



Infiniti School

Attendance Policy

Reviewed by Governing Body – March 2026
Next Review Date – March 2027

1. Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the statutory guidance on [Working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE). We aim to achieve this through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, which includes:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every student has access to the full time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure students have the support in place to attend school We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.
- Ensuring our school is a calm, orderly, safe and supportive environment
- We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

- ❖ This policy is based on the DfE's statutory guidance on [Working together to improve school attendance](#), [Children missing education: statutory guidance for local authorities and schools](#), 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 School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- ❖ [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- ❖ The [Equality Act 2010](#)
- ❖ It also refers to:
- ❖ [School census guidance](#)
- ❖ [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(KCSIE\) 2026](#)
- ❖ [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)
- ❖ [Ofsted's 2026 State-funded Schools Inspection Toolkit](#)

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children safe in education](#)
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3. Roles and responsibilities

The governing board is responsible for:

- Ensuring this policy meets the expectations outlined in the DfE's statutory guidance, and is published and publicised regularly so that it is easily accessible to pupils, parents/carers and staff
- Actively supporting and prioritising attendance improvement, and working together with school leaders to establish a whole school attendance culture
- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents/carers
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations, statutory duties and comply with the law on school attendance, including:
- Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority (LA)
- Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Recognising that improving a pupil's attendance is part of improving the pupil's overall welfare. This can be achieved by prioritising attendance in strategies around attainment, behaviour, bullying, special educational needs (SEN) support, supporting pupils with medical needs or disabilities, safeguarding, wellbeing and support for disadvantaged pupils
- 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, including ensuring the school engages and works effectively with the LA school attendance support team and wider local partners and services
- Making sure high aspirations are maintained for all pupils, but that processes and support are adapted to the individual needs of particular pupils including:
 - · Those with long-term illnesses, or special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND)
 - Pupils with a social worker
 - Pupils who are young carers
 - Pupils from cohorts with historically lower attendance (e.g. those eligible for free school meals)
- Regularly reviewing, discussing and challenging attendance data and trends, and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most

- Repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to ensure they are meeting the needs of pupils as experiences and barriers to attendance evolve
- Regularly reviewing attendance data at governing body meetings including a thorough examination of recent and historic trends at a school level, as well as benchmarking to comparator schools within the local authority area, region and nationwide
- Paying particular attention to attendance of pupil cohorts within the school that have historically had poor attendance or that face entrenched barriers to attendance based on the school's specific context
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance, and providing support and challenge around delivering against those focus areas
- 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
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance, which is evaluated and reviewed regularly
- Making sure training on attendance is included in the school's continued professional development offer for all staff so that, as a minimum, all staff understand:
 - The importance of good attendance and that absence is almost always a symptom of wider circumstances
 - The law and requirements of the school, including on the keeping of registers
 - The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up and improving attendance
 - The processes for working with other partners to provide more intensive support to pupils who need it
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including administrative, pastoral or family support staff and senior leaders. This will also include:
 - The skills needed to interpret and analyse attendance data
 - Any additional training that would be beneficial to support pupils and pupil cohorts overcome commonly seen barriers to attendance
- Making sure, as part of staff induction, that staff are aware of the school's safeguarding response to children who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions and/or prolonged periods
- Make sure that appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place to respond to children absent from education, repeated absence and prolonged absence
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

Our link governor for attendance is Jenny Daly.

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school

- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing penalty notices, where necessary
- Working with the parents/carers of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents/carers through all available channels
- Sharing information from the school register with the local authority, including:
- Notifying the local authority when a pupil's name is added to or deleted from the school admission register outside of standard transition times
- Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who fail to attend school regularly, or who have been marked with an unauthorised absence for a continuous period of 10 school days
- Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who the school believes will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness

3.3 The designated senior leader is responsible for:

Our designated senior leader for attendance is Anna Daly She is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed, including to explain the consequences of persistent and severe absence, and the potential need for legal intervention in the future where engagement in support is proving challenging
- Building close and productive relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader for attendance will participate in regular 'targeting support meetings' with the local authority school attendance support team to review data, discuss and agree multi-agency action plans for persistently and severely absent pupils.

