



Highlands

School & Sixth Form

**Dare to
flourish**

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

APPROVED

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Section 1: Rationale and aims

Our goal is to provide a world-class educational experience for our students and be held as an example of best practice to other schools in all that we do. For our students to have complete access to such education and to reach their full educational potential, a high level of school attendance is essential.

Highlands school adopts a whole school approach to attendance which views attendance as everyone's responsibility and promotes the benefits of high attendance across all communications.

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence; including persistent absence.
- Ensuring every student has access to full-time education to which they are entitled.
- Acting early to address patterns of absence.

Regular school attendance is important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and absence below 95%.
- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically.
- Regular attenders manage school routines, schoolwork and friendships with more ease and success.
- Regular attenders are more successful in transferring between primary school, secondary school, and higher education, employment or training.

We will also support parents and carers to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

1.1. Summary

- Attendance is a legal requirement and parents, students and members of staff work together to monitor, report and intervene with attendance.
- Absence is notified on the school telephone absence line 020 8370 1191.
- Failure to report your child absent is a safeguarding concern.
- It is the responsibility of parents/carers to provide the school with evidence for unavoidable medical appointments during school time and absences related to sickness.
- The school will classify each period of absence as authorised or unauthorised.
- The school will investigate unexplained absence, poor attendance or concerning patterns in a student's absence, working jointly with outside agencies as necessary.
- A student with attendance below 90% is considered a 'persistent absentee' and may be referred to the education welfare officer (EWO).
- A student with attendance below 50% is considered 'severely absent' and the local authority will be notified of this.
- The school and local authority will use the full range of legal measures to secure good attendance.
- Requests for absences in term time, not related to a medical appointment, are only authorised in exceptional circumstances and requests must be made in advance using our 'leave request form'.
- Poor punctuality is considered an attendance concern and subject to the same interventions.

Section 2: Legislation and guidance

This policy is effective from 1st September 2026 and meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on *Working Together to Improve School Attendance 2026*. This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's safeguarding policy, *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026* and the DfE's latest guidance on attendance:

- School attendance parental responsibilities measures
- School attendance guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities.

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

This policy will be published on the school website and sent to parents and carers on admission and at the start of each academic year, and when revised. We will provide paper copies on request.

Section 3: Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 The governing body

The governing body is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a half-termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

The governing body will receive half-termly attendance reports, including benchmarking, cohort analysis and interventions.

3.2 The designated senior leader/ senior attendance champion responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader (also known as the 'senior attendance champion') leads on strategy, data analysis, targeted interventions and partnership working. They are the names point of contact for attendance with the local authority and the governing body and report half-termly to governors on attendance trends and actions.

Key responsibilities include:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring the school's attendance strategy
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis and data related to, but not limited to, key groups, children with a social worker and young carers.
- 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 students, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed

- Building strong and productive relationships with families and the local authority to address attendance issues and work collaboratively to remove barriers
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with students and their parents /carers.
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to students and families.
- Ensuring all attendance systems are followed by staff.
- Ensure all safeguarding procedures are followed where concerns related to attendance arise.
- Ensure a collaborative, multi-agency approach is in place for all complex cases.
- Where absence gives rise to safeguarding concerns, the DSL will act immediately in accordance with *KCSIE 2026* and *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026*, including making a referral to children's social care where required. Attendance triggers will be treated as potential child protection/welfare concerns where appropriate.
- Lead on any cases where a reduced/part-time timetable is to be considered, or where a student is educated off site either through remote education or alternative provision.

The designated senior leader/attendance champion is Anna Toouli, and can be contacted at tooulia@highlearn.uk. Anna Toouli is also the school's designated safeguarding lead (DSL).

3.3 The Attendance officer

- Monitors attendance data at whole school and individual student level.
- Reports concerns about attendance to the senior attendance lead and headteacher.
- Agree actions in response to absences identified and in accordance with the school's attendance tracking system (see appendix 2).
- Oversee and manage the school attendance tracker.
- Work with the education welfare officer to tackle persistent absence.
- Inform the safeguarding team of any concerning absences.
- Complete all relevant documentation in line with the local authority procedures for the issuing of fixed-penalty notices
- With the support of the pastoral team, coordinate meetings between the school, parents and support agencies.
- Meet regularly with heads of year and the EWO to discuss attendance cases.
- Monitor the accurate and prompt completion of registers.
- Follow all safeguarding procedures where safeguarding concerns arise in relation to attendance.
- Liaise with the local authority any children missing in education, data sharing practice and local authority interventions.
- Monitor and record the daily attendance of any students educated off site.

