



Attendance Policy

This Policy has been adopted and approved by Oxlip Learning Partnership and is to be used by all members of the Trust.

History of Document:

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Please note that for the purposes of this policy, the term “pupil” refers to any learner on roll at a Trust school.

Where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult or adults the school decides is most appropriate to work with (see section 4. Definitions).

1. Introduction

At Oxlip Learning Partnership (the Trust), we are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our pupils and recognise this can only be achieved by supporting and promoting excellent school attendance by all. Only by attending school regularly, and punctually, will children and young people be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. High attainment depends on good attendance.

The Trust, and our schools, recognise our responsibilities to ensure pupils are in school and on time, therefore having access to learning for the maximum number of days and hours.

Our policy applies to all pupils registered at schools within our Trust and this policy is made available on our school websites.

Although parents/carers have the legal responsibility for ensuring their child’s good attendance at school, the whole Trust community - pupils, parents/carers, tutors, teachers, support staff, governors and Trustees - work together with other professionals and agencies to ensure that all pupils are encouraged and supported to develop good attendance habits. Procedures in this policy are followed to ensure this happens.

Pupils who are persistently late or absent soon fall behind with their learning. Those who are absent from school frequently develop large gaps in their learning which will impact on their progress and their ability to meet age related learning expectations. A pupil whose attendance drops to 90% each year (equivalent of being absent 1 or more days a fortnight) will, over their time in education, miss more than one full year of learning.

The pupils with the highest attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment.

2. Aims and Objectives

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#), through our Trust-wide culture and ethos that values good attendance.

Our attendance policy sets out to all staff, pupils and parents/carers the actions and expectations necessary to promote good attendance.

Governors and Trustees are fully aware of the policy and expectations on promoting good school attendance.

Through this Policy we aim to:

- Support the safeguarding of all pupils and families ensuring that pupils are in school.
- Promote a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure, and valued, and encourage in pupils a sense of their own responsibility.
- Improve pupil's achievement by ensuring high levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Expect full attendance for all pupils.
- Create an ethos in which good attendance and punctuality are recognised as the norm and seen to be valued by our schools and the communities by raising the awareness of parents, carers and pupils of the importance of uninterrupted attendance and punctuality at every stage of a pupil's education.
- Work in partnership and support with pupils, parents and staff, so that all pupils realise their potential, unhindered by unnecessary absence.
- Establish a pattern of monitoring attendance and ensure consistency in recognising achievement and dealing with difficulties.
- Recognise the key role of all staff, but especially class teachers and our attendance officers, in promoting good attendance.
- Be particularly mindful of pupils absent from school due to mental or physical ill health or their special educational needs and/or disabilities and provide them with additional support.

We maintain and promote good attendance and punctuality through:

- Raising awareness of attendance and punctuality issues among all staff, parents and pupils.
- Ensuring that parents understand the responsibility placed on them for making sure their child attends regularly and punctually.
- Equipping pupils with the life skills needed to take responsibility for good school attendance and punctuality appropriate to the pupil's age and development.
- Maintaining effective means of communication with parents, pupils, staff and governors on school attendance matters.
- Developing and implementing procedures for identifying, reporting and reviewing cases of poor attendance and persistent lateness.
- Supporting pupils who have been experiencing any difficulties at home or at school which are preventing good attendance by identifying barriers to school and developing strategies to overcome these.
- Developing and implementing procedures to follow up non-attendance at school.

3. Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) and [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of the [Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of the [Education Act 2002](#)

- Part 7 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment](#)

It also refers to:

- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

This policy also complies with our Trust's funding agreement and articles of association.

4. Definitions

Parent

- All biological parents, whether they are married or not.
- any person who, although not a biological parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person - this could be an adoptive parent, a step-parent, guardian or other relative.
- any person who, although not a biological parent and does not have parental responsibility, has care of a child or young person.

A person typically has care of a child or young person if they are the person with whom the child lives, either full or part time and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their biological or legal relationship is with the child.