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is the Headteacher, Anna Daly and can be contacted via;

Phone - 01795 886687 or email - headteacher@infinitischool.org

3.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 9)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement.
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers and our FLO Natalie Finlay to tackle persistent absence

The attendance officer is Nadine Dix and can be contacted via; Phone – 01795 886687 or Email – office@infinitischool.org

3.5 Attendance is collected at the beginning of the school day by our school attendance officer Nadine Dix.

Nadine is responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information on Arbor by 9.00am and again in the afternoon by 1pm.

3.6 School Office staff

The School office staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day to day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents/carers and pupils to the pastoral office where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

3.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9.00am on the day of the absence (and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Parents should notify their child's school transport provider to cancel their cab before pick up time
- Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the ISC pastoral team
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting Bill Jones our pastoral lead or Natalie Finlay our family liaison officer, who can be contacted via 01795 886887.

3.8 Students

Students are expected to:

- Be ready for your allocated pick up time for your home to school transport
- Attend every timetabled session on time

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an electronic attendance register, and place all students onto this register. We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every student is:

- Present at school
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent – leave of absence
- Absent – other authorised reasons
- Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause
- Absent – unauthorised absence

The attendance register is a record of the pupil's presence at the time it was taken. It will only routinely be amended if the reason for absence isn't known at the time it is taken, and it is subsequently necessary to correct the entry. 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 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a student is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a student is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Students must arrive in school by 8.45am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.50am and will be kept open until 9am.

The register for the second session will be taken at 1pm and will be kept open until 1.15pm.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The student's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office staff (see also section 7).

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

Where the absence is longer than 5 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. 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 of this in advance.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the student's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

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

The student's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A student who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as present, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- Nadine will contact the taxi company if students are late

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

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

- Call the student's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the student's emergency contacts, the school may visit the family home where possible.
- 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
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer
- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the pupil's social worker and/or youth offending team officer
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with: issue a notice to improve, and engage the student with an attendance contract
- Repeated or prolonged unexplained absences will be treated as a potential safeguarding issue and reported to our DSL and FLO Natalie Finlay. She will then visit the family home to discuss

The school recognises that children missing education are at significant risk of underachievement, abuse, neglect, child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE) and other safeguarding concerns. The school will:

- Take all reasonable steps to identify pupils at risk of becoming children missing education
- Investigate unexplained absence
- Undertake appropriate welfare enquiries
- Work with the local authority and other agencies
- Comply with statutory pupil registration requirements
- Ensure that no pupil is removed from the school roll unless the lawful grounds for deletion are met and all required notifications have been made
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4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

Infiniti school will regularly inform parents/carers about their child's attendance and absence levels via a termly report.

4.7 Children missing from education

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 (e.g., elective home education). LAs have a duty under section 436A of the Education Act 1996 to make arrangements to establish the identities of children in the circumstances outlined above.

A pupil would not be classified as CME if they were a persistent or severe absentee in general unless there is continuous absence and indication or confirmation they have not returned or will not return to the area. For safeguarding purposes, schools are advised to

notify KCC of any non-compulsory aged child who may be CME so there is a record and KCC can follow up when they reach compulsory age. Updated CME guidance was published by the DfE in August 2024. Schools have a legal duty to inform KCC of a child missing education and can do this through the Notify of a Potential child missing education form located on the [Digital Front Door](#).

Schools should complete this form as soon as they become aware of one of the two scenarios below and have completed their own reasonable enquiries: In cases where schools intend to delete a pupil's name under any of the three grounds shown below, a CME referral should be made first.

If a school has a forwarding address for a pupil then a CME referral is not required and the deletion from admission register form can be completed automatically.

Ground 1(g) within Regulation 9 of The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. The pupil no longer normally lives a reasonable distance* from the school and: ✓ The school does not have reasonable grounds to believe the pupil will attend the school again, and the pupil is not a boarder at the school. * The DfE does not define reasonable distance because each case depends on the family situation and the geography of the area for example, the parent's ability to get the child to the school, a safe walking route or the accessibility of local transportation. Pupils should not be deleted under this ground in cases where they are generally not attending school, either for authorised or unauthorised reasons. Schools are advised to contact their link KPAS Officer first for advice as other measures may be suitable such as a penalty notice or statutory attendance intervention.

Ground 1(h) within Regulation 9 of The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. The pupil has been granted a leave of absence and: ✓ The pupil has not attended school within the ten school days immediately after the end of the period that the leave was granted for.