3.4 Head of year

- Meet with the attendance officer weekly to analyse attendance using the attendance tracker. Actions will be agreed in response to absences identified and in accordance with the school's attendance tracking system.

- Promote the importance of excellent attendance with students and families within their allocated year group.
- Monitor attendance for their year group identifying concerns and patterns, and working to address these with their SLT line manager and the attendance officer.
- Ensure that all truancy is followed up and sanctioned in line with the school behaviour policy.
- Meet with parents to address attendance concerns according to agreed trigger levels (see appendix 2).
- Liaise with external agencies where support is required for students with known attendance concerns.
- Follow all safeguarding procedures where safeguarding concerns arise in relation to attendance.

3.5 Form tutors

- Ensure that all students are registered accurately, and registers are taken promptly in line with our published registration time.
- Liaise with the head of year on matters of attendance and punctuality, including any signs of suspected truancy.
- Work with the head of year to deliver agreed support and action plans to improve attendance and punctuality.
- Promote excellent levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Follow all safeguarding procedures where safeguarding concerns arise in relation to attendance.

3.6 Classroom staff

- Ensure that all students are registered accurately and within 10 minutes of a lesson starting.
- Log attendance codes accurately including logging punctuality during lessons, and updates the register as and when needed if a student arrives late to a lesson.
- Log any lateness to lessons on bromcom using the relevant C code, as per our behaviour policy.
- Use the 'alert' function to notify the office of any students who have not arrived to lesson, but have been marked in previously during the school day.
- Report suspected truancy to the attendance officer and head of year.
- Communicate any concerns or underlying problems that may account for a student's absence.
- Support students with absence to engage with their learning once they are back in school.
- Promote excellent levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Follow all safeguarding procedures where safeguarding concerns arise in relation to attendance.

3.7 Staff training

All staff will receive annual safeguarding training reflecting the most recent version of *Keeping Children Safe in Education*. Alongside this, staff will also receive regular training in relation to factors that may impact attendance, including mental health, SEND and EBSNA.

Staff with attendance responsibilities (attendance officer, executive safeguarding team, pastoral teams, admissions coordinator, EWO, and any other relevant staff) will receive targeted training on the DFE's 'working together to improve school attendance' toolkit.

All staff must read part one of *KCSIE 2026* in full and confirm in writing that they have done so on appointment and annually thereafter. The DSL and HR lead will record completion on the single central record.

3.8 Students

- Attend school every day unless they are genuinely too ill to attend school or have an authorised absence that has been authorised by the school in advance.
- Arrive to school on time and attend registration and lessons punctually. All students are expected on site between 8:20-8.30am and a student is considered late if they arrive at the main gate after 8.30am.
- Take responsibility for registering at the reception desk if they are late or are leaving the school site during school hours.
- Attend all lessons punctually.
- Students will be issued with a C3 30-minute detention if they arrive late for school. Late detentions are set on the same day as the punctuality infringement.

3.9 Parents and carers

Regular attendance at school is a parent/carer's legal responsibility (Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act) and permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the school creates an offence in law.

Parents/carers will:

- Ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually.
- Inform the school on the first day of absence, sharing a reason for absence.
- Inform the attendance officer of any planned or known absences and seek permission for any such absences.
- Provide the school with evidence for unavoidable medical appointments during school time and absences related to sickness where an extended period of absence is required.
- Support the school in aiming for 100% attendance each year for their child.
- Make sure that any absence is clearly accounted for by telephone or email on the first and subsequent days of absence.
- Avoid taking their child out of school for non-urgent appointments.
- Only request a leave of absence if it is for an exceptional circumstance.
- Not book holidays or trips/visits during term time. If this is unavoidable, parents/carers must complete the Highlands school leave request form.
- Work collaboratively with the school to ensure excellent levels of attendance for their child.
- Inform the school as early as possible of any factors that may affect their child's attendance.
- Engage in positive communication with the school through telephone calls, emails and meetings to ensure effective working relationships centred on working together to support attendance and prevent absences.

Section 4: Attendance procedures

4.1 Attendance register

By law, all schools (except those where all students are borders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all students must be placed on this register. Registers will be taken at the same published time (8:40am) for all students each day. Registers close at 9:10am. Any arrival after register close will be coded as absent for the session, in line with statutory guidance.