Authorised absence

- An absence is classified as authorised when a pupil has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or carer. For example, unavoidable medical/dental appointments. Ideally, these should be made after school if at all possible.
- Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised. Where the absences are not authorised, the school will inform parents of this.

Unauthorised absence

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a pupil is away from school without the permission of the school. (Unauthorised holiday constitutes an unauthorised absence.)
- Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a pupil is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.
- If the absence is unauthorised the Local Authority will be notified and consideration may be given to a Penalty Notice or legal proceedings for non-attendance. **Parents have a duty to ensure their child's regular attendance at school and failure to do so is an offence under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996. Legal action under Section 444(1) can result in a fine of up to £2,500 and/or up to 3 months imprisonment.**

Further information on authorised and unauthorised absences can be found in section 8.

5. Procedures

Schools within our Trust will undertake the following procedures to support good attendance:

- Record attendance twice daily (and in case of secondary schools in each lesson) and consistently record absence or lateness.
- Communicate clearly the attendance procedures and expectations to all staff, governors, Trustees, parents and pupils.
- Follow up absences and persistent lateness if parents have not communicated with the school.

- Inform parents what constitutes authorised and unauthorised absence.
- Strongly discourage unnecessary absence through holidays taken during term time.
- Work with parents and other agencies to improve individual pupil's attendance and punctuality.
- Refer to the Attendance Officer in school any child whose attendance causes concern and where parents have not responded to school initiatives to improve.
- Report attendance statistics to the Local Authority where required and/or requested.
- Share daily attendance data with DfE, and specific pupil information on request. (Our schools have granted the DfE access to their management information system so the data can be accessed regularly and securely.)
- Inform the Local Authority the name and address of sick pupils who they believe will miss 15 consecutive or cumulative days.
- Inform a pupil's social worker and/or youth offending team worker if there are unexplained absences from school.
- Schools must also inform the Local Authority of every pupil who fails to attend regularly, which is interpreted to mean those pupils who have patterns of unauthorised absence without amassing 10 continuous absences.

6. Responsibilities

All members of our Trust community have a responsibility for identifying trends in attendance and punctuality. The following includes a more specific list of the kinds of responsibilities which individuals might have.

6.1 Parents

Parents are responsible for:

- Ensuring that their child attends school regularly and punctually unless prevented from doing so by illness or attendance at a medical appointment.
- Contacting the school to report their child's absence on the day of the absence, and advise when they are expected to return.
- Informing the school in advance of any medical appointments in school time. For the absence to be recorded as a medical absence we do require evidence from the doctor or dentist (doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence).
- Ensuring that non-urgent medical or dental appointments are made outside of the school day.
- Making requests for leave of absence only in exceptional circumstances.
- Providing the school with more than one emergency contact number for their child.
- Talking to the school Office or Attendance Officer as soon as possible about any pupil's reluctance to come to school so that problems can be quickly identified and dealt with.
- Promoting the link between attendance and attainment/progress.

6.2 Pupils

Pupils are responsible for:

- Aiming for high attendance – being in school every day, on time.
- Attending every timetabled session, on time.
- Attending school appropriately prepared for the day.
- Taking pride in attendance and punctuality.

6.3 School Attendance Officers

The School Attendance Officer is responsible for:

- Overall monitoring of school attendance.
- Identifying trends in authorised and unauthorised absence.
- Contacting families where concerns are raised about absence including arranging meetings to discuss attendance issues.
- Monitoring individual attendance where concerns have been raised.
- Making referrals to other agencies as appropriate.

- Meeting parents in danger of being issued a first warning.
- Liaising with other professionals to determine potential sources of difficulties and reasons for absence.
- Keeping an overview of class and individual attendance, looking particularly for either poor overall attendance, anomalies in patterns of attendance and/or unusual explanations for attendance offered by children and their parents and reporting concerns to the Principal.
- Informing the Principal where there are concerns and acting upon them.
- Providing background information to support referrals.
- Monitoring follow-up once actions have been taken to correct attendance concerns.
- Ensuring attendance issues are raised by teachers at parent consultation evenings where necessary.
- Collating and recording registration and attendance information.
- Taking and recording messages from parents regarding absence.
- Contacting parents of absent children where no reason for absence has been received or for clarification of reason for absence.
- Recording details of pupils who arrive late or go home.
- Sending out standard letters regarding attendance.
- Ensuring that in the event a pupil is required to go home, permission is sought from the Principal or their designate.

