

PRIMARY ATTENDANCE POLICY



Equalities Statement

In our Trust we work to ensure that there is equality of opportunity for all members of our community who hold a range of protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010, as well as having regard to other factors which have the potential to cause inequality, such as socio-economic factors. For further information, please see our Equalities Policy.

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Roles and contact Details		
Role	Name	Contact details
Attendance Admin/Officer	Suzanne Abbott	Suzanne.abbott@swale.at
Attendance Champion / Senior Lead	Michelle Oswald	michelle.oswald@swale.at
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Victoria Pettett	victoria.pettett@swale.at
Local Authority (LA) Education Welfare Service	Kent County Council (KCC) education services	03000 41 99 94

1. Aims

- 1.1 It is the aim of Westlands Primary School that pupils should experience a vibrant inclusive community that transforms lives and broadens horizons through excellent teaching and learning. Our mission is to inspire children to flourish and achieve their best. The Attendance Policy reflects this and recognises that regular attendance has a positive effect on the motivation and attainment of pupils.
- 1.2 We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos. We value relationship-based practice that achieves good attendance, including:
- Promoting regular attendance.
 - Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence.
 - Recognising and celebrating individual successes.
 - Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled.
 - Taking early action to address patterns of absence.
 - Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school.

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons. Barriers such as poor attendance will hinder, delay or stop their progress.

Studies have shown that frequent absence from school can have a serious negative impact on your child's education. There is a perception from both students and parents that 90% attendance is good, however 90% attendance is the equivalent of one and half days off each week.

- 1.3 Improving attendance is everyone's business. This policy should be read alongside the annual review of the school Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. This policy is included in the required reading list for all new employees. All team members know the importance of good attendance and support the whole-school approach by communicating consistent high expectations.

2. Legislation and Guidance

- 2.1 This policy meets the requirements of the [Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on School attendance parental responsibilities responsibility measures [Stat guidance template \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/stat-guidance-template). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [Education Act 1996 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/part-6)
- Part 3 of [Education Act 2002 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/26/part-3)
- Part 7 of [Education and Inspections Act 2006 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/58/part-7)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/2682/made)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/191/made)

legislation.gov.uk

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

2.2 In addition, this policy incorporates the following guidance from the DfE:

- [Equality Act 2010 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Children missing education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- [School behaviour and attendance: parental responsibility measures - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- [School suspensions and permanent exclusions - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Keeping children safe in education 2025 - GOV.UK](#)

3. School Times

	Start Time	End Time
Reception	8.40am	3.10pm
Years 1 & 2	8.40am	3.10pm
Years 3,4,5,6	8.40am	3.10pm

To report your child's attendance please do so by: report child absent option on Weduc, email us on wpsoffice@swale.at or call us on 01795 470862.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Role of the Local Authority

Local authorities and other groups that help children play a critical role in assisting students to overcome challenges and ensuring all children can get the full-time education they deserve. Local authorities help families and schools get the extra support they need in the short term to overcome challenges. They also work regionally to address challenges in the long term. Because local authorities differ so much in size, organisation, and demographics, the specifics of how attendance services are delivered should be determined locally to meet the needs of students, parents, and schools.

As a minimum, however, all local authorities are expected to:

Rigorously track local attendance data to devise a strategic approach to attendance that prioritises the pupils, pupil cohorts and schools on which to provide support and focus its efforts on to unblock area wide barriers to attendance.

Have a School Attendance Support Team which provides the following core functions free of charge to all schools (regardless of type):

- **Communication and advice:** regularly bring schools together to communicate messages, provide advice and share best practice between schools and trusts within the area.
- **Targeting Support Meetings:** hold termly conversations with schools, using their attendance data to identify pupils and cohorts at risk of poor attendance and agree targeted actions and access to services for those pupils.
- **Multi-disciplinary support for families:** provide access to early help support workers to work intensively with families to provide practical whole-family support where needed to tackle the causes of absenteeism and unblock the barriers to attendance.
- **Legal intervention:** take forward attendance legal intervention (using the full range of parental responsibility measures) where voluntary support has not been successful or engaged with.
- **Monitor and improve** the attendance of children with a social worker through their Virtual School.

Role of Governance

The Board of Trustees, through the Education and Standards Committee, are responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across our policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfill expectations and statutory duties.
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data

The Trust Executive Team are responsible for:

- regularly monitoring attendance data, providing challenge and support to the school as necessary

The Local Governing Body are responsible for:

- Receiving attendance data and information via the termly Headteacher's report, providing scrutiny and escalating concerns to the Trust Executive and/or Board of Trustees as necessary.
- Monitoring the application of the Attendance Policy
- Providing parental and community feedback to the school on the impact and effectiveness of the Attendance Policy.

Role of The School

1. to register the children promptly and accurately;
2. to record absence appropriately, including signing in and out during school hours;
3. to record as late, pupils who arrive after 8:40am. and before the close of registers at 9:15am
4. to record as unauthorised absences, pupils who arrive after the registers close;
5. to record as late, pupils who arrive ten minutes after class afternoon registration time;
6. to check registers daily for first day absence;
7. to telephone those parents who have not contacted the school by the required time on the first day of absence, priority being given to:
 - children on the Protection Register or involved with Social Services such as LAC or those with Child Protection Plans;
 - children in families where there is a particular concern;
 - children, whose parents or carers are normally fastidious in making contact.
8. to send a Weduc/email home that day to parents who cannot be contacted, to ask why their child is absent.
9. to keep records of all telephone calls on BROMCOM and keep all contact concerning absence;
10. to monitor regularly absence and lateness, to look for patterns and take appropriate action;

11. to involve appropriate external agency if there are any concerns regarding absence or punctuality;
12. to obtain details of telephone contacts for all pupils and to ensure that records are updated regularly by writing to parents to remind them of their responsibilities, whilst requesting current contact information. An emergency telephone number must be recorded for every pupil;
13. to send reminders regarding absence and punctuality on the school's regular communication to parents/carers;
14. to raise concerns regarding absence at parent consultation meetings, or sooner if necessary;
15. to discourage the practice of taking children out of school for odd days and holidays;
16. to report all authorised and unauthorised absence on the child's annual report;
17. to publish attendance data to parents (and individual pupil attendance data on annual school reports);
18. to set attendance targets annually for the whole school as well as individual pupils, and monitor.
19. to adhere to the mandatory requirement to **notify the local authority when a pupil is recorded with code I (illness) and is expected to miss 15 days or more, either consecutively or cumulatively, in a school year.**
20. to inform a pupil's **social worker and/or youth offending team (YOT) worker** of any unexplained absences.

The school will not authorise absences for shopping, looking after other children, day trips etc. Leave may, however, be granted in an emergency (e.g. bereavement) or for medical appointments which cannot be arranged out of school time.

Role of Parents and Carers

- Parents/ carers are expected to contact the school at an early stage and work with the staff in resolving any problems together;
- Ensure that the aim is for their children to achieve 100% school attendance;
- Ensure that pupils are on the premises between 8:30 and 8:40am and not before.
- The school front gate opens at 8:20am however pupils remain the responsibility of parents or carers until the school doors open at 8:30am;
- Take children who are late (8:40am onwards) to the main entrance to sign in;
- Collect children promptly at the end of the school day, which finishes at 3:10pm. After this time, children are the responsibility of their parents or carers;
- Collect children promptly from after school clubs; 4.15pm
- Ensure that the school has current parent/carers and emergency contact telephone numbers and addresses.

