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**Attendance**

**and Punctuality Policy**

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# 1. Introduction and Aims

Our aim at Venturers Trust is to fulfil our vision of ‘*All Children, All Backgrounds, All Succeeding’.* We recognise that regular attendance has a positive effect on the motivation and attainment of pupils and is an integral part of our schools. We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our trust culture and ethos. We aim to:

* Promote, celebrate and reward good attendance and punctuality
* Reduce absence, including persistent and severe absence
* Ensure every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
* Act early to address patterns of absence
* Support pupils back into school following absence and provide support to build confidence and bridge gaps
* Build strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school, keeping parents and carers updated about their child’s absence and attendance levels
* Provide support, advice and guidelines to parents, carers, pupils and staff.

When recording, monitoring and discussing absence with pupils and their parents and carers, we strive to be respectful of family circumstances and mindful that some pupils may face increased barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include pupils with long term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). We will make reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010 for disabled pupils and ensure that additional support is put in place where necessary to help pupils access their full-time education.

We understand that many pupils have family overseas or observe religious festivals and celebrations which fall outside of school holidays. We aim to be sensitive to this, whilst respecting the law and the Department for Education guidance. Further details about absence are contained in section 5. All pupils and parents will be treated with dignity and staff will build respectful and constructive relationships with families.

Our schools are committed to working collaboratively with other schools, the Local Authority and other partners who can provide support, especially where absence is at risk of becoming persistent (below 90%) or severe (below 50%).

# 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE’s statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/parental-responsibility-measures-for-behaviour-and-attendance). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

* Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/contents)
* Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents)
* Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/contents)
* [The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/1751/contents/made)
* [The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/757/regulation/2/made)

This policy also refers to the DfE’s guidance on the [school census](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/complete-the-school-census), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

**2.1 Safeguarding and attendance**

Our school will monitor trends and patterns of absence for all pupils as a part of our standard procedures. However, we are aware that sudden or gradual changes in a pupil’s attendance may indicate additional or more extreme safeguarding issues. We recognise that there may be safeguarding risk for those children who are missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions and/or for prolonged periods. In line with government guidance [Keeping children safe in education 2023](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2) we will investigate and report any suspected safeguarding cases on to the relevant authorities. As part of our safeguarding duty and our standard procedures, we will inform the Local Authority and/or the Police of the details of any pupil who is absent from school when the school cannot establish their whereabouts and is concerned for the pupil’s welfare. (Please see our school’s Safeguarding and Child Protection policy for more information).

We take a robust response to persistently absent pupils (those with less than 90% attendance) as they may be at a higher risk of becoming a child missing education in the future.

Our Attendance Leads will work closely with Designated Safeguarding Leads to ensure that information and concerns are appropriately shared.

**2.2 Children Missing Education (CME)**

Our schools will add and delete pupils from roll in line with the law. Schools will follow [Bristol City Council’s Children Missing Education guidance](https://www.bristol.gov.uk/schools-learning-early-years/children-missing-education-cme) and make CME and Pupil Tracking referrals as appropriate. Attendance leads and Designated Safeguarding Leads will seek advice from the Children Missing Education Officer if unsure about any individual cases: [childrenmissingeducation@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:childrenmissingeducation@bristol.gov.uk)

# 3. Recording attendance

3.1 Admissions register

The admission register (sometimes referred to as the school roll) must contain specific personal details of every pupil in the school along with the date of admission or re-admission to the school, information regarding parents and carers, and details of the last school attended. The school will enter pupils on the admission register at the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or been notified by the parent, that the pupil will attend.

A pupil’s name can only lawfully be deleted from the admission register if a reason set out in regulation 8 of the [Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/1751/contents/made), applies. It is vital that the admission register is kept up to date. Therefore, we encourage parents and carers to inform the school of any changes whenever they occur and ensure the admission register is amended as soon as possible.

3.2 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

In accordance with the law, 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 pupil is:

* Present
* Attending an approved off-site educational activity (see section ??)
* Absent
* Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

**See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.**

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

We will also record:

* For pupils of compulsory school age, whether the absence is authorised or not
* The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
* The nature of circumstances where a pupil 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.