The school Attendance Officer has the responsibility for ensuring that all of the attendance data is accurately recorded on the school's management information system. Regular meetings are held with the Trust Safeguarding and Attendance Manager to discuss all attendance concerns and appropriate actions are taken following these meetings, such as letters sent to parents or meetings arranged to discuss attendance concerns.

6.4 Class Teacher/Tutor

Class teachers/tutors are responsible for:

- Welcoming pupils at the beginning of the day and for each lesson.
- Celebrating high attendance rates – both verbally and through the school's reward system.
- Monitoring daily attendance as the child's first point of contact.
- Taking registers accurately and on time.
- Highlighting concerns regarding attendance with parents and or pupils.
- Discussing attendance during parent consultations or at individual parent meetings.
- Raising concerns with the schools Attendance Officer where necessary.

6.5 Senior Leadership Teams

The school Senior Leadership Team are responsible for:

- Monitoring attendance and where concerns are identified, consulting with parents/outside agencies to agree actions to address identified issues.
- Informing governors and Trustees of attendance data through leadership reports.
- Informing parents of their child's attendance in line with the school's reporting procedures.
- Promoting excellent attendance by pupils and providing opportunities to celebrate good attendance.
- Monitoring the attendance of individual cohorts of children and plan appropriate interventions at whole group level to address concerns.

6.6 Principals (or member of senior staff with responsibility for attendance)

The Principal is responsible for:

- Considering requests for absence and meeting with parents to discuss such requests as necessary.
- Making referrals to the Local Authority for the issue of Fixed Penalty Notices as appropriate.
- Monitoring the progress of attendance interventions across key groups to ensure all pupils have the best opportunity for success.
- Address punctuality where appropriate.

6.7 Governance

Local Advisory Boards and the Trust Board are responsible for:

- Attendance data and strategies for attendance support will be shared with the Governors and Trust Board during meetings enabling Governors and Trustees to offer challenge and support.
- A named Locality Committee/Trust Board for attendance will maintain an overview of policies and procedures in relation to attendance.

The Local Advisory Board (governors) is responsible for:

- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources.
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs.
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most.
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge.
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils needs.
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance, including with teachers from across the Trust, as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
 - The importance of good attendance.
 - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues.
 - The Trust's legal requirements for keeping registers.
 - The Trust's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate.
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data.

The Board of Trustees is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all Trust and school leaders, staff, pupils and parents.
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
 - Making sure all schools in the Trust record attendance accurately in the register, and share the required information with the DfE and local authorities.
 - Making sure all schools in the Trust work effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keep them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate.
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the Trust's policies and ethos.
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance.
- Sharing effective practice on attendance management and improvement across the trust and providing regular opportunities for staff from different schools to come together, learn from each other and share resources.
- Holding the Principals to account for the implementation of this policy.
- Identifying and monitoring attendance patterns across the Trust's schools to identify common issues and barriers, and share effective practice between schools.

7. Recording Attendance

7.1 Attendance Register

Each school will keep an electronic attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

Schools will take their attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. Schools will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, whether the pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See Appendix B for the DfE attendance codes.

Schools will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not (for pupils of compulsory school age).
- The nature of the activity, where a pupil is attending an approved educational activity.
- The nature of circumstances, where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

Each school will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

The registration times for each school are listed in Appendix A.

Each class teacher has the responsibility for keeping an accurate record of attendance. Any pupil who is absent must be recorded at the beginning of the morning session. The attendance register must be completed by the class teacher by the time listed in Appendix A.

7.2 Lateness and Punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late. Note this will be no longer than 30 minutes from the start of registration time
- After the register has closed pupils will be marked as being absent. Note this will be no longer than 30 minutes from the start registration time.