✓ The school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or an unavoidable cause, and

✓ The school and the local authority have jointly made reasonable efforts to find out the pupil's location and circumstances, but: They have not succeeded, or; They have succeeded but they agree that there are no reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will attend the school again, taking into account any reasonable steps that could be taken (either jointly or separately) to secure the pupil's attendance. Ground 1(i) within Regulation 9 of The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

The pupil has been continuously absent from school for a period of 20 school days or more and:

✓ At no point during that period did any of the circumstances in regulation 10(3) Table 2 or 10(4) Table 3 other than the ones for codes G, N, or O apply.

✓ The school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or an unavoidable cause, and

✓ The school and the local authority have jointly made reasonable efforts to find out the pupil's location and circumstances, but: o They have not succeeded, or; o They have succeeded but they agree that there are no reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will

attend the school again, taking into account any reasonable steps they could take (either jointly or separately) to secure the pupil's attendance.

Reasonable enquiries entail contact with parents, reaching out to any emergency contacts, liaising with other schools where there are siblings (where applicable) and contacting any agencies to whom the family may be known. For safeguarding reasons, schools should conduct a home visit where there is no forwarding address and if there is uncertainty surrounding the family relocating. Each case should be judged on its own merits and professional curiosity should always be applied. Schools should submit a CME referral as soon as enquiries have been completed, and within 10 school days of the last time the child attended school. Schools do not have to wait until 10th day of absence if the necessary information is available or investigations are already complete (whether the whereabouts of the pupil is known or not).

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a student during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the student is authorised to be absent for.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for authorised absence include:

- Illness (including mental illness) and medical/dental appointments
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the student's parents/carers belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents'/carers' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller students 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 student is attending educational provision
- Other possible 'exceptional circumstances' where the head teacher may grant term-time holiday
- Study leave

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

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments

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)
- The school considers 'a day exclusively set apart for religious observance' to be a day when the pupil's parents would be expected by the religious body to which they belong to stay away from their employment
- If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart for religious observance. Pupils should attend school on the days surrounding those set apart for religious observance
- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – a pupil is a mobile child if their parent is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with them. In these circumstances, a pupil will be considered as a mobile child, provided they are of compulsory school age and have no fixed abode and whose parent is in a trade or business that requires them to travel from place to place
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

5.2 Legal sanctions

The local authority can fine parents/carers for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent/carers must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the school.

Penalty notices can be issued by a local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded student is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

5.3 Absences from the school site (which are not classified as absences)

The headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings. These are not classified as absences.

Reasons 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, because the school premises are closed
- Where the pupil is in criminal justice detention, because of public health guidance or law, or because of any other unavoidable cause

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

Good attendance is recognised and celebrated in the form of personalised recognition including certificates, awards and reward trips 3 times in the year. Pupils who have not met the attendance and engagement criteria for a reward trip are expected to attend school as normal on that day, as it remains a regular school day for them.

We have a whole school assembly each Friday, students are rewarded with certificates and a goody bag for 100% attendance and engagement.

7. Supporting pupils with poor attendance

The school will always work with other local partners to understand the barriers to attendance and provide support. Where that is not successful, or the support is not engaged with, our school will make use of the full range of support and 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.

The school will make use of the full range of legal interventions rather than relying solely on penalty notices or prosecution. The school will decide whether to use each legal intervention after considering the individual family circumstances.

School attendance/absence is recorded and monitored daily with discussions held with the pastoral team immediately when a student is absent.

Ongoing analysis of attendance is completed termly with actions taken as a result of analysis and further discussions by SLT, pastoral lead or class staff. The attendance is also shared with KCC attendance team.

Considerations are made to accommodate flexibility into this attendance policy in relation to student diagnosis and previous education experiences (linked to high levels of school based anxiety / EBSA).

7.1 Attendance contract

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual student level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Student level absence 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. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

We use attendance contracts as a form of attendance support.

An attendance contract is a formal written agreement between a parent and the school to address irregular attendance at school. An attendance contract is not legally binding, but it provides a more formal route to secure engagement with support where a voluntary early help plan has not worked or is not deemed appropriate.

Parents cannot be compelled to enter an attendance contract, and the school cannot agree an attendance contract in a parent's absence.