**See appendix 2 for register timings.**

3.3 Unplanned absence

The pupil’s parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by the time stated in **appendix 2,** or as soon as practically possible by calling the school (see also section 3.6).

See **appendix 2** for further information on school procedures.

**Illness**

In most cases, absences for illness which are reported by following the school’s absence reporting procedures will be authorised. In accordance with [working together to improve school attendance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance) if the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness, the school may ask the parent or carer to provide medical evidence, such as a prescription, appointment card, or other appropriate form of evidence. In some cases, the school may ask the parent or carer to obtain a letter from a GP, or the school may seek parental permission to contact the child’s GP directly.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. Where a pupil has a high level and/or frequency of absence, the school may require medical evidence of some description in order to authorise any future medical absences. If this is the case, the school will make the parent or carer aware of this expectation in advance.

**Mental Health and Wellbeing**

Parents or carers who have concerns about their child’s mental wellbeing can contact the school’s Designated Safeguarding Lead or Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator (SENDCo) for further information on the support available. See **appendix 3** for contact details.

Parents and carers should also contact their GP or the NHS Helpline by phoning telephone number 111 for advice if they are concerned. In case of emergency, parents should dial 999.

**Pupils taken ill during the school day**

If a pupil needs to be sent home due to illness, this should be by agreement with an appropriately authorised member of senior school staff. In such circumstances, pupils must be collected from the school office by a parent or carer, or another authorised adult and signed out. No pupil will be allowed to leave the school site without parental confirmation.

3.4 Planned absence

In addition to illness, the school may give approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away from the school.

**Medical and dental appointments**

Parents and carers should try to make appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where medical and dental appointments during school time are unavoidable, the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment and should not miss a whole day of school, unless absolutely necessary. Where a whole day’s absence is requested, the school will need an explanation for the child missing the whole day.

If child must attend a medical appointment during the school day, they must be collected from the school office by a parent or carer, or another authorised adult and signed out. No pupil will be allowed to leave the school site without parental confirmation.

Advance notice is required for medical or dental appointments and must be supported by providing the school with sight of, or a copy of, the appointment card, letter or text message – only then will the absence be authorised. If the appointment is an emergency, the procedure for unplanned absences should be followed, with the parent or carer providing the evidence of appointment as soon as possible following the absence.

Parents and carers must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 4 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

3.5 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

* Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using code L
* After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using code U

When a child/ young person arrives late to school, they miss important events like assembly, tutor time, teacher instructions and introductions. Children often also feel embarrassed at having to enter the classroom late.

See appendix 4 for a breakdown of how frequent lateness can add up to a considerable amount of learning being lost. This can seriously disadvantage children and disrupt the learning of others.

Our schools monitor, analyse and address lateness in the same way as attendance issues.

3.6 Following up unexplained absence

**First day of absence response**

If a child is not in school and the school does not hear from parents or carers, they will endeavor to establish a reason for absence by contacting those on the pupil’s emergency contact list.

Parents and carers will be asked to supply details of at least three people who can be contacted in an emergency, and these details will be reviewed on an annual basis through parents’ evenings, newsletter reminders etc.

If a school is unable to contact any of the emergency numbers provided, and is concerned for the welfare of the child, we may request a Welfare Check from the police.

**Following up unexplained absences**

When no contact has been made with the school regarding absence, the school will contact parents or carers by text, email, telephone or letter to try and establish the reason for the child’s absence. The absence will then be marked as authorised or unauthorised, depending on the circumstances. If the school is unable to establish the reason for absence, it will be recorded as unauthorised, using the O code.

3.7 Reporting to parents/carers

We report to parents and carers regarding their child’s attendance record during parents’ evenings and at least annually in the pupil’s end of year school report.

Where a child’s attendance drops below 90%, for whatever reason, the school will write to the parents to highlight this, unless there is a good reason not to.