Our schools reserve the right, in exceptional circumstances, to assess the reason for late attendance and have the discretion to authorise lateness during the relevant morning or afternoon session. The school also reserves the right to request evidence of medical appointments.

Pupils who are persistently late miss a significant amount of learning, often the most important aspect, as the beginning of the day or lesson is where the teacher explains the learning objectives and what each child is expected to achieve.

Where there have been persistent incidents of lateness the Senior Leader responsible for attendance will meet with the parents to create an action plan to improve punctuality. Should punctuality not improve, the Local Authority may be approached to give consideration for a fixed penalty notice.

Other appropriate interim sanctions may also be considered.

7.3 Unplanned Absence

Parents should contact the school on the first day of their child's unplanned absence and by the time stated for their school in appendix A. When parents notify the school of their child's absence

it is important that they provide full details of the reason for absence. Please avoid using phrases such as “poorly” or “sick”. Absence due to physical or mental illness will be recorded as authorised, unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where the absence is longer than five days, or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor’s note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. The school will not ask for evidence unnecessarily.

All absences are recorded as either authorised or unauthorised. It is important that schools receive accurate information from parents with reasons for their child’s absence. This information is used to determine whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. Principals have the responsibility to determine whether absences are authorised or unauthorised.

Where a school has not received satisfactory reasons for a child’s absence within five days, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised in line with DfE guidance.

7.4 Planned Absence

Pupils who have attended a medical or dental appointment will have the absence recorded as authorised, as long as parents have notified the school in advance of the appointment. Where possible, routine medical or dental appointments should be made outside of the school day and pupils should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

7.5 First Day Contact

Where the school has not received any verbal or written communication from the parent regarding their child’s absence, then the Attendance Officer or a member of the administrative team will telephone home by 10.00am. If no response is received, the school will attempt to get in touch with other emergency contacts held for the child. If we have not heard from any contacts, then a home visit may be conducted.

If no response is received to a home visit, the child is referred to the Local Authority as a possible Child Missing Education. Contact may also be made with Children’s Services and/or the police in line with safeguarding procedures.

7.6 Long-term Illness

When pupils have an illness that means they will be away from school long term, the school will do all it can to send material home, in collaboration with any professionals, so that the pupil can keep up with their schoolwork.

If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will seek external support to see if arrangements can be made for the child to be given some home tuition outside school. Please also refer to the school’s policy on support for pupils with medical conditions.

Where over the course of an academic year, a pupil has repeated periods of illness, the school will ask parents to provide medical evidence for each future period of illness related absence. This evidence could be a doctor’s note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. The school may seek written permission from you for them to make their own enquiries.

8. Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

8.1 Approval for term-time absence

Principals will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the [2024 school attendance regulations](#).

These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad.
- Attending an interview.
- Study leave.
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable.

- Exceptional circumstances.

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday. Leave of absence will not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

The school will consider each application for term-time absence individually, considering the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted at the Principal's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as:

- For Armed Service Personnel (Army, Navy, RAF) whose specific tour and duties prevent them from taking holidays during term time.
- For Emergency Services Personnel (Police, Fire, Ambulance, Coastguard) who were unable to take leave at any other time due to national event or a period of national significance.
- A family need to spend time together during or after a significant period of emotional crisis (which should be supported by at least one external agency).

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 15 school days before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via school websites. The Principal may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Other valid reasons for **authorised absence** include (but are not limited to):

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 7.3 and 7.4 for more detail).
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.
- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision.
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made).

Further reasons the school may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
- Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority
- Attending work experience
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

8.2 Parental Request for Leave of Absence for a Holiday

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. Schools will only be able to authorise leave of absence in exceptional circumstances (please see 8.1).

Parents who are considering taking their child out of school for a holiday during term time, must submit a leave of absence request form. This must be completed by all adults with parental responsibility BEFORE the holiday is booked. Where a holiday is not authorised, consideration will be given to requesting a penalty notice from the Local Authority for this period of absence.