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and again during the second session. It will mark whether every student is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent (authorised or unauthorised dependent on the reason given for absence)
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

Students are expected to be on school site by 8:30am at the latest, and expected to be present for registration at 8:40am. If a student arrives after 8:30am they will be marked as late. Any student arriving after the gates have closed must sign in at reception.

4.2 Expected communication in the event of absence

If a student is absent, parents/carers must contact the school as soon as possible.

- By phone 020 8370 1191
- By email postbox@highlearn.uk

If the absence is known in advance, (e.g. a medical appointment), parents/carers should notify the school at least one day before the absence. If the absence is expected to last longer than one day parents/carers should notify the school on each day of the absence. If a doctor has recommended a fixed number of days' absence, then parents/carers should notify us of this in writing, with supporting evidence. In this case it would not be required to call on each day of absence. Absence for a period of longer than two days for medical reasons, or where absences for medical reasons persist within a short time frame, medical evidence may be requested.

If a student is absent and we have not received the appropriate notification from a parent/carer we will send a text message or telephone during the morning of the absence. Any student absent without appropriate notification from a parent or carer will be considered a safeguarding concern.

4.3 Unplanned absence

Parents/carers must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence - for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health - by 8:30am or as soon as practically possible.

Parents/carers can let the school know by telephone or email. The school should be informed again if the absence continues on each day of absence.

The school will review each case of absence and the reasons given to determine whether the absence is to be coded as authorised or unauthorised. Absences related to low level/minor illness will not be authorised. This includes, but is not limited to, a cold or cough, headaches, period pains or tummy aches. [NHS guidance](#) has been issued to help understand whether to send a child to school or not if they are unwell.

The school may request medical evidence where absence is frequent, patterns are suspicious or suggest parental misuse, or for prolonged absence. Medical evidence may also be requested for absences beyond two days, or for recurring short-term absence; the school will always consider equality/reasonable adjustment implications before requesting evidence. Medical evidence such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence can be provided. We will not ask for evidence unnecessarily.

If the school has valid reasons to doubt the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this when a decision is made. This will be visible on the 'my child at school' portal.

Where evidence is provided after the fact, attendance records will be updated to reflect this change.

4.4 Medical or dental appointments

We encourage parents/carers to arrange medical/dental appointments outside of school hours. However, if a student is required to attend a medical appointment during the school day, they should be out of school for the minimum amount of time possible, and should not take a whole day's absence to attend an appointment. To report an absence due to a medical or dental appointment please contact the school office. Advanced notice and evidence of an appointment is required for authorising absences in these circumstances. Failure to provide evidence of an appointment will result in the absence being coded as 'unauthorised'.

4.5 Lateness and punctuality

Students are expected to be punctual to morning and afternoon school sessions as well as their lessons. The start of school/lessons is used to give out instructions, communicate important messages and/or organise work. Punctuality is not only an important life skill that students will need in the world of work and further education but it is also imperative to your student's learning and the smooth running of the school.

The school register opens at 8.40am, when students are expected to be present, and closes at 9:10am. If a student arrives after the close of the register, they are given an attendance mark for health and safety reasons, but are regarded in law as being absent.

Parents/carers of students who have patterns of lateness will be contacted to discuss the importance of good time keeping and how this might be achieved. If lateness persists parents or carers are invited to attend the school to discuss concerns and review any support that might be needed to prevent further punctuality issues.

4.6 Response to absence: Our attendance system

The school will follow up any absences to:

- Ascertain the reason for absence.
- Ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not.
- Identify the correct attendance code to use.

Where no contact is received from parents/carers, Highlands school will try to make contact with parents via text message, phone calls, emails, or, where necessary, by conducting home visits. A lack of contact and communication from parents/carers regarding absences is considered a safeguarding concern and may result in a local authority referral.

4.6.1 First day absence

Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence, for example if a student is unable to attend due to ill health by 8:30am or as soon as practically possible. If a student is absent we will telephone or text the parent/carer on the first day of absence if we have not heard from them. This is because we have a duty to ensure the safety and regular attendance of all students.

If absences persist, we will invite parents/carers to meet with the relevant staff member to discuss the situation and we will refer our concerns to the Education Welfare Officer as appropriate.

4.6.2. Third day absence

If a student is not seen and contact has not been established with any of the named parents/carers, after three consecutive days of absence the school will make all reasonable enquiries to establish contact with parents/carers and the student. Designated members of staff may make a home visit to establish the whereabouts of the student.