# 4. Authorised and unauthorised absence

4.1 Approval for term-time absence

**The law does not grant parents or carers the automatic right to take their child out of school during term time.**

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 and medical/dental appointments (see sections 3.3 and 3.4)
* Religious observance
* Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes
* Exceptional circumstances
* Suspensions
* Temporary Education Arrangements

**Religious Observance**

Our schools acknowledge the multi-faith nature of their communities and recognise that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside of school holidays or weekends. In accordance with the law, the school can only authorise absence if the day is exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent or carer belongs. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents’ or carers’ religious body, to confirm whether the day is set apart. In accordance with Bristol Local Authority policy, the school will authorise one day’s absence for a religious festival and should any additional days be taken, these will be recorded in the register as unauthorised absence.

**Traveller absence**

This covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers.

The school will authorise the absence of a Traveller child of no fixed abode who is unable to attend school because they are travelling with their parent or carer who is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require them to travel from place to place. This is subject to certain limits, depending on the child’s age and number of sessions absent. The school will discuss cases individually with Traveller families as necessary. Parents and carers should let the school know of their plans as far in advance as possible. Authorised Traveller absence will be recorded appropriately in the register.

To help ensure continuity of education for Traveller children, wherever possible the child should attend school elsewhere when their family is travelling for occupational purposes. Where this is the case, the child will be dual registered at both schools.

Children from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities whose families do not travel for occupational purposes are expected to register at school and attend in line with other pupils.

**Exceptional Circumstances**

Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. We consider each application individually, taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. The request must be made by the parent or carer (in agreement with social worker where applicable) with whom the child normally lives, and permission must be sought in advance. The school will not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. The school must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances, based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case; following consultation with other staff as required, including the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days the pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the school’s discretion.

Circumstances which could be authorised include significant family emergencies or funerals. However, parents will also be aware that, wherever possible, it can be better for children to continue to attend school normally during difficult family times.

Parents/ carers should complete a Leave of Absence Request form which is available from the school office. The request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated; and wherever possible, at least four weeks before the absence. Although such absence may be unauthorised, it is better that we know your child is safe, rather than missing. Please be aware that you may be required to provide us with additional evidence in order to support your request. If we have any concerns about possible safeguarding risks such as risk of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) or Forced Marriage we will follow the necessary protocols. (Please see our Safeguarding and Child Protection policy for more information.)

All term time absence for Children in Care should be discussed at the child’s Personal Education Plan (PEP) meeting in advance where possible and agreed with the Social Care and The HOPE Virtual School. This permission should be gained before school is approached for approval.  The school will contact the HOPE Virtual School in relation to any requests for term time absence for a child in care.

In attendance with DfE schools’ attendance guidance, there are some circumstances where the child is unable to attend which will not be marked as absences. These are outlined in section 6.

**Suspensions (previously called fixed-term exclusions)**

If the school decides to send a child home due to their behaviour, this will be recorded as a suspension, using code E on the register. The school will follow the [DfE Statutory Guidance on suspensions](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion).

Any suspension **must** be agreed by the headteacher and the school will notify the parent or carer in writing. If the pupil is a Child in Care, the school will notify the child’s carer, social worker and the HOPE Virtual School. Where a pupil is open to Children’s Social Care for any reason, the school will also inform their allocated social worker.

The pupil must be collected from the school office by the parent or carer, or another authorised adult and signed out. No pupil will be allowed to leave the school site without parental confirmation.

For more information, please refer to the Behaviour, Belonging and Engagement policy.

**Temporary Education Arrangements**

Pupils are entitled to a full-time education, suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and any special educational needs or disabilities that they may have.

If, for any reason, one of our schools is unable to provide a pupil with a full-time education due to the pupil’s needs, we will work with the pupil, their parents or carers and other agencies where appropriate, to come to a mutually convenient arrangement. Any reduced timetables will be for the shortest amount of time possible and regularly reviewed whilst arrangements are made to support the pupil’s return to full-time provision as soon as possible. The arrangements will be recorded on a document called a Temporary Education Arrangement (TEA), which must contain the review dates and be signed by the headteacher.