8.3 Sanctions

Our schools will make use of the full range of potential sanctions – including, but not limited to, those listed below – to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

Penalty notices

Our schools (the Principal or someone authorised by them), the Local Authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

If the school issues a penalty notice, it will check with the Local Authority before doing so, and send it a copy of any penalty notice issued.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met.
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil.
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution.
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate.

The national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England is 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period. These sessions do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence. The 10-school week period can span different terms or school years.

Each parent who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence. For example, 3 siblings absent for unauthorised term time leave, would result in each parent receiving three separate fines.

The payment must be made directly to the Local Authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the Local Authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

First Penalty Notice

If issued with a **first** penalty notice, each parent must pay, per child:

- £80 within 21 days, or increasing to
- £160 within 28 days.

Second Penalty Notice (within 3 years of a First Penalty)

If a **second** penalty notice is issued to the same parent(s) in respect of the same pupil(s), the parent must pay, per child:

- £160 if paid within 28 days.

Third Offence and any Further Offences (within 3 years)

A **third** penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead. This will include consideration for prosecution.

Magistrates Court

Cases may be presented to the Magistrates Court. Prosecution can result in a criminal record and a fine up to £2,500. Cases found guilty in Magistrates Court can show on a future DBS certificate due to 'failure to safeguard a child's education'.

Other Penalty Notices

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place

during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day). These penalty notices are not included in the National Framework, are not subject to the same considerations about support being provided, and do not count towards the limit as part of the escalation process.

- In these cases, the parent must pay £60 within 21 days, or £120.

9. Promoting Good Attendance

At Oxlip Learning Partnership, we understand that most pupils will attend regularly and punctually. These pupils must not be forgotten or ignored and it is hoped that by recognising and rewarding them others may be encouraged to try and follow their good example.

The following is a list of possible rewards that are used within our schools:

- School leaders reinforcing the importance of good attendance in assemblies, registration and in lessons.
- Regular praise and communication either verbal or written.
- Certificates for excellent attendance to be issued in achievement assemblies and celebration evenings.
- Small reward recognition for excellent attendance over a term or a year. For example, vouchers, hot-chocolate with the Principal.
- Display boards for top performers in the past month.
- Ladders of attendance for top students.

10. Attendance Monitoring

Data will be collected each term and published at national and Local Authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics.

Our schools will benchmark attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement, and share this with their Local Advisory Boards (governors).

10.1 Analysing and using data to improve attendance

Our schools will:

- Monitor and analyse attendance and absence data (including punctuality) half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level.
- Monitor attendance rates for key vulnerable groups.
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern.
- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and
- Use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence.
- Develop targeted strategies to address historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that the school has identified.
- Provide regular attendance reports to key school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families.
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies.
- Ensure that a recording and reporting system is in place and is maintained.
- Ensure that attendance statistics, strategies and impacts are reported to the Senior Leadership Team, the Local Advisory Board and to the Trust board.

10.2 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the Trust's strategy for improving attendance.

Our schools will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence.
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education.
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
 - Discuss attendance and engagement at school
 - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
 - Explain the help that is available
 - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
 - Review any existing actions or interventions
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant.
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence.
- Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 8.3)

The effectiveness of the policy will be measured by the overall rates of pupil attendance and the numbers of pupils falling into the Persistent Absence category. This data will be shared with governors and Trustees to improve our aspirations for our communities.

11. Monitoring and Reviewing this Policy

This policy will be reviewed as a minimum annually by the Trust Attendance Lead, and as guidance from the Local Authority and/or DfE is updated. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Board of Trustees.