Home visits are undertaken only after dynamic risk assessment; staff will follow the home visits procedures outlined in our safeguarding policy. At least two members of staff will visit where possible and will carry school ID with them. The DSL is notified of all home visits and outcomes recorded on our internal monitoring system.

4.6.3. Tenth day of absence

We have a legal duty to report the absence of any student who is absent without an explanation for ten consecutive days. If the student is not seen and contact has not been established with the named parent/carer then the local authority is notified that the student is at risk of being missing. The school will also complete a child protection referral to the Enfield (or appropriate local authority) multi-agency safeguarding hub in line with statutory requirements.

4.6.4. Continued or ongoing absence

If a student misses 10% or more schooling across the school year, for whatever reason, they are defined as **persistently absent (PA)**. Absence for whatever reason disadvantages a student by creating gaps in their learning. Research shows these gaps affect attainment when attendance falls below 95%. As such, we monitor all absences thoroughly and all attendance data is shared with the local authority and the Department for Education. Where a student is defined as persistently absent, there are a number of actions the school may take. This includes attendance review meetings with parents/carers and the student and possible referral to the EWO. In some circumstances, referrals may be made to early help or children's social care, if deemed necessary. The school will always work with parents/carers and offer a range of support strategies to reduce a student's absence and encourage improved attendance. We aim to work in partnership with a student's best interests as the priority.

A student with attendance below 50% is classed as 'severely absent'. This level of absence is a significant concern and must be reported to the local authority, with a multi-disciplinary approach. The DSL will oversee any cases of severe absence.

4.6.5. Children missing education

If a student becomes missing from education they could be at risk of significant harm. A student or young person is missing from education if they are 5-16, do not have a school place and there are no alternative education arrangements in place for them.

The school will make a referral to the Education Welfare Officer and inform the local authorities for students who:

- fail to transfer between primary and secondary schools, or different local authorities.
- have never accessed education (have neither enrolled at a school, nor received education otherwise than at school since reaching statutory school age);
- leave educational provision without a confirmed education destination, and/or fail to access a school place when moving to a new area;
- fail to transfer between a new key stage (for instance Year 6 to Year 7);
- have been withdrawn by the parent/carer from the education system (in accordance to the home education protocol).
- have been excluded from school and have not had a confirmed place at a new education setting.

The local authority will track, locate and ensure access to education for these students. All students identified as 'children missing from education' need to be monitored and tracked until the local authority can show that they have:

- been allocated a place at a school, or suitable alternative education provision;
- reached a destination in another authority and/or the new local authority is aware and investigating;
- all reasonable checks have been satisfactorily conducted.

Where a student is absent for 10 consecutive school days and contact cannot be established, the school will

follow the local authority 'child missing education' procedures and refer to the education welfare officer (EWO). Students will not be removed from the register until the local authority has confirmed destination/placement or reasonable checks have been completed.

The school will always ensure all measures have been taken to establish contact with the family, which may include telephone calls, emails, home visits. In cases where there are concerns of a safeguarding nature, the police and/or MASH team may be contacted.

If an allegation is made against a member of staff during attendance enquiries, including home visits, the school's allegations management procedures will be followed and the DSL informed immediately.

4.6.6 Removing students from the school register and mid-term admissions

To remove a student from the school register, the parent/carer must inform the school in writing by providing details of the new school and proposed start date. Contact will then be made with the new school and the student will only be removed from our register once we have confirmation that the student has attended their first day at their new school. Once students are removed from our register, the local authority is informed and all student files are transferred to the new school.

Students who attend another school temporarily are legally registered as students of Highlands school and will therefore be dual registered. For students who are educated offsite, this will be B-coded in the register. The school will contact the education provider on a weekly basis for updates on the attendance of the student.

Students will not be removed from the register until the local authority has confirmed destination/placement or reasonable checks have been completed.

4.7 Support during absence and return from absence

The school's expectation is that students will complete classwork while they are absent from school, as long as they are well enough to do so. In cases where a student is being supported by another external agency the school will work in conjunction with them to ensure that a suitable programme of work is provided.

Where a phased return to school is required, the attendance champion/DSL and relevant pastoral team will work with the family to ensure appropriate support is provided to ensure a smooth transition to full-time education.

4.8 Reporting to Parents

Parents will receive updated attendance and punctuality information at various points through the academic year. This report will include: student's attendance figure; punctuality information and attendance colour-band groups. Parents also have access to attendance data through the school's management information system.