5. Recording Attendance

5.1 Attendance Register

Attendance documents issued to parents / carers are saved directly to the pupil record on the school's Management Information System (BromCom in Bromley & Kent and CPOMs for our East Sussex schools) along with other relevant information to update the current attendance status of our children.

We follow our Trust safeguarding processes for recording information or incidents of a safeguarding nature. This can include information regarding poor attendance.

Expectations on schools:

- Keep registers electronically
- Preserve every entry in the attendance or admission register for 6 years
- Use the revised attendance and absence codes
- Share the school's daily attendance data directly with the DfE.

Maintained schools and non-maintained special schools **must** (and other schools are expected to):

- Only grant leaves of absence for specific circumstances set out in regulation 11 of the 2024 attendance regulations
- All schools can also grant absence for education off site.
- Where applicable, schools also expected to report unexplained absences to the pupil's youth offending team worker.

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

5.2. **Unplanned Absence**

The pupil's parent/carers must notify the school of the reason for the absence on each day of an unplanned absence by **9am** or as soon as practically possible by informing the school attendance office.

Every half-day absence from our school has to be classified by the attendance officer (not by parents/carers) as either Authorised or Unauthorised. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required. If no explanation is received, absences will not be authorised.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carers to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, and parents/carers will be notified.

5.3 **Planned Absence**

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised if the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. Please see above for evidence requests if the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the appointment.

If a pupil is present at registration but has a medical appointment during the session in question, no absence needs to be recorded for that session.

We encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

5.4 **Lateness and punctuality**

A pupil who arrives late:

Before the register has closed after 8.40am will be marked as late, using the appropriate code (L)

After the register has closed after 9.15am will be marked as unauthorised late, using the appropriate code (U)

If a pupil arrives after the register has closed this will (be) an unauthorised absence unless prior details about the absence have been shared and authorised by the Headteacher.

5.5 **Following up unexplained absence**

Where any pupil we expect to attend the school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on each morning of an unexplained absence to ascertain the reason.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not.
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session.
- If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may complete a welfare visit at the pupil's home address, seek advice from Children's Social Care and/or contact the police.
- To further ensure safeguarding actions are taken where necessary. If the absence continues, the school will consider referral to an education welfare officer and/or Children's Social Care, or any other relevant services.

5.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will share attendance information frequently with parents/carers, for example at each parents evening and on school reports. We will provide parents/carers with a copy of their child's attendance summary for the academic year in Term 6.

If parents/carers wish to see a copy of their child's attendance summary at any other time during the year, they can ask for a printed copy at the school office.

Where a pupil's attendance drops below 96% (this equates to 7 missed school days in a year) the school may contact parents/carers to highlight this, unless there is a good reason not to.

Parents/carers to be advised that we do make referrals to the Local Authority for legal action such as Court Judgments or Fixed Penalty notices.

6. Authorised and Unauthorised Absences

6.1 Approval for term-time absence

The Headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances', a leave of absence will not be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

A leave of absence is granted at the Headteacher's discretion, in accordance with local and national guidance, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

- The school will not authorise any leave of absence in term-time unless satisfied the reason for absence is exceptional.
- The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. This includes consultation with other team members as required, including the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). If illness occurs either side of unauthorised or authorised leave we will NOT authorise those sick days. We may also require evidence of passports, tickets and original booking of leave along with medical evidence for illness.
- Parents/carers are asked not to make plans to take their child out of school without making a request to the school first.
- Any request should be submitted at least 4 weeks before the absence, via the Absence request form, available via the school office or can be found on Weduc.
- Parents may be required to provide the school with additional evidence in order to support a leave of absence request.
- The school cannot grant a leave of absence retrospectively. If the parent did not apply in advance, leave of absence cannot be granted.
- The absence should be for the shortest time possible – if an absence is agreed, the Headteacher will decide how many days of absence will be authorised. If the pupil is absent for more days than were authorised by the school, the remaining days will be

- recorded as unauthorised absence.
- Any other absence such as trips and visits which have not been agreed in writing by the school, will be recorded as unauthorised.
- Parents/carers should be aware (that) an unauthorised absence may result in a Penalty Notice or Prosecution. See 5.2 for more information.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail) If your child is leaving the school for an illness they **MUST** be collected.
- Religious observance. This is '*a day exclusively set apart for religious observance*' when the pupil's parents would be expected by the religious body to which they belong, to stay away from their employment in order to mark the occasion. The school may seek further advice from the parent's religious body regarding the absence. If a religious body sets apart a single day for a religious observance and the parent applies for more than one day, the school may only record one day as authorised on this basis; the rest of the request would be considered as a leave of absence.
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school.
- Suspension. When a pupil has been suspended or excluded from the school.
- Taking part in a regulated performance
- A temporary reduced timetable
- Exceptional circumstances that have been agreed by the Headteacher.

6.2 **Unauthorised Absence:**

If the school is not satisfied with the reason given for the absence, or where no reason has been provided. Unauthorised absences may result in Legal Sanctions, usually Penalty Notices or Prosecutions. See 5.3 for further details.

Unauthorised absence includes, but is not limited to:

- Absences that have not been explained within 5 days of occurrence.
- Parent/carer's keeping children off school unnecessarily (persistent nonspecific illness eg. poorly/unwell/headache/sore throat/period pains).
- Medical/dental appointments of more than half a day without very good reason (distance taken into consideration).
- Arriving at the school after the register has closed (unless by prior authorisation).
- Family trips and excursions, including birthdays and weddings.
- Moving house
- Inadequate uniform
- Family Holidays in term time (see details in section 5.1)
- Absences due to an illness of a family member or sibling.

NB: Schools will only accept a child's medical unfit for school letter from a consultant of which the child is under their care and not a GP statutory sick note which is aimed for adults and their employees. This is an official document for the department of working pensions (DWP). Provision of medical certificates for school children is not part of a GP's responsibility, and declining to provide this certification is in accordance with the government policy to reduce GP bureaucracy and reserve valuable GP time for clinical care.

Parents/carers should seek advice and support from the school when experiencing barriers in securing regular attendance.

If the school has cause for concern regarding the reason for a pupil's absence, we may seek additional information or evidence from parents/carers regarding the absence, and make an outreach visit to the family home in order to verify the reason and offer additional support. If the reason cannot be verified and the school has cause to believe the reason given for absence may not be genuine, parents/carers may be asked to provide satisfactory proof of the reason before the school authorises the absence. If satisfactory proof is not provided, the school may record the absence as unauthorised.

7 Legal interventions

Notice to Improve and Penalty Notices

A notice to improve will be issued if the child's absence has met the DfE thresholds including the 10 in 10 absence threshold.

A Notice to Improve is a final opportunity for a parent to engage in support and improve attendance before a penalty notice is issued. If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate but offers of support have not been engaged with by the parent or have not worked, a Notice to Improve should usually be sent to give parents a final chance to engage in support. A Notice to Improve does not need to be issued in cases where support is not appropriate and an authorised officer can choose not to use one in any case, including cases where support is appropriate but they do not expect a Notice to Improve would have any behavioural impact (e.g. because the parent has already received one for a similar offence).

Where a Notice to Improve is used, it should be issued in line with processes set out in the Local Code of Conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school. The Notice to Improve is expected to include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and details of the offences.
- The benefits of regular attendance and parents' duty under section 7 of the Education Act 1996.
- Details of the support provided so far.
- Opportunities for further support and the option to access previously provided support that was not engaged with.
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued or prosecution considered if attendance improvement is not secured within the improvement period.
- A clear timeframe for the improvement period of between 3 and 6 weeks.
- Details of what sufficient improvement within that timeframe will look like.

- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period.

What sufficient improvement looks like can be decided on a case by case basis taking the individual family's circumstances into account. For some families, no further unauthorised absences will be appropriate, for others some absence may be tolerable if considerable improvement is seen. Details of what sufficient improvement looks like for each case should be made clear in the Notice to Improve.

Where it is clear that improvement is not being made, it may be appropriate to issue a penalty notice before the improvement period has ended. For example, a Notice to Improve stated there should be no further unauthorised absences in a 6 week period but the pupil is absent for unauthorised reasons in the first week. The parent should be informed before a penalty notice is issued if it is before the end of the improvement period. Two penalty notice limit and escalation in cases of repeat offences.

A penalty notice is an out of court settlement which is intended to change behaviour without the need for criminal prosecution. If repeated penalty notices are being issued and they are not working to change behaviour they are unlikely to be the most appropriate tool. Therefore, only 2 penalty notices can be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within a 3 year rolling period and any second notice within that period is charged at a higher rate:

- The first penalty notice issued to a parent in respect of a particular pupil will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.
- A second penalty notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.
- A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of issue of the first.

In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action should be taken instead. This will often include considering prosecution, but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions. Once 3 years has elapsed since the first penalty notice was issued a further penalty notice can be issued, but in most cases it would not be the most effective tool for changing what may have now become an entrenched pattern of behaviour. For the purpose of the escalation process, previous penalty notices include those not paid (including where prosecution was taken forward and the parent pleaded or was found guilty) but not those which were withdrawn.

Cross-border Checks

In cases where a pupil has moved school or local authority area in the previous 3 years, an additional check should be made to try and ascertain whether previous penalty notices have been issued to the parent in respect of the pupil. Where the pupil's previous school was in the same local authority area this check will be simple. If the pupil has moved between local authorities in the previous 3 years and the previous local authority(ies) is known they should be contacted to check whether a penalty notice has been issued to that parent for that pupil in the previous 3 years. These checks can be made by the school and/or local authority depending on the agreed local process. In cases where the previous local authority is not known or the information cannot be, or is not, provided by the previous local authority, it should be assumed that the parent has not previously received a penalty notice and the escalation process started as a new case. All local authorities are expected to have an email mailbox to make these enquiries

as easy as possible, where possible this should be in the form of crossborder.penaltynotice@laname.gov.uk

8. Strategies for Promoting Attendance

One of the most important factors in promoting good attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, the school strives to provide a happy and rewarding experience for all children, and to foster positive and mutually respectful relationships with parents/carers. The school will regularly reward good and improved attendance with different incentives and initiatives.

By promoting good attendance and punctuality the school aims to:

- Make good attendance and punctuality a priority for all those involved in the school community.
- Raise pupils' awareness of the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- Provide support, advice and guidance to parents/carers, pupils, and team members.
- Work in partnership with parents/carers and, where appropriate, the wider family.

9 Attendance improvement

9.1 Improving Attendance

Improving attendance is everyone's responsibility and must be a whole school approach. The barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates, and are often specific to individual pupils and families. The foundation of securing good attendance is that the school is a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environment where all pupils feel safe, happy and able to learn.

9.2 Attendance Management

The barriers to accessing education are wide and complex and are often specific to individual pupils and families. All school-led interventions are bespoke to the individual needs of pupils and will incorporate a holistic and coordinated package of support to increase the chance of successful outcomes. This approach ensures that pupils and cohorts with additional vulnerabilities are effectively supported to reduce absenteeism. School-led interventions will always incorporate regular opportunities for pupil and parent voice.

10 School Levels of Support and Intervention

10.1 Stages of Support and Intervention

The school operates a tiered level of support measures for families. From a universal and preventive approach for all pupils that can escalate to early help support within the school team and by local partners. If early-help is unsuccessful, or not engaged with, this will lead to targeted and legal intervention. See 5.3.

Stage 1 Trigger Points (Preventative)	At this stage parents / carers will be informed by phone call and / or letter that their child's attendance is beginning to decline and will highlight the importance of continued good attendance in school and offer support. When attendance begins to decline, and then ongoing, a pupil's social worker and/or youth offending team (YOT) worker will be notified of any unexplained absences.
Stage 2 Trigger Points (Emerging Risk)	At this stage, Letter 2 is sent home which invites parents/carers to attend an attendance support meeting at the school or a Telephone Appointment to support the family. After the date of the meeting, a "Follow Up" letter is sent out which either confirms their attendance at the meeting, what discussion took place and any support offered or if they did not attend, what will happen if their child's attendance drops to the third stage. At this stage, all future absences, without medical evidence, are marked as 'unauthorised'. Attendance contracts may be put in place and reviewed regularly.
Stage 3 Trigger Points (Vulnerable)	At this stage, Letter 3 is sent home which encourages parents/carers to attend a meeting with the Senior Attendance Champion at a given time to discuss their child's attendance and to complete a personalised attendance improvement plan (attendance contract) if not already in place, that addresses the causes and symptoms of declining attendance. A notice to improve commences at this point if appropriate (10 unauthorised absences in 10 weeks). As part of the Attendance Contract, parents will be expected to attend and be part of the graduated assess-plan-do-review process. At this stage the local authority will be notified when a pupil is recorded with code I (Illness) and has missed or on track to miss 15 days or more, either consecutively or cumulatively, in a school year.
Stage 4 Trigger Points (Legal Intervention)	Letter 4 is sent home which explains that despite the school's intervention and support and attempting to engage with parents/carers several times in order to support with improvements in attendance, that there still does not seem to be any significant improvement with their child's attendance. The letter explains that it has now become necessary for the school to refer their concerns to the Local Authority education service. This could lead to legal intervention. The designated safeguarding lead will work with the attendance team members to assess risk of educational neglect. Case evaluations may lead to a referral into Children's Social Care.

10.2 Trigger Points By Days Each Term

The table below identifies the **number of days of absence** that will trigger each stage of the attendance policy for each term:

Term	Stage 1 Trigger Points	Stage 2 Trigger Points	Stage 3 Trigger Points	Stage 4 Trigger Points
Term 1	4	7	15	23
Term 2	5	8	16	24
Term 3	6	9	17	25
Term 4	7	10	18	26
Term 5	8	11	19	27
Term 6	9	12	20	28

11 Monitoring and Analysing Attendance

The school team will:

- Monitor individual attendance and absence data weekly at a minimum, using our INSIGHT attendance tracker templates to identify pupils at Stage 1,2,3 and 4 trigger points in order to implement early interventions and relevant actions.
- Identify through data analysis, any groups of pupils' whose absences may be a cause for concern. e.g. SEND, EHCP, Pupil Premium, Children in care, Children with a social worker, Young Carers, etc and plan supportive actions.
- Meet weekly to discuss and agree actions for pupils at risk of persistent absenteeism.
- Meet weekly with (the) safeguarding team to review cases and agree action for pupils who are persistently or severely absent.
- Regularly report attendance data, analysis and impact of interventions to the local governing board and executive team.
- Use comparative data at local, trust, similarly schools and national levels to improve attendance rates so they align with at least the Attendance Baseline Improvement Expectation (ABIE).

11.1 Using Data to Improve Attendance

The attendance team will:

- Use data to identify, monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies.
- Provide regular updates on attendance improvement data with parents.
- Provide daily attendance data to the DfE.

12 Reducing Persistent and Severe Absence

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence may seriously impact their learning. The Department for Education (DfE) defines a pupil as a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year, for whatever reason.