12. Links with other Policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Support for pupils with Medical Conditions (individual school policy)

Appendix A

Attendance Register: Trust-wide Timings and Contact Details

	Pupils must arrive in school on each school day by:	The school day		Unplanned absence - notify the school by:	The register for the first session		The register for the second session will be		Contact details for each school
		starts at:	and ends at:		will be taken at:	and will be kept open until:	taken at:	and will be kept open until:	
Britannia	Gates open at 8.35am	8.50am	3.15pm	8.50am	8.50am	8.55am	EYFS at 12.45pm Y1-2 at 1.05pm Y3-6 at 1.35pm	EYFS at 12.45pm Y1-2 at 1.05pm Y3-6 at 1.35pm	01473 728566 office@britannia.suffolk.sch.uk
Bacton	Gates open at 8.45am	8.50am	3.15pm	8.50am	8.50am	9.00am	1.00pm	1.10pm	01449 781367 admin@bactonschool.org.uk
Cedars Park	Gates open at 8.30am	8.40am	3.10pm	8.40am	8.40am	8.55am	1.00pm	1.10pm	01449 778230 admin@cedarspark.suffolk.sch.uk
Mendlesham	Gates open at 8.45am	8.50am	3.15pm	8.50am	8.50am	9.00am	1.00pm	1.10pm	01449 766224 admin@mendleshamschool.org.uk
Rose Hill	Gates open at 8.40am	8.50am	EYFS/KS1 at 3.15pm KS2 at 3.20pm	8.50am	8.50am	9.00am	EYFS/Y3-4 at 12.30pm KS1 at 12.45pm Y5-6 at 1.15pm	EYFS/Y3-4 at 12.30pm KS1 at 12.45pm Y5-6 at 1.15pm	01473 727552 mail@rosehillprimary.net
Copleston	Gates open at 8.00am	8.25am	3.00pm*	8.30am	8.35am	9.00am	1.00pm	1.05pm	01473 277240 mail@copleston.suffolk.sch.uk
Stowupland	Gates open at 8.35am	8.55am	3.40pm	8.00am	8.55am	9.25am	1.40pm	2.10pm	01449 742428 attendance@stowuplandhighschool.co.uk

*at Copleston, on a Wednesday the school day ends at 2.00pm, unless pupils have signed up for WOW activities.

Please note: Registration is open no longer than 30 minutes after the session begins, or the length of the form time or first lesson in which registration takes place.

Parents should contact the school on the first day of their child's unplanned absence and by the time shown above for their school. When parents notify the school of their child's absence it is important that they provide full details of the reason for absence.

Appendix B

Attendance Codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's [guidance on school attendance](#).

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance

I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

Appendix C

A Guide on Illnesses and School Attendance

Parents should contact the school on the first day of their child's unplanned absence and by 8.45am. When parents notify the school of their child's absence it is important that they provide full details of the reason for absence. Please see the guidance below or visit the online NHS guidance: [is my child too ill for school?](#)

Where the school has not received any communication from the parent regarding their child's absence, then the Attendance Officer or a member of the administrative team will telephone home by 10.00am. If no response is received, the school will attempt to get in touch with other emergency contacts held for the child. If we have not heard from any contacts, then a home visit may be conducted.

Illness	Recommendations
Asthma	Long term illness. No need to be off school. Administer medication and send in. Medication should be in school
Body aches	No need to be off school. Administer medication and send in.
Chickenpox and Shingles	Keep off school for 5 days from start of rash and until the spots have crusted over
Cold sores	No need to be off school
Conjunctivitis	No need to be off school
Diarrhoea and vomiting (infectious) (follow NHS advice)	Should stay away from school until they have not been sick or had diarrhoea for at least 2 days (48 hours).
Vomiting (non-infectious) ie: overexertion, food allergy reaction, diabetes, acid reflux	Return to school the following day
Dizziness	No need to be off school. Administer medication and send in.
Earache/ ear infection	No need to be off school. Administer medication and send in.
Eczema	Long term illness. No need to be off school. Administer medication and send in. Medication should be in school
Flu (influenza)	Children to be sent to school after they have recovered - medical proof of flu to be provided
Glandular fever	No need to be off school
Hand, foot and mouth disease	Not necessary to take days off school
Hay fever	No need to be off school. Administer medication and send in.
Head lice	No need to be off school
Headache/Migraine	No need to be off school. Administer medication and send in.
Impetigo	Keep off until lesions(spots) are crusted over or healed or after 48 hours of antibiotics. Whichever has the shortest recovery period
Measles	Keep off school for 4 days from start of rash