4.2 Unauthorised absence

Unauthorised absence is where a school is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence.

Absence will be unauthorised if a pupil is absent from school without the permission of the school. Whilst parents can provide explanations for absences, it is the school’s decision whether to authorise the absence or not.

Unauthorised absence includes:

* Absences which have never been properly explained
* Pupils who arrive at school too late to get a mark
* Shopping
* Birthdays
* Waiting at home for a washing machine to be mended, or a parcel to be delivered
* Day trips
* Long weekends and holidays in term time (unless very exceptional circumstances are agreed in writing, in advance by the school)
* In the case of term time leave - if a pupil is kept away from school longer than was agreed, the additional absence is unauthorised

Unauthorised absences may result in Legal Sanctions, usually Penalty Notices or Prosecutions.

4.3 Legal sanctions

Parents and carers have a legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends school on a regular basis. It is a criminal offence under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 to fail to secure regular attendance of a registered pupil at the school. This applies to both resident and non-resident parents who may both be subject to legal sanctions if their child fails to attend school regularly. It also applies to others who may not be the parent but may have day to day care of the child.

Unauthorised absence from school can result in a number of different outcomes for parents/ carers and children/ young people. Each case is considered individually.

Under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, if a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school his/her parent(s) are guilty of an offence. Parents with more than one school aged child need to be aware that each child’s irregular attendance is dealt with as a separate matter.

Schools will refer cases of unauthorised absence that meet the threshold for a Penalty Notice to the Local Authority for legal action unless there are reasonable grounds for not doing so. The outcome of a referral to the Local Authority may be a Penalty Notice or Prosecution.

**Penalty Notices**

Penalty Notices are intended as a sanction for low level offences and a tool to support improved school attendance (for example in circumstances associated with an unauthorised holiday taken during term time). They are an alternative to prosecution and may not be issued if prosecution is considered to be a more appropriate response to a child’s irregular attendance.

The penalty is £60 payable within 21 days, rising to £120 if paid between 22 and 28 days. Failure to pay will result in prosecution

**Prosecution**

Prosecution could lead to fines of up to £2500 and/or 3 months imprisonment. See [DfE’s statutory guidance (School behaviour and attendance: parental responsibility measures)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/parental-responsibility-measures-for-behaviour-and-attendance) for more information and Bristol City Council’s Penalty Notice Code of Conduct, available here: <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/schools-learning-early-years/education-welfare>.

Penalty Notices and prosecution proceedings are issued to each parent with responsibility for the child and are issued for each child with irregular attendance. For example, in the case of Penalty Notices, if two siblings had irregular school attendance, and there were two parent(s) with responsibility for the children, four Penalty Notices would be issued. Penalty Notices cannot be paid in instalments.

There are a range of legal interventions open to schools:

• Parenting contracts

• Education supervision orders

• Attendance prosecution

• Parenting orders

• Fixed penalty notices

All cases will be considered on an individual basis, with the school working with the Local Authority to avoid relying solely on Penalty Notices and Prosecution.

If a school refers a case of poor school attendance to the Local Authority for legal sanctions, they will show that the parents or carers were warned that they were at risk of receiving a Penalty Notice or other legal sanction. This will at least be evidenced via the sending of a warning letter.

Schools will not usually request legal sanctions from the Local Authority in cases where poor attendance is symptomatic of complex family circumstances. In such circumstances our schools will take a holistic approach to the issue and involve other agencies as necessary. The exception to this will be where parents or carers fail to accept or engage with support offered by the school and/or other agencies, or fail to implement the suggested changes. Again, when referring for legal sanctions, schools will show that they have warned of the risk of receiving a Penalty Notice or other legal sanction.

# 5. Approved Educational Activity

When pupils are attending educational activities off-site that have been approved by the school, the register will be marked to show this is the case.

If a pupil is attending an alternative education provider such as another school, or Pupil Referral Unit, for part or all of their education, the school will make arrangements for the pupil to be dual registered at the other setting and mark our registers accordingly.