Attendance	90%	85%	80%	75%	50%
Days Missed	19	29	38	57	95
Lessons Missed	Approx 95	Approx 145	Approx 190	Approx 285	Approx 475

To reduce the impact of persistent and severe absenteeism the school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence.
- Prioritise intensive support to overcome barriers in attendance.
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or Local Authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school.
- Complete an Attendance Improvement Agreement with the family or attendance contract/ Notice to Improve. This will include an action plan, parent and pupil voice, target setting and details of any reasonable adjustments.
- Facilitate access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance.

12.1 Mental and Physical Health Conditions

The school will work with families to assess and implement any necessary reasonable adjustments for pupils who experience challenges that have a substantial and/or long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out regular daily activities.

Reasonable adjustments may include changes to the physical environment, curriculum or the way information is presented, as well as providing additional equipment, or tailored services.

Pupils are entitled to a full-time education that is suitable to (for) their age and ability. If the school is unable to provide a pupil with full-time education due to their individual needs, we will work with the pupil, family, and other agencies to create an arrangement that is in the best interests of the pupil.

We will work in partnership with local medical and mental health services to ensure consistency of approach. When a pupil has an identified medical condition, it may be necessary to create an Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP) to support them at school. IHCPs are developed in partnership between the school, parents, pupils, and any relevant healthcare professionals who can advise on the child's case. The IHCP enables the school to effectively keep pupils safe, well and involved at school by providing clear information on what needs to be done when, and by whom.

13. Part-time timetables

Temporary part-time timetables must only be used in 'very exceptional circumstances' and must not be used to manage a pupil's behaviour.

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. In some circumstances their education may be provided partially at school and partially at another educational setting or through education otherwise than at a school in line with section 19 of the Education Act 1996 or section 42 or 61 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Time away from school to receive education in other ways must be recorded in the attendance register using the appropriate codes

In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a school to provide a pupil of compulsory school age with less than full-time education through a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending school or another setting full-time and a part-time timetable is used to help the pupil access as much education as possible. A part-time timetable should not be used to manage a pupil's behaviour.

A part-time timetable should:

- Have the agreement of both the school and the parent the pupil normally lives with.
- Have a clear ambition and be part of the pupil's wider support, health care or reintegration plan.
- Have regular review dates which include the pupil and their parents to ensure it is only in place for the shortest time necessary.
- Have a proposed end date that takes into account the circumstances of the pupil, after which the pupil is expected to attend full-time, either at school or alternative provision. It can, however, be extended as part of the regular review process. In some limited cases, a pupil with a long-term health condition may require a part-time timetable for a prolonged period.

Where the pupil has a social worker, the school is expected to keep them informed and involved in the process.

14. Safeguarding and Attendance

14.1 Safeguarding

The school will monitor trends and patterns of absence for all pupils as a part of its standard procedures. However, it is recognised that sudden or gradual changes in a pupil's attendance may indicate additional or more extreme safeguarding issues. In line with government guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education, Local Authority Procedures and the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, we will investigate and report any suspected safeguarding and welfare cases to Children's Social Care. The school has a duty to inform the Local Authority and/or the Police of the details of any pupil who is absent from school when they cannot establish their whereabouts and is concerned for the pupil's welfare.

The school will regularly liaise with providers of Alternative Provision (AP) to ensure that attendance records are accurately maintained and any absences and/or safeguarding concerns are effectively shared. We will coordinate any required follow up actions in conjunction with the AP. All AP providers agree to implement our school child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures.

We recognise that safeguarding is not a discrete area of work: there is a safeguarding dimension to almost every area of school practice. As part of our whole school approach, and to ensure a holistic view of all children, we have structures and systems in place, such as scheduled meetings and shared databases, to ensure that the DSL and wider safeguarding team has oversight of areas of school organisation which may not fall directly within their remit, but may impact upon effective safeguarding. These areas include behaviour, attendance, medical needs/first aid, SEND and bullying. Information from these areas will be factored into safeguarding decision making for individual children so that their needs are considered holistically.

14.2 Welfare and Outreach Visits

If a pupil does not attend the school regularly, team members may make welfare visits to the pupil's (their) home to see and speak to the pupil and parents/carers as part of the school's safeguarding and attendance processes. If team members are unable to see and speak to the pupil and parents/carers, they may contact the pupil's emergency contacts and/or other professionals or contacts of the family, who they reasonably expect may be able to provide the school with relevant information.

Welfare visits do not need to be agreed or prearranged and can be at any point during school hours by any members of the school team.

The school will offer outreach visits at the family home if an attendance meeting at the school cannot be facilitated. The rationale and purpose for an outreach visit will be clearly communicated in advance with pupils and parents.

Details of welfare and outreach visits are recorded on a pupil's child protection file.

All welfare and outreach visits will be subject to a regularly reviewed Risk Assessment.

14.3 Children Missing Education

Children missing education (CME) are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school.

Effective information sharing between parents, schools and Local Authorities is critical to ensuring that all children of compulsory school age are safe and receiving suitable education.

Where a pupil has not returned to school for ten days after an authorised absence or is absent

from the school without authorisation for twenty consecutive school days, the pupil can be removed from the admission register when the school and the Local Authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to establish the whereabouts of the child. This only applies if the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or unavoidable cause.

We will notify the Local Authority when we are removing a pupils' name from the school admission register. We will also notify Children's Social Care if we have any safeguarding concerns.

14.4 Leaving Our School

We are always sad to say goodbye to our students. If a student is leaving our school because they are relocating or they are changing schools, please inform us.

We need the student's new address and the details of the new school, including school name, address and start date.

This safeguarding procedure means that we know the student is still in education, safe and well. If a parent/carer decides to Electively Home Educate their child, it is essential that they inform the school in writing including the correct terminology from the DFE guidance. This can be via an email to wpsoffice@swale.at, or by completing a child leaving form (form can be found on Weduc or you can get a hard copy in the office.)

15. Policy Review

15.1 This policy and the procedures will be reviewed every academic year. All other linked policies will be reviewed in line with that policy review cycle.

15.2 The Senior Attendance Lead/Champion will ensure that team members are made aware of any amendments to policies and procedures during the academic year.

15.3 Policies and Procedures

- Trust First Aid and Medical Policy
- Trust Complaints policy and procedure
- Trust Equality Objectives
- Trust Health and Safety Policy and other linked policies and risk assessments
- Trust ICT Acceptable Use Policy (staff and pupils)
- Trust Offsite Activities Policy
- Trust Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy
- Trust Staff Code of Conduct
- Trust Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Trust Attendance Management Guide
- school Preventing Bullying policy
- school Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- school Online Safety Policy

- Behaviour Policy
- Children Missing from Education Procedures

Appendix 1: DfE Attendance and Absence Codes

Summary of Attendance Codes and Meanings

In accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 a pupil should be recorded as present or absent in the Attendance Register

On each occasion the register is taken the appropriate national attendance and absence code must be entered for every pupil (of both compulsory and non –compulsory school age) whose name is listed in the admissions register at the time (exception boarder)

Full information contained in the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and the Statutory Attendance Guidance Working Together to Improve Attendance 2024

1. If a pupil is present in school the following codes from table 1 should be used

Code	Meaning	Criteria	Statistical Value
/	Present at school AM	Must be in school at registration	Attending (Present)
\	Present at school PM	Must be in school at registration	Attending (Present)
L	Late arrival before register is closed	The pupil was absent when the register started being taken but arrived before the register was closed.	Attending (present)

2. If a pupil is absent from school so that they can attend a place other than school for any of the following reasons the relevant code from table 2 should be used.