Section 5: Leave of absence requests

Regulations state that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are 'exceptional circumstances'.

Parents/carers wishing to apply for leave of absence must submit the request using the Highlands school leave request form and must be received a minimum of two weeks before the intended leave.

5.1 Absence in term time

There is no automatic entitlement in law to take time off in school time. Decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis and can only be taken with the permission of the headteacher. The school holiday dates are published a year in advance and we therefore do not see any reason for parents/carers to take their child/ren out of school during term time. The headteacher on behalf of the governing body will only authorise leave in exceptional or emergency circumstances and days must be kept to a minimum. The school will not authorise any leave of absence for holidays during term time, as set out in the national framework.

The school considers valid reasons of absence to be:

- Illness and unavoidable medical/dental appointments (as outlined in 3.3)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the relevant religious body.
- Traveller pupils 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.

Requests for occasional days will not be authorised unless the circumstances are exceptional. Birthday treats/day trips with family are not considered exceptional and will not be authorised. Under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, the local authority may issue penalty notices to parents of children with unauthorised absences from school.

5.2 Absence through participation in public performances, including theatre, film or television work and sport

Parents/carers can seek leave of absence from school for a student to take part in a performance. To request this, parents must submit a request in writing to the headteacher, in advance. Parents/carers should outline the nature and frequency of the work or activity, whether the student has a valid performance licence and whether education will be provided by the employer/organiser during the leave of absence. It is at the headteacher's discretion as to whether to authorise this under these circumstances. The headteacher may wish to discuss with parents how learning will continue if absence occurs. Any agreed absence recorded as part of a student's participation in a public performance is recorded as an authorised absence.

Permission for a student to leave early or arrive late to attend coaching and training sessions is also at the discretion of the headteacher and is not likely to be approved if it is a regular event, unless the sports club or association is providing an education tutor as part of their coaching.

Section 6: Legal measures and penalty notices

Before legal interventions (penalty notices/prosecutions) are considered, the school will have offered targeted support and Notices to Improve will be used where appropriate. Penalty notices will be issued in line with the local authority code of conduct and the national threshold of 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling 10 week period.

The headteacher (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 (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks).
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that student.
- 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.

Each parent who is liable for the student's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence.

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.

If issued with a first penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 21 days.

If a second penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 21 days.

A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of 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.

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 £80 within 21 days, or £160.

Legal intervention, including fines, cannot be used for absence recorded as authorised by the school.

Notices to improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

They will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences.
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under section 7 of the Education Act 1996.
- Details of the support provided so far.
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with a clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis.
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period.
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period.

Section 7: Emotional-based school non-attendance

Where a student is affected by emotional-based school non-attendance, the school will work closely with parents/carers, the student, and external agencies where necessary, to provide a package of support for the student. The school will implement a graduated approach to support, providing early help as soon as absence

starts to become a concern, focusing on understanding and removing the barriers of attendance in partnership with the family. The aim of this will be to reintegrate the student back into education by working together to address concerns. This may include:

- An attendance support plan
- A welfare support plan
- In-school interventions
- A temporary reduced timetable with a planned review process to return to full time education
- Referral to CAMHS
- Referral to Early help
- Referral to the EWS as an additional supportive agency
- Referral to the attendance support unit
- Referral to Enfield's multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH)

Section 8: Reduced timetables

Students of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. A reduced timetable or remote education is only permitted in exceptional circumstances. These measures will only be utilised as a last resort and only once other forms of intervention and support have been thoroughly explored. A reduced timetable or period of remote education must form part of an agreed reintegration plan. Reduced timetables are temporary, must have a formal end date and be reviewed regularly; where safeguarding or SEND is a factor the DSL and SENCO must be involved and the local authority informed as necessary.

In some cases, the school may request medical or clinical evidence to support the decision-making around introducing a reduced timetable or remote education arrangement. This evidence will be considered in discussion with the local authority, however it is important to note that medical evidence will be considered on a case by case basis and may not be sufficient to trigger such interventions.

Where a student has an education and health care plan (EHCP) the local authority must be consulted and approve any change in educational provision including a reduced timetable or change of educational setting, even where this is a temporary change.

The DFE's statutory attendance guidance expects that reduced timetables are:

- Only agreed on a temporary basis, stating a proposed end date when they're expected to return to school full time and must not be a long-term solution.
- A last resort to support a student in accessing full-time education.