If a pupil is attending an alternative education provider, which is not a school or Pupil Referral Unit, for part or all of their education, we will mark the sessions which the pupil attends the alternative setting as code B (off-site educational activity). The school expects the alternative provider (AP) to notify them of any absences by individual pupils, to ensure the school become aware of any attendance concerns as soon as possible and can take follow up action as necessary. Attendance updates will be provided on a weekly basis, or more frequently if agreed with the alternative setting.

Any attendance concerns will be followed up by the school, in conjunction with the AP.

# 6. Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

In accordance with DfE school attendance guidance, our school will record pupils as ‘Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances’ in the following circumstances, and this will not be recorded as an absence:

* The school site, or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause
* The transport provided by the school or the Local Authority is not available and the pupil’s home is not within statutory walking distance. (See the DfE’s ‘Home to school travel and transport’ guidance document)
* A local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the pupil from attending school.
* The pupil is in custody, but still on the school roll. (If the school has evidence that the pupil is attending educational activities, we can record those sessions as ‘present at approved educational activity’.)

These circumstances will not be recorded as absences.

# 7. Strategies for promoting attendance

7.1 Rewarding good attendance

Our schools value and reward good and improved attendance (please see our Belonging, Behaviour and Engagement policy for more information). Our system is carefully considered and ensures it does not make pupils who have poor attendance, through no fault of their own, feel marginalised, worried, or guilty about their low attendance rate and its impact on the pupil’s own learning or the learning or rewards for the class as a whole.

7.2 Support for poor attendance

Sometimes pupils can be reluctant to attend school. We encourage parents, carers and pupils to be open and honest with us about the reason for the pupil’s absence. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or for a parent or carer to give in to pressure to let the child stay at home. This can give the impression to the child that attendance does not matter and can make things worse. We need to understand the reasons why a pupil is reluctant to attend in order to be able to support pupils and families in the best way.

When schools have concerns about the attendance of a pupil, they will do their best to make the parents and carers aware of the concerns about their child’s attendance and give them the opportunity to address this. However, if parents and carers do not make use of the support offered and improve their child’s attendance to an acceptable level, this may result in legal sanctions as outlined in section 4.3. Where there are no genuine reasons for the absences, parents may be asked to meet with the attendance lead or other appropriate member of staff to discuss the matter. In some cases, this may result in a formal action plan being produced in the form of an Attendance Contract.

In communicating with parents, we will highlight the link between attendance and attainment and wider wellbeing and enhance their understanding of what good attendance looks like. Where a pupil or family needs support with attendance we will identify who is best placed to work with them to address issues. We will support pupils and parents by working together to address any in-school barriers to attendance. Where barriers are outside of the school’s control, all partners should work together to support pupils and parents to access any support they may need voluntarily.

Where absence intensifies, so should the support provided, which will require the school to work in tandem with the local authority and other relevant partners. If a school has safeguarding concerns about a pupil who is absent, they will share information with other agencies as deemed necessary.

# 8. Attendance monitoring

8.1 Monitoring attendance

Schools will:

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

Pupil-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 through the Welfare Dashboard with the Executive team and the Quality of Education and Welfare sub-committee of the Trust board.

Attendance leads across the Trust will work in a network to share best practice and collaborate on raising attendance. The Trust makes full use of the Attendance toolkit provided by Bristol Local Authority and Trust representatives attend the Local Authority Attendance meetings.

8.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

* 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
* Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

8.3 Using data: persistent and severe absence

Any absence affects the pattern of a child’s schooling and regular absence may seriously affect their learning. See **appendix 4** for more information. The Department for Education (DfE) defines a pupil as a ‘persistent absentee’ when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year, for whatever reason. For pupils who miss more than 50% of possible sessions they are defined as ‘severely absent’.