Code	Meaning	Criteria	Statistical Value
K	Attending Education provision arranged the LA	The nature of the provision must also be recorded. Code K can only be used if the child is present at the provision.	Attending an approved educational activity (present)

V	Attending an Educational visit or trip	The pupil is attending a place, other than the school or any other school at which they are a registered pupil, for an educational visit or trip Arranged by or on behalf of the school and supervised by a member of school staff. The visit or trip must take place during the session for which it is recorded. Code V can only be used if the pupil is present at the visit.	Attending an approved educational activity (present)
P	Participating in a Sporting Activity P code can only be used if the pupil is present at the activity	P code can only be used if the pupil is present at the activity The sporting activity must take place during the session for which it is recorded. The place is somewhere other than the school, another school where the pupil is registered, or a place where educational provision has been arranged for the pupil by a local authority under section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996 or sections 42(2) or 61(1) of the Children and Families Act 2014; • the activity is of an educational nature; • the school has approved the pupil's attendance at the place for the activity; and • the activity is supervised by a person considered by the school to have the appropriate skills, training, experience and knowledge to ensure that the activity takes place safely and fulfils the educational purpose for which the pupil's attendance has been approved.	Attending an approved educational activity (present)

W	Attending Work Experience	W code can only be used if the pupil is present at the activity Under arrangements by school or LA In session for which it is recorded The place is somewhere other than the school, another school where the pupil is registered, or a place where educational provision has been arranged for the pupil by a local authority under section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996 or sections 42(2) or 61(1) of the Children and Families Act 2014; • the activity is of an educational nature; • the school has approved the pupil's attendance at the place for the activity; and • the activity is supervised by a person considered by the school to have the appropriate skills, training, experience and knowledge to ensure that the activity takes place safely and fulfils the educational purpose for which the pupil's attendance has been approved.	Attending an approved educational activity (present)
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B	Attending any other approved Educational Activity	B code can only be used if the pupil is present at the activity Under arrangements by school or LA In session for which it is recorded The place is somewhere other than the school, another school where the pupil is registered, or a place where educational provision has been arranged for the pupil by a local authority under section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996 or sections 42(2) or 61(1) of the Children and Families Act 2014; • the activity is of an educational nature; • the school has approved the pupil's attendance at the place for the activity; and • The activity is supervised by a person considered by the school to have the appropriate skills, training, experience and knowledge to ensure that the activity takes place safely and fulfils the educational purpose for which the pupil's attendance has been approved. As set out in the DfE's guidance on 'Providing remote education'. pupils who are absent from school and receiving remote education still need to be recorded as absent using the most appropriate absence code. Schools should keep a record of, and monitor pupil's engagement with remote education, but this is not formally tracked in the attendance register	Attending an approved educational activity (present)
D	Dual Registered at another school	The school at which the pupil is scheduled to attend must record the pupil's attendance and absence with the relevant code. Code D may only be used by either school for a session where the pupil is scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby all unexpected and unexplained absences are promptly followed u	Not a possible attendance (neither present or absent)

3. **If a pupil is absent with leave (NB schools not required to follow regulation 11 in granting a leave of absence should still use the relevant code)**

Code	Meaning	Criteria	Statistical Value
C1	Leave of absence – performance or regulated employment abroad	Performance licence issued by LA or Body of Persons Approval issued by LA or Justice of peace has given licence for pupil to go abroad for performance or regulated purpose	Authorised absence
M	Leave of absence for Medical or dental Appointment	Agreement in advance Application by parent child normally lives with Minimum time necessary Where pupil is absent at registration	Authorised absence
J1	Leave of absence for Interview	Agreement in Advance Application by parent child normally lives with In session absence recorded	Authorised absence
S	Leave of absence for Studying for public examination		Authorised absence
X	Non – Compulsory School age pupil not required to attend school	For part time attendance Absence for timetabled sessions to use appropriate code and not X	Not a possible attendance (neither present or absent)
C2	Leave of absence – compulsory school age pupil subject to part time timetable	Exceptional circumstances If the school and a parent who the pupil normally lives with have agreed that, exceptionally, the pupil should temporarily be educated only part-time Temporary See Working Together to improve attendance	Authorised Absence

C	Leave of absence exceptional circumstances	Exceptional circumstances No blanket approach School discretion Generally, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance.	Authorised absence
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4. **Pupil Absent other Authorised reasons**

Code	Meaning	Criteria	Statistical Value
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes.	The pupil is a mobile child and their parent(s) is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with them. A mobile child is a child of compulsory school age who has no fixed abode and whose parent(s) is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require them to travel from place to place. To help ensure continuity of education for pupils, when their parent(s) is travelling for occupational purposes in England, it is expected that the pupil should attend a school where their parent(s) is travelling and be dual registered at that school and their main school.	Authorised absence
R	Religious Observance	The pupil is absent on a day that is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body the parent(s) belong to (not the parents themselves)	Authorised Absence
I	Illness (not medical appointment)	The pupil is unable to attend due to illness (both physical and mental health related). Schools should advise parents to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness.	Authorised Absence
E	Suspended or Permanently excluded with no alternative provision made	The pupil is suspended from school or permanently excluded from school, but their name is still entered in the admission register, and no alternative provision has been made for the pupil to continue their education	Authorised Absence

5. **Pupil Absent – Unavoidable Cause**

Code	Meaning	Criteria	Statistical Value
Q	Unable to attend school because of lack of access arrangements	There is a lack of access arrangements for a pupil whose home is in England if— (a) a local authority have a duty to make travel arrangements in relation to the pupil under section 508B(1) of the 1996 Act(13) for the purpose of facilitating the pupil's attendance at the school and have failed to discharge that duty; (b) a local authority have a duty to make travel arrangements in relation to the pupil because of section 508E(2)(c) of the 1996 Act(14) for the purpose of facilitating the pupil's attendance at the school and have failed to discharge that duty; or (c) the school is an independent school that is not a qualifying school and— (i) the school is not within walking distance of the pupil's home; (ii) no suitable arrangements have been made by a local authority for boarding accommodation for the pupil at or near the school; and (iii) no suitable arrangements have been made by a local authority for enabling the pupil to become a registered pupil at a qualifying school nearer to their home.	Not a possible attendance
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not been available	The pupil is unable to attend because the school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport to and from the school that is normally provided for the pupil by the school or local authority is not available	Not a possible attendance
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread travel disruption	The pupil is unable to attend the school because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national, or international emergency	Not a possible attendance
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed	Part of the school premises is unavoidably out of use and the pupil is one of those that the school considers cannot practicably be accommodated in those parts of the premises that remain in use.	Not a possible attendance
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed	Where a school was planned to be open for a session, but the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather), the attendance register is not taken as usual because there is no school session. Instead, every pupil listed in the admission register at the time must be marked with code Y4 to record the fact that the school is closed.	Not a possible attendance

Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention	The pupil is unable to attend the school because they are: • in police detention, • remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • detained under a sentence of detention. A pupil's absence should be recorded under code Y7 (Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause) if they are unable to attend because they are serving a community based (i.e. non-detained) part of a sentence of detention, referral order, or youth rehabilitation order that requires them to be absent during the school day	Not a possible attendance
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law	The pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be: • contrary to any guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of infection or disease published by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care (or the equivalent in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland), or • prohibited by any legislation relating to the incidence or transmission of infection or disease.	Not a possible attendance
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause	This code should be used only where something in the nature of an emergency has prevented the pupil from attending the session in question. The unavoidable cause must be something that affects the pupil, not the parent. The fact that a parent has done all they can to secure the attendance of the pupil at school does not, in itself, mean the pupil has been prevented by unavoidable cause. Schools must also record the nature of the unavoidable cause (regulation 10(6))	Not a possible attendance