Where an attendance contract would be an appropriate form of support, the school will arrange a meeting with the parent / carer and pupil to explain the purpose of an attendance contract and why using one would be beneficial in the family's circumstances. The parent will be asked to outline their views on the pupil's attendance, any underlying issues and how they believe these should be addressed. The meeting will allow them to share their views on the idea of an attendance contract and what type of support they think would be helpful.

Where a parent fails to attend the meeting without good reason or notification, further attempts will be made to contact them and arrange another meeting.

Where parents fail to comply with an agreed attendance contract, the school may seek an alternative course of action. In the first instance, this will include discussions with the parent(s) to seek explanations and determine whether the attendance contract remains useful.

If a parent cannot comply with the attendance contract through no fault of their own, a meeting will be arranged with them to review and adjust it. If the parent fails to engage without a valid reason, the school will issue a warning that the contract may be terminated and alternative action taken.

If there are further instances of non-compliance, the school will arrange a meeting with the parent to review the attendance contract and discuss how it can be made to work. Following this meeting, the school will decide whether the non-compliance is undermining the contract to the extent that it is no longer useful, in which case an alternative course of action will be decided upon.

The school will keep a record of its decision-making and any non-compliance by the parent and or child in respect of the attendance contract.

7.2 Analysing and using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify students or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these students and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

7.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a student misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a student misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence.
- Inform parents/carers of concerns regarding attendance initially via email/phonecall
- Hold regular meetings with the parents/carers of students who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance

8. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

If the school becomes aware of barriers that relate to the pupil's needs, we will inform the local authority.

Where a parent expresses an intention to educate a child at home, the school will meet with the parent and any relevant professionals before a final decision is made to ensure that the best interests of the child have been considered.

8.2 Pupils absent due to mental or physical ill health

The school recognises that worries about friendships, schoolwork, or examinations can cause attendance anxiety. However, regular attendance remains mandatory. Staff will communicate to parents that pupils are still expected to attend school regularly. Staff will work with families to mitigate anxious feelings in school as much as possible and remove barriers to attendance.

The school maintains high expectations for all pupils. For those facing complex barriers, including pupils with SEND or long-term health conditions, appropriate additional support will be provided to secure regular attendance.

In cases of both long term physical or mental ill health, the school will:

- Facilitate any relevant pastoral support with the clear aim of improving attendance as much as possible while supporting the underlying health issue
- Consider adjustments to practice and policies to help meet the needs of pupils who are struggling to attend school, as well as making reasonable adjustments where a pupil has a disability
- Consider whether a time-limited phased return to school would be appropriate
- Make a sickness return to the local authority if a pupil is recorded in the attendance register as absent using code I (unable to attend because of sickness) and there are reasonable grounds to believe the pupil will have to miss 15 consecutive school days or more for illness, or the pupil's total number of school days missed during the current school year because of illness (whether consecutive or cumulative) will reach or exceed 15 school days

All of our students have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND with EHCPs), our aim is to :

- Work in partnership with the parents to develop specific support approaches for attendance including, where applicable, ensuring the provision outlined in the pupil's education, health and care (EHC) plan is accessed
- Work in partnership with families to help support routines where school transport is regularly being missed and work with other partners to encourage the scheduling of additional support interventions or medical appointments outside of the main school day
- Establish strategies for removing the in school barriers these pupils face, including considering support or reasonable adjustments for uniform, transport, routines, access to support in school and lunchtime arrangements
- Consider adjustments to practice and policies to help meet the needs of pupils who are struggling to attend school, as well as making formal reasonable adjustments where a pupil has a disability
- Ensure joined up pastoral care is in place where needed and consider whether a time-limited phased return to school would be appropriate

In some cases, the school will not be able to fully support a pupil without the assistance of a range of other agencies. The school will:

- Make use of school nursing services and mental health support teams where they are available
- Consider whether additional support from other external partners (including the local authority, children and young people's mental health services, GPs or other health services) would be appropriate and make referrals
- Where external support is provided, work together with those services to deliver any subsequent support

If a pupil has an education health and care (EHCP) plan, the school will:

- Communicate with the local authority if a pupil's attendance falls or they become aware of barriers to attendance that relate to a pupil's needs

- Where possible, agree adjustments to its policies and practices that are consistent with the special educational provision set out in the education health and care (EHC) plan in collaboration with the parents
- Where needed, work with the local authority to review and amend the education health and care (EHC) plan to incorporate the additional or different attendance support identified

Parents should consult the NHS guidance [Is my child too ill for school?](#) when deciding whether to keep their child home due to illness. We will share this guidance with parents, and provide support in understanding it, in order to promote school attendance wherever appropriate.