Mumps	Keep off school for five days from start of swollen glands
Period pain/cramps	No need to be off school. Administer medication and send in.
Ringworm	It is not usually necessary to keep off school
Rubella (German measles)	Keep off school for 4 days from start of rash
Scabies	Children can return to school after first treatment
Scarlet fever	Keep off school for 24 hours after starting antibiotic treatment
Slapped cheek / Fifth disease / Parvovirus B19	No need to be off school once rash has developed
Sore Throat	No need to be off school unless your child has a high temperature as well, then stay off school until it goes away.
Sprains	No need to be off school. Administer medication and send in.
Stomach ache	No need to be off school. Administer medication and send in.
Threadworms	No need to be off school
Toothache	No need to be off school. Administer medication and send in. If the pain has lasted for more than 48 hours, please seek dental care
Warts and verrucae	No need to be off school
Whooping cough	Keep off school for two days after starting antibiotic treatment

Further guidance to minor illnesses and school attendance

Raised temperature (fever)

If your child is shivery or feels hot, they may have a raised temperature. This may be due to a variety of reasons. If your child has a raised temperature (over 38°C) they should not be in school, if it's below, please administer medication and send into school. It is important to measure the temperature accurately with a digital thermometer, which you can buy from a supermarket or pharmacy. Please follow the instructions for use carefully. Your child should be able to return to school once they feel and look better.

A rash

could be one of the first signs of many childhood illnesses, such as chickenpox or measles. The rash or 'spots' may cover the entire body or may only appear in one area. If your child has an unexplained rash, please seek medical advice. If the rash has been diagnosed as infectious your child should not attend school.

Colds and coughs

Children can attend school with a mild cold and cough. If your child has asthma, remember they may need their reliever inhaler more often. They should have a spare inhaler and spacer which they can use when they are at school. Occasionally coughs can be persistent and last for weeks. Children with bad or long-lasting coughs need to see their GP. Once treated, or when the cough is improving and the child is feeling better, they need to return to school.

Asthma

Asthma is a long-term condition that affects the lungs, and can cause cough, wheeze, difficulty breathing or asthma attacks which make it hard to breathe. If your child has asthma, you must ensure that you give the school a spare reliever (usually blue) inhaler and a spacer to be used in school for your child, and their up-to-date asthma action plan.

Viral-induced wheeze

Viral-induced wheeze is similar to asthma and a third of children will grow out of viral-induced wheeze by the time they reach Year 1 of primary school. Viral-induced wheeze is triggered by virus infections, and unlike in asthma, children do not have symptoms all year round. If your child has viral-induced wheeze, you must ensure that you give the school a spare reliever (usually blue) inhaler and a spacer to be used in school for your child, and their up-to-date wheeze action plan.

Toothache

If your child has a toothache for longer than two days, it is recommended that they see a dentist.

Ear infections and earache

Ear infections are very common, particularly in children. You don't always need to see a GP for an ear infection as they often get better on their own. Your child may also need pain relief if they are experiencing an earache.

Headache

If the only complaint is a slight headache, your child will not usually need to be kept at home.

Tummy ache

If your child complains of mild tummy ache and has no other symptoms, they should go to school.

Head lice

Head lice and nits are very common in young children. They don't have anything to do with dirty hair and are usually picked up from head-to-head contact. Your child having head lice does not require them to be absent from school.

Vomiting and diarrhoea

If a child has vomiting or has diarrhoea you can usually treat your child at home. The most important thing is to have plenty of fluids to avoid dehydration. Child to be sent into school after last loose motion and will be given a toilet pass for the day.

Appendix D

Exceptional Circumstance Leave Request Notice to Parents / Carers

The law does not grant parents an automatic right to take their child out of school during term time. Any absence from school will disrupt your child's learning. You may consider that a holiday will be educational, but your child will miss out on the teaching that their classmates will receive during your holiday. Attendance is vital to academic success and lost education poses a potential risk of underachievement. This is something we all have a responsibility to avoid.