6. Absent for unauthorised reasons

Code	Meaning	Criteria	Statistical Value
G	Holiday not granted by school	The school has not granted a leave of absence and the pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday. A school cannot grant a leave of absence retrospectively. If the parent did not apply in advance, leave of absence should not be granted.	Unauthorised absence
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Where absence is recorded as code N (reason not yet established) in the attendance register, the correct absence code should be entered as soon as the reason is ascertained, but no more than 5 school days after the session (regulation 10(7) to (9)). Code N must not therefore be left on the pupil's attendance record indefinitely; if a reason for absence cannot be established within 5 school days, schools must amend the pupil's record to Code O	Unauthorised absence
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	Where no reason for absence is established or the school is not satisfied that the reason given is one that would be recorded using one of the codes statistically classified as authorised.	Unauthorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Where a pupil has arrived late after the register has closed but before the end of session. Schools should actively discourage late arrival, be alert to patterns of late arrival and seek an explanation from the parent. All schools are expected to set out in their attendance policy the length of time the register will be open, after which a pupil will be marked as absent. This should be the same for every session and not longer than 30 minutes	Unauthorised absence

Administrative Codes

Code	Meaning	Statistical Value
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	NOT COLLECTED
#	Planned whole school closure	NOT COLLECTED

Letter Exemplars

Please note these letters are exemplars and the exact wording and content is subject to change.

Appendix 2 – Lateness

Letter 1

Dear (Name),

RE: Lateness, (Name) - (Class)

I'm writing to you because [name] has been late to school [number] times in [timeframe].

[Name] arrived at school after the register had closed on the following dates:

[date]

[date]

[date]

[Name] arrived at school late but before the register had closed on the following dates:

[date]

[date]

Arriving promptly makes sure that your child does not miss work, and that disruption to the teacher and other pupils is minimised. Persistent lateness can lead to a significant loss in learning time. The table below shows you just how much time can be missed over a year just by being 5 minutes late to school every day:

5 minutes late every day = 3 days of school lost a year

10 Minutes late every day = 6.5 days of school lost a year

15 Minutes late every day = 10 days of school lost a year

20 minutes late every day = 13 days of school lost a year

30 minutes late every day = 19 days of school lost a year

Persistent lateness can result in a penalty notice. The school can request that the local authority issues a penalty notice related to lateness when a child has arrived late for 10 or more sessions after the register has been closed.

If you have any queries or would like to discuss attendance with anyone please do not hesitate to contact the school attendance team on 01795 470862.

Yours sincerely,

Attendance Champion

Late Letter 2

Dear (Name),

RE – Names of Pupil

Further to my previous letter dated _____, we are writing to you as your child has now been late XX times. This is concerning.

I am inviting you to attend an Attendance Improvement Meeting. The time and date have been set for ?? at ?? It is important that you attend this meeting for us to explore the issues around attendance. If this appointment is inconvenient, I would be grateful if you could contact me so that an alternative time can be arranged.

We are closely monitoring your child's attendance and lateness. Any child arriving after 8:40am is given a late mark (L) in the register. An arrival after 9:15am will be recorded as an unauthorised absence (U).

Persistent lateness can also result in a penalty notice. The school can request that the local authority issues a penalty notice related to lateness when a child has arrived late for 10 or more sessions after the register has been closed. Since September 2024, all Schools must notify KCC of all compulsory aged pupils who are continuously late after the registers have closed for at least 10 school days.

Being late to school and registration can have a considerable impact over the whole school year. The table below shows you just how much time can be missed over a year just by being 5 minutes late to school every day:

5 minutes late every day = 3 days of school lost a year
 10 Minutes late every day = 6.5 days of school lost a year
 15 Minutes late every day = 10 days of school lost a year
 20 minutes late every day = 13 days of school lost a year
 30 minutes late every day = 19 days of school lost a year

If you have any queries or would like to discuss your child's lateness with anyone please do not hesitate to contact me on 01795 470862.

Yours sincerely,

Name
 Attendance Champion

Letter 3

Dear [Parent/Guardian Name],

Further to our attendance meeting on [date] [which you were unable to attend], we are writing to inform you that [child's name] has now reached 10 unauthorised absences in 10 school weeks. As a result we are now issuing you with a notice to improve [child's name]'s attendance. [child's name]'s has had (Number) unauthorised sessions during these dates XXXXXX-XXXXXX. Please see enclosed your child's registration certificate.

Details of Attendance Record:

- [Child's Name] has had (number) unauthorised sessions between xxx and xxx.
- This constitutes an attendance rate of [Z]%, which is significantly below the national average and target of 96%.

Benefits of Regular Attendance and Legal Duty:

Regular school attendance is essential for your child to achieve their full potential. Consistent attendance helps your child:

- Develop essential social skills and friendships.
- Keep up with the curriculum and avoid falling behind.
- Build a positive attitude towards education and learning.

Under section 7 of the Education Act 1996, it is your legal duty as a parent to ensure that your child receives a full-time education suitable to their age, ability, and any special educational needs they may have.

Support Provided So Far:

- [Details of support provided, e.g., meetings with attendance officer, personalised attendance plans, referral to support services, etc.]

Opportunities for Further Support:

We are committed to supporting you and [Child's Name] to improve their attendance. You may access further support such as:

- [Details of additional support available, e.g., counseling services, attendance workshops, etc.]
- Re-engagement with previously provided support that was not fully utilised.

Warning and Improvement Period:

Please be aware that if sufficient improvement in [Child's Name]'s attendance is not secured within the improvement period, we may issue a penalty notice or consider prosecution. The improvement period will last for 20 school days, starting from [Start Date] to [End Date].

Criteria for Sufficient Improvement:

For improvement to be considered sufficient, [Child's Name] must:

- Achieve an attendance rate of at least [X]% during the improvement period.
- Have no more than [Y] unauthorised absences. Please note that any absence will be unauthorised unless medical evidence is provided (e.g. doctors note, proof of medication or an appointment card).

Cost of Penalty Notice:

A penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period if the criteria are not met. The cost of a penalty notice is:

- £80 if paid within 21 days.
- £160 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days.

Penalty Notices are issued to each parent of each child and the amount will be £160 if paid within 28 days, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. If a second penalty notice is issued within a rolling 3 year period, then the charge will be a flat rate of £160 per parent per child if paid within 28 days. In both instances failure to pay the penalty in full at the end of the 28 days period may result in prosecution by the Kent PRU and Attendance Service, which could lead to a fine of up to £1000. In the event of three or more periods of unauthorised absence within a 3 rolling year period, a penalty notice will not be issued. A referral will be made to Kent PRU and Attendance Service Courts Team who will consider the case for prosecution.

We urge you to take this notice seriously and work with us to ensure [Child's Name] attends school regularly. Your cooperation is crucial in helping your child succeed academically and socially.

Should you have any questions or require further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact the school office on 01795 470862.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Yours sincerely,

Attendance Champion

Letter 4

Dear (Name),

RE – Names of Pupil

With reference to the Notice to Improve we issued to you on 26th February 2025, (Childs name) has had (Number) unauthorised sessions during the notice to improve period. As a result of this, a Penalty Notice has been requested.

Please see enclosed attendance certificate, indicating the days (Childs Name) has had unauthorised sessions.