8.3 Pupils absent due to other barriers to attendance

- Having EBSA
- Being disadvantaged
- Being known (or previously known) to local authority children's social care
- Having other barriers to attendance (e.g. young carers)
- Travel issues with cans

Part of Ofsted's criteria for 'expected standard' for attendance and behaviour says that any reasonable adjustments and/or interventions should be timely and appropriate, well-chosen and targeted.

Where a pupil has an education health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, the school will inform the local authority.

8.4 Pupils returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence

As a Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) school, we recognise that returning to education after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence can be challenging for pupils and their families. We understand that every pupil has individual needs, experiences and barriers to engagement, and we are committed to providing a supportive, nurturing and flexible approach to reintegration.

Our pastoral team has vast experience of working with hard to reach pupils, including those who may have experienced significant challenges with attendance, emotional regulation, anxiety, relationships or engagement with education. We understand the importance of building trust, establishing positive relationships and helping pupils feel safe.

We believe that positive relationships with families are essential to successful reintegration. We will maintain open, regular and supportive communication with parents and carers, recognising the important role they play in helping their child return to education.

In cases of prolonged absence, or when a child is absent without notification, we will contact the child's parents and alternative emergency contacts. Our family liaison officer (FLO) will visit the family address with prior notice.

Where necessary, we will develop an individualised reintegration timetable tailored to the emotional needs of the child and readiness to return. This may include:

- A phased return to school, with attendance and expectations gradually increased where appropriate
- A carefully planned transition, including visits to school or meetings with key staff before the return
- A designated member of the pastoral team to act as a consistent point of contact
- Adjustments to the timetable, learning environment or daily routines where appropriate
- Clear, achievable short term targets to build confidence, attendance and engagement.

Plans will be reviewed regularly with the pupil, family and relevant staff to ensure that support remains appropriate and progress is recognised.

When deciding whether a child's absence should be considered prolonged, we will consider the:

- Patterns and trends in the child's absences and their personal circumstances
- Vulnerability of the child and their parents, as well as the circumstances of their home life
- Health conditions

We will also implement our safeguarding procedures (see our child protection/safeguarding policy and refer any concerns to local authority children's social care and/or request a police welfare check.

9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Attendance Codes

The DfE are introducing new attendance codes as of the 19th August 2024. This article will explain the changes that have been made and a list of the now active attendance codes and what they mean.

The DfE advises schools to refer to: [Working Together improve school attendance](#). Please seek advice from your Local Authority, or the DfE, regarding attendance codes if required.

Attendance codes

Register Code	Description
/	Present AM
\	Present PM
L	Late (before registers closed) marked as present
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
C	Authorised absence as pupil is absent due to other authorised circumstances
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
E	Authorised absence as pupil is excluded, with no alternative provision made

I	Illness (NOT appointments)
M	Authorised absence due to medical/dental appointments
R	Authorised absence due to religious observance
S	Authorised absence due to study leave
T	Authorised absence due to traveller absence
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
B	Approved education activity as pupil being educated off site (NOT dual registration)
P	Approved educational activity as pupil is attending an approved sporting activity
V	Approved education activity as pupil is away on an educational visit or trip
W	Approved educational activity as pupil is attending work experience
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
G	Unauthorised absence as pupil is on a family holiday, NOT agreed, or is taking days in excess of an agreed family holiday
N	Unauthorised absence as pupil missed sessions for a reason that has not yet been provided

O	Unauthorised absence as pupil missed sessions for an unauthorised absence not covered by any other code/description
U	Unauthorised absence as pupil arrived after registers closed
D	Dual registered (at another establishment - NOT counted in possible attendance
X	Not required to be in school - for non-compulsory school age children
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances - not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll - not counted in possible attendances
#	Planned whole or partial school closure - NOT counted in possible attendances
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed

Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause

Codes requiring a mandatory note

Codes B, K and Y7 are required to have a note against the attendance code.

Archived codes

H - Authorised absence due to agreed family holiday

J - Approved educational activity as pupil is attending an interview

Y - Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances - not counted in possible attendances