It is the headteacher's decision to agree what constitutes 'exceptional circumstances'.

All other avenues of in-school support and intervention must be considered and implemented prior to reducing a student's timetable.

Where there are safeguarding concerns, the DSL must be involved in the decision to permit a reduced timetable.

Section 9: Support for SEND/Medical needs

The school recognises that students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or long-term physical or mental health conditions may face complex and individual barriers to attendance.

The school has a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of all students. We will always work with families to understand the underlying causes of absence for these pupils.

Where a student is defined as having a disability under the Equality Act 2010, the school will consider and implement formal reasonable adjustments to the attendance policy, registration procedures, or daily schedule, where appropriate, to enable the pupil to attend school as regularly as possible. All reasonable adjustments will be considered and recorded, with regular reviews put in place to ensure ongoing and appropriate support.

All absences, including those related to health conditions, must be reported to the school. For long-term or recurring conditions, parents/carers must provide appropriate medical evidence, which will inform the reasonable adjustments and the coding of absence.

If a student is medically unable to attend school for an extended period, the school will work with the local authority to ensure the student continues to receive a suitable full-time education (or part-time as appropriate for their health needs), which may involve dual registration or tuition at home or in a hospital setting.

The attendance champion is responsible for overseeing the attendance of all students with significant health or SEND needs. All bespoke attendance plans are subject to regular, formal review, engaging parents, relevant medical professionals, and the SENCO to ensure the provision is effective in enabling the student's access to education.

Section 10: Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the SLT member responsible for attendance. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

Attendance data will be analysed weekly and reported to SLT and to governors half-termly. Analysis will include key cohorts (SEND, FSM, PP, LAC, young carers and other key groups). The governing body will receive benchmarking and targeted attendance objectives.

Section 11: Links with other policies

This policy should be read alongside our other policies:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- SEND Policy
- Anti-bullying
- E-Safety Policy
- Exclusion Policy
- Mental health and wellbeing policy

Appendices

Appendix 1: Attendance codes

Registers will be completed using the DfE mandatory codes (school attendance regulations 2024). The attendance officer will maintain an audit log explaining application of non-standard codes.

All attendance codes listed below are the latest mandatory DfE codes from the school attendance (pupil registration) (England) regulations 2024, including the correct usage of codes like 'B' (off-site educated), 'W' (work experience), 'P' (attending a performance activity) and the revised 'C1', 'J1', and 'C2' codes.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Student is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Student is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Student arrives late before register has closed
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Student is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority

B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Student is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Student is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
W	Attending work experience	Student is on an approved work experience placement
P	Sporting activity	Student is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Student is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Student is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Student is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Student has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Student has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
X	Not required to be in school	Student of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Student is not in school due to having a part-time timetable

C	Exceptional circumstances	Student has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent - other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Student is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Student is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Student is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Student 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	Student is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Student 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	Student is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Student 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 student absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)

Y5	Criminal justice detention	Student is unable to attend as they are: • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Student'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	Student 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	Student has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Student 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 2: Our attendance system

Each week we will monitor the attendance of all students using a centralised tracking system. Students are placed in one of five attendance groups below based on their cumulative attendance each week.

Group 1: No Concern

- Green Group

The student attends for 97% - 100% of the time.

Group 2: Concern

- Yellow Group

The student attends for 95% - 96.9% of the time.

Group 3: Risk of Underachievement

– Amber Group

The student attends for 93% - 94.9% of the time.

Group 4: Severe Risk of Underachievement

– Pink Group

The student attends for 90% - 92.9% of the time.

Group 5: Extreme Risk of Underachievement

– Red Group

The student attends for 0% - 89.9% of the time.

Attendance and punctuality is reviewed weekly by the attendance officer and head of year and a cause for concern is identified. A cause for concerns could include:

- Long periods of absence
- Patterns of absence
- Sporadic days off for minor reasons
- Absences where no reason is given by the parent/carers
- Unauthorised periods of leave
- Persistent lateness.

Where a cause for concern is raised, the school will follow steps to address these concerns which may include any of the following:

- Written communication to parents
- Attendance calls by the school attendance officer or a member of the pastoral team
- Attendance meetings
- Attendance support plans
- EWS referral
- Fixed penalty notices in line with the local authority code of conduct
- A referral to children's services where there are safeguarding concerns.

Appendix 3: Attendance diamond