Fixed Penalty notices are issued to each parent for each child and the amount of the penalty will be £160 if paid within 28 days, reduced to £80.00 if paid within 21 days. If a second penalty notice is issued within a rolling 3-year period, then the second penalty notice will be charged at a flat rate of £160 per parent per child if paid within 28 days. In both instances failure to pay the penalty in full at the end of the 28 day period may result in prosecution by the Attendance Service.

In the event of a three or more periods of unauthorised absence within a 3 rolling year period, a penalty notice will not be issued. A referral will be made to Kent PRU and Attendance Service Courts Team who will consider the case for prosecution. In addition, there will not be the opportunity to discharge a third period by way of a penalty.

If you have any queries or would like to discuss your child's lateness with anyone please do not hesitate to contact the school office on 01795 470862.

Yours Sincerely

Mrs Pettett
Headteacher

Appendix 3 – Example Absence Letters

Stage 1 Letter

Dear X,

RE – Names of Pupil

I am writing to express my concern over the number of occasions that (Name) has been absent from school. I attach for your information a summary of attendance indicating the days (name) was absent.

We are very keen to ensure that all children attend school regularly as it is important for your child's friendships and academic progress. In addition, it is proven that good attendance is linked with academic success.

We understand that your child's absence may be for a range of reasons including illness but as their target is below school target, we feel it is important to share it with you.

I am sure you share my concern and would wish to work with the school to improve (name) attendance. If we can help in any way, perhaps via Family Liaison Officer please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely,

Attendance Champion

Stage 2 Letter - Invite

Dear X,

RE – Names of Pupil

As you are aware, all Schools are having a real focus on attendance as this has such a huge impact on children's learning. As a school, we are following the Kent guidelines and also aim to be proactive in supporting families with any attendance issues before the local authority becomes involved.

From the start of the Academic year X has missed X days which is X sessions. This means their attendance percentage is presently only X% which is below the national target of 96%.

Please find enclosed your child's Registration Certificate. Going forward, we will not be approving any absences unless you are able to provide evidence to support the absence. If any absences are due to medical reasons, please ensure you bring relevant doctor's notes and/or appointment details. All Schools must notify KCC of all compulsory aged pupils who are continuously absent for at least 10 school days.

Due to the number of sessions already missed this academic year, your child is classed as a 'persistent absentee' and we would like to work with you to prevent any further absences.

Therefore, it is necessary for us to arrange an attendance meeting with you. This will take place on _____ at _____. This is a supportive meeting which reviews our Attendance Policy and will enable you to honestly discuss any issues or barriers to your child attending school. If this appointment is inconvenient, I would be grateful if you could contact the office so that an alternative time can be arranged.

If you do not attend this meeting and «forename»'s absence continues to deteriorate, a referral may be made to the Local Authority School Liaison Officer for further action and possible prosecution under section 444 Education Act 1996.

We look forward to talking with you and working in partnership to see an improvement.

Yours sincerely,

Attendance Champion

Letter 2 – Follow Up

Dear (name),

RE – (Childs name)

Following on from our Attendance Support Meeting on (date) , we have arranged a review meeting. This will take place on (date and time). This is a supportive meeting which reviews points from our previous meeting and will enable you to honestly discuss any issues or barriers to your child attending school. If this appointment is inconvenient, I would be grateful if you could contact the office so that an alternative time can be arranged.

If you do not attend this meeting (name)'s absence continues to deteriorate, a referral may be made to the Local Authority School Liaison Officer for further action and possible prosecution under section 444 Education Act 1996.

We look forward to talking with you and working in partnership to see an improvement.

Yours Sincerely

Attendance Champion

Stage 3 Letter - Invite

Dear (name),

Further to our attendance meeting on [date] [which you were unable to attend], we are writing to inform you that [child's name] has now reached 10 unauthorised absences in 10 school weeks. As a result we are now issuing you with a notice to improve [child's name]'s attendance. [child's name] has had (Number) unauthorised sessions during these dates XXXXXX-XXXXXX. Please see enclosed your child's registration certificate.

Details of Attendance Record:

- [Child's Name] has been absent for [X] days so far this academic year.
- This constitutes an attendance rate of [Z]%, which is significantly below the national average and target of 96%.

Benefits of Regular Attendance and Legal Duty:

Regular school attendance is essential for your child to achieve their full potential. Consistent attendance helps your child:

- Develop essential social skills and friendships.
- Keep up with the curriculum and avoid falling behind.
- Build a positive attitude towards education and learning.

Under section 7 of the Education Act 1996, it is your legal duty as a parent to ensure that your child receives a full-time education suitable to their age, ability, and any special educational needs they may have.

Support Provided So Far:

- [Details of support provided, e.g., meetings with attendance officer, personalised attendance plans, referral to support services, etc.]

Opportunities for Further Support:

We are committed to supporting you and [Child's Name] to improve their attendance. You may access further support such as:

- [Details of additional support available, e.g., counseling services, attendance workshops, etc.]
- Re-engagement with previously provided support that was not fully utilised.

Warning and Improvement Period:

Please be aware that if sufficient improvement in [Child's Name]'s attendance is not secured within the improvement period, we may issue a penalty notice or consider prosecution. The improvement period will last for 20 school days, starting from [Start Date] to [End Date].

Criteria for Sufficient Improvement:

For improvement to be considered sufficient, [Child's Name] must:

- Achieve an attendance rate of at least [X]% during the improvement period.
- Have no more unauthorised absences during the improvement period. Please note that any absence will be unauthorised unless medical evidence is provided (e.g. doctors note, proof of medication or an appointment card).

Cost of Penalty Notice:

A penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period if the criteria are not met. The cost of a penalty notice is:

- £80 if paid within 21 days.
- £160 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days.

Penalty Notices are issued to each parent of each child and the amount will be £160 if paid within 28 days, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. If a second penalty notice is issued within a rolling 3 year period, then the charge will be a flat rate of £160 per parent per child if paid within 28 days. In both instances failure to pay the penalty in full at the end of the 28 days period may result in prosecution by the Kent PRU and Attendance Service, which could lead to a fine of up to £1000. In the event of three or more periods of unauthorised absence within a 3 rolling year period, a penalty notice will not be issued. A referral will be made to Kent PRU and Attendance Service Courts Team who will consider the case for prosecution.

We urge you to take this notice seriously and work with us to ensure [Child's Name] attends school regularly. Your cooperation is crucial in helping your child succeed academically and socially.

Should you have any questions or require further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact the school office on 01795 470862.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Yours sincerely,

Yours sincerely,

Attendance Champion

Stage 4 Letter

Dear (Name),

RE – Childs name

With reference to the Notice to Improve we issued to you on (date), (Childs Name) has had (Number) unauthorised sessions during the notice to improve period. As a result of this, a Penalty Notice has been requested.

Please see enclosed attendance certificate, indicating the days (Childs Name) was absent.

Fixed Penalty notices are issued to each parent for each child and the amount of the penalty will be £160 if paid within 28 days, reduced to £80.00 if paid within 21 days. If a second penalty notice is issued within a rolling 3-year period, then the second penalty notice will be charged at a flat rate of £160 per parent per child if paid within 28 days. In both instances failure to pay the penalty in full at the end of the 28 day period may result in prosecution by the Attendance Service.

In the event of a three or more periods of unauthorised absence within a 3 rolling year period, a penalty notice will not be issued. A referral will be made to Kent PRU and Attendance Service Courts Team who will consider the case for prosecution. In addition, there will not be the opportunity to discharge a third period by way of a penalty.