The Department for Education no longer allows Academy Heads to grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. If you consider that your request for absence is exceptional you will need to complete the form attached to this notification. A response will be sent to you as soon as possible. If leave is not authorised and you still decide to withdraw your child from school, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised absence.

Schools will only consider authorising holiday leave in the following circumstances:

- For Armed Service Personnel (Army, Navy, RAF) whose specific tour and duties prevent them from taking holidays during term time
- For Emergency Services Personnel (Police, Fire, Ambulance, Coastguard) who were unable to take leave at any other time due to national event or a period of national significance
- A family need to spend time together during or after a significant period of emotional crisis (which should be supported by at least one external agency)

“If your child is absent from school without authorisation you will be committing an offence under the Education Act 1996. We may submit a request to Suffolk Council for a Penalty Notice to be issued, in accordance with Sections 444A and 444B of the said Act. Penalty Notices are issued per liable parent, per child and each carry a fine of £80 if paid within 21 days or £160 if paid after this but within 28 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in legal action. Absence not authorised by the school may result in a prosecution in the Magistrates’ Court under Section 444(1) or Section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996, leading to a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a custodial sentence.”

‘Parent’ as set out in Section 576 of the Education Act 1996, defines parent to include: natural parents, whether they are married or not; any person or body who has parental responsibility for a child (as defined by the Children Act 1989) and; any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child. Having care of a child means a person with whom a child lives and who looks after a child, irrespective of what their relationship is with said child.

All requests must be completed on this form; letters will not be accepted. This form should be returned to the School Office at least 15 school days before the start of the absence.

I hope you will support our efforts in raising attendance and attainment at **[name of school]**.

Appendix E

Absence Request Form

The Government has made it clear that parents should not take their children on holiday in term time and **there is no legal right to do so**. Absences during term time will not be sanctioned routinely because the effect of such absences is damaging both for pupils and staff. Even when the requested leave may constitute "exceptional" circumstances, attention will be given to current attendance and previous applications for leave. Please note that staff will not be able to set or mark work for students taking holiday leave.

Parents/carers applying for their child to have leave from school should complete this form and return it to school for authorisation well in advance and no less than 15 school days before the requested date.

Name of pupil:					
Year Group and Form Class:			Date of birth:		
Name of Parent/Carer completing this form:					
Occupation of Parent/Carer:					
Address of Parent/Carer:					
Telephone Number(s):					
First date of absence from school:			Date of return to school:		
If away before the first date of absence, please provide the date:			Total number of school days missed:		
Reason requesting time off during term time: <i>(please have due regard to the attendance policy)</i>					
Please inform us if you have a child in another local school as we will need to contact the school to discuss the absence request. Please note, we will need to share information about your child with the other school.					
Name of child:		Year Group:		School:	
Name of child:		Year Group:		School:	

DfE National Framework for Penalty Notices

A Penalty Notice must be considered by all schools in England of 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period. These sessions do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence. The 10-school week period can span different terms or school years.

First Offence: £160 per parent, per child if paid within 28 days or reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.

Second Offence (within three years): £160 per parent, per child to be paid within 28 days.

Third Offence and Any Further Offences (within three years): The third time an offence is committed a Penalty Notice will not be issued and the case could be presented straight to the Magistrate's Court. Prosecution can result in Criminal records and fines of up to £2,500. Cases found guilty in Magistrates' Court may show on the parent's future DBS certificate due to 'failure to safeguard a child's education'.

I understand that the school may request a Penalty Notice is issued if the absence is unauthorised.

Signature of Parent / Carer:			Date:		
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For school use only:		Pupil Name:			Year Group:		
Current Attendance %:		Comments:			Unauthorised:		
Previous year attendance %:					Authorised:		
Communicated outcome to parent:	Letter / phone call / other		Date:			This request has been authorised for the following dates only:	
Signed by Principal:			Date:			From:	
Penalty Notice requested:			Date:			To:	