If you have any queries or would like to discuss your child's lateness with anyone please do not hesitate to contact the school office on 01795 470862.

Yours Sincerely

Headteacher

Appendix 5 – Withdrawal from Learning Request Response

Dear (Name),

RE: Term Time Leave – Names of Pupil

Thank you for your recent request for an absence in term time for X days from X returning to school on X (Include reason if known).

I am not able to authorise this absence – the absence is not deemed as an exceptional circumstance. I realise that you will be disappointed by my decision, but since September 2013 the Department for Education has amended the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 removing the Head Teacher's ability to authorise leave of absence for a family holiday. Some additional changes came into force in August 2024, which means there is no longer scope to authorise a term-time holiday in any circumstances. Generally, the DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.

As stated above, I am unable to authorise leave retrospectively and we will be notifying the Local Authority of the unauthorised absence and a Penalty Notice may be issued.

Fixed Penalty notices are issued to each parent for each child and the amount of the penalty will be £160 if paid within 28 days, reduced to £80.00 if paid within 21 days. If a second penalty notice is issued within a rolling 3-year period, then the second penalty notice will be charged at a flat rate of £160 per parent per child if paid within 28 days. In both instances failure to pay the penalty in full at the end of the 28 day period may result in prosecution by the Attendance Service.

In the event of a three or more periods of unauthorised absence within a 3 rolling year period, a penalty notice will not be issued. A referral will be made to Kent PRU and Attendance Service Courts Team who will consider the case for prosecution. In addition, there will not be the opportunity to discharge a third period by way of a penalty.

I hope you will understand and support our efforts in sustaining high attendance and attainment at School.

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher

Holiday Request Not Submitted

Dear (Name),

RE: Term Time Leave not applied for in advance , (Name) - (Class)

You failed to apply in advance for permission for «forename» to be absent from school for X days from X returning to school on X.

Since September 2013 the Department for Education has amended the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 removing the Head Teacher's ability to authorise leave of absence for a family holiday. Some additional changes came into force in August 2024, which means there is no longer scope to authorise a term-time holiday in any circumstances. Generally, the DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.

As stated above, I am unable to authorise leave retrospectively and I will be making a request for a Penalty Notice to be issued.

Fixed Penalty notices are issued to each parent for each child and the amount of the penalty will be £160 if paid within 28 days, reduced to £80.00 if paid within 21 days. If a second penalty notice is issued within a rolling 3-year period, then the second penalty notice will be charged at a flat rate of £160 per parent per child if paid within 28 days. In both instances failure to pay the penalty in full at the end of the 28 day period may result in prosecution by the Attendance Service.

In the event of a three or more periods of unauthorised absence within a 3 rolling year period, a penalty notice will not be issued. A referral will be made to Kent PRU and Attendance Service Courts Team who will consider the case for prosecution. In addition, there will not be the opportunity to discharge a third period by way of a penalty.

Our school works in partnership with parents to provide the best education for each child and believes that regular attendance throughout the year is essential to every child's success and fulfilment. We expect you to consult the school before booking holidays or taking leave that means your child will be absent.

If you have any queries or would like to discuss attendance with anyone please do not hesitate to contact the school attendance team on 01795 470862.

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher

Appendix 7: Step by Step Guide to First Day Calling

When no reason for absence has been provided by the parent/ carer, schools should as a minimum follow the below steps.

Pupils deemed at risk	Pupils deemed at high risk should be treated as a priority and a Vulnerable list created: ● Children subject to a child protection plan or with Early Help Keyworker- EHKW ● Looked After Children. ● It is suspected or known that a pupil is at potential risk of harm. ● There is information that a pupil is, or may be, a victim of criminal activity. ● At risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) If these children are absent you must notify the social workers/ key worker via email and paste email to Cpoms/Myconcern.
Day 1 of absence	● Telephone parents/carers if it is not answered leave a message if possible. Complete by 10.30am. ● Send absent text/email to parent/carers ● Record actions on Bromcom
Day 2 of absence	● Telephone parents/carers if it is not answered leave a message if possible. Complete by 10.30am. ● If no response - telephone all contacts on Bromcom, if no answer leave message to return call ● Send absent text/email to parent/carers ● If an international dialling tone is heard, leave a message advising of this and ask for a call back. ▪ This may indicate they are on holiday and have not notified the school. ▪ If you believe this to be the case, send a suspected holiday letter. ▪ Letters should be sent separately to both parents first class. ● Record all actions on Bromcom.
Day 3 of absence	● Telephone parents/carers, if it is not answered leave a message if possible. Complete by 10.30am. ● Telephone all contacts on Bromcom, if no answer leave message asking them to return the call ● Send absent text to parents/carers. ● Complete a welfare visit - if there is no answer leave a calling card/letter and move to the next step. ● Record all actions on Bromcom.
Day 4 of absence	● Telephone parents/carers, if it is not answered leave a message if possible. Complete by 10.30am. ● Telephone all contacts on Bromcom, if no answer leave message to return call. ● Telephone parents/carers, if it is not answered leave a message if possible. Complete by 10.30am. ● Record all actions on Bromcom.
Day 5 of absence	● Telephone parents/carers, if it is not answered leave a message if possible. Complete by 10.30am. ● Telephone all contacts on Bromcom, if no answer leave message to return call. ● Send absent text to parents/carers. ● If you believe this family is not on holiday and are concerned about the child's welfare, request a welfare visit from the police 101. ● Record all actions on Bromcom.

Day 6 – 8 of absence	• Telephone parents/carers, if it is not answered leave a message if possible. Complete by 10.30am. • Telephone all contacts on Bromcom, if no answer leave message to return call • Send absent text to parents/carers. • Either send a further letter or make a further welfare visit. If there is no answer leave calling card/letter and move to next step • Record all actions on Bromcom.
Day 9 - 10 of absence	• Telephone parents/carers, if it is not answered leave a message if possible. Complete by 10.30am. • Telephone all contacts on bromcom, if no answer leave message to return call • If you have not done so already, and you believe the family are not on holiday and are concerned about the child's welfare, request a welfare visit from the police 101. • Send a further concern letter separately to both parents / carers by first class post stating: You are making a referral to the Local Authority as their child is now considered Missing from Education • Contact the Children Missing Education Team local authority to discuss whether it is appropriate to submit a Child Missing Referral and checklist.
Missing Pupil Checklist Day10	Must be completed by the 10th day of absence, when one of the following criteria applies: • A pupil has gone missing, and no contact can be made with parent/carer to establish the reason for absence. • A pupil ceased to attend the school and the forwarding address of the family is not known. • A pupil has not returned from holiday within 10 school days of the expected date of return. • A pupil fails to take up their place at the start of the academic year and the whereabouts of the young person is unknown. <u>Schools must continue investigations, while the Local Authority undertakes their investigations.</u>
Day 11 - 19 of absence	• Telephone parents/carers, if it is not answered leave a message if possible. Complete by 10.30am. • Telephone all contacts on bromcom, if no answer leave message to return the call • Send absent text to parents/carers. • Make another welfare visit during this period and leave a calling card/letter. • Inform parents/carers in writing that their child is at risk of being removed from the roll. • Record all actions on Bromcom.
Day 20 of absence	• Telephone parents/carers, if it is not answered leave a message if possible. Complete by 10.30am. • Telephone all contacts on Bromcom, if no answer leave message to the return call • Send absent text/email to parents/carers. <u>You cannot remove a child from roll until you have received notification from the Local Authority</u> • Record all actions on Bromcom.
Coding:	• These absences must be coded as O for unauthorised absence due to no reason provided from parents/carers.