The school will ensure that data is routinely monitored to identify emerging attendance issues and will seek to prevent any pupil becoming persistently or severely absent. This will include: identifying the individual needs of pupils; working closely with families and wider support services to remove barriers to attendance; and where a formalised approach in conjunction with the local authority is required in line with the DfE guidance [Working Together to Improve School Attendance](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1099677/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance.pdf).

# 9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum yearly by the Trust Inclusion Lead. At every review, the policy will be shared with the Executive Team and approved by the Trust board.

# 10. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

* Safeguarding and Child Protection policy
* Behaviour, Belonging and Engagement policy
* Anti-Bullying procedures
* Special Educational Needs and Disabilities policy
* Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions policy

**Appendix 1: attendance codes**

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

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| **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 |
| **B** | Off-site educational activity | Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school |
| **D** | Dual registered | Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered |
| **J** | Interview | Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment |
| **P** | Sporting activity | Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school |
| **V** | Educational trip or visit | Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school |
| **W** | Work experience | Pupil is on a work experience placement |

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| **Code** | **Definition** | **Scenario** |
| **Authorised absence** | | |
| **C** | Authorised leave of absence | Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances |
| **E** | Excluded | Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made |
| **H** | Authorised holiday | Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances |
| **I** | Illness | School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness |
| **M** | Medical/dental appointment | Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment |
| **R** | Religious observance | Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance |
| **S** | Study leave | Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations |
| **T** | Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence | Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school |
| **Unauthorised absence** | | |
| **G** | Unauthorised holiday | Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school |
| **N** | Reason not provided | Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time) |
| **O** | Unauthorised absence | School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence |
| **U** | Arrival after registration | Pupil arrived at school after the register closed |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Code** | **Definition** | **Scenario** |
| **X** | Not required to be in school | Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend |
| **Y** | Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances | School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody |
| **Z** | Pupil not on admission register | Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school |
| **#** | Planned school closure | Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day |

**Appendix 2: School procedures**

**Register Times**

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.50am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.50am and will be kept open until 9.20am.

A pupil who arrives late, but before the register has closed will be marked as late (L), which counts as present.

If a pupil arrives after the registers close, they will be marked with the unauthorised absence code ‘late after registers close’ (U).

If the pupil is arriving late due to a valid reason, such as an unavoidable medical appointment, the absence will be authorised and coded accordingly. See the DfE guidance, [working together to improve school attendance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance), and section 3 of this policy for further information.

**Absence Reporting Procedure**

**Unplanned absence**

If a pupil is off school, parents and carers should notify the school office as soon as possible, or by 9am.

Absences can be reported by using the Studybugs app or by calling the school office on 0117 924 0517. Please be specific in detailing the reasons for absence, you may receive a call back requesting further information.

If the child is absent for more than one day, the parent or carer should contact the school each day to provide an update on the child’s condition, unless otherwise agreed by the school.

**Planned absence**

Families are reminded that children’s medical appointments should be booked out of school hours. Where this is not possible please provide evidence in the form of a text message, email or appointment card.

Absence for any other reason needs to be formally requested. Absence request forms are available from the office..

**Appendix 3: Key Contacts**

The Senior Leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance is Kate wells, Headteacher, and can be contacted by emailing info@dolphinschoolbristol.org or calling 0117 924 0517*.*

If pupils, parents or carers wish to raise initial concerns around attendance, they should contact Susannah Holmes, Family Support and Attendance Officer, who can be contacted by emailing info@dolphinschoolbristol.org or calling 0117 924 0517*.*

To report a pupil as absent, call the school office on 0117 924 0517*.*

To request a leave of absence please come to the school office.

**Appendix 4: The impact of absence and lateness**

**Effects of non-attendance**

The table below indicates how what might seem like just a few days absence can result in children missing a significant number of lessons.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Attendance during school year | Days lost in a year | Which is approximately | Approximate number of lessons missed |
| 95% | 9.5 Days | 2 Weeks | 50 Lessons |
| 90% | 19 Days | 4 Weeks | 100 Lessons |

**Effects of Late Arrival at School**

When a child arrives late to school, they miss important events like assembly, teacher instructions and introductions. Children often also feel embarrassed at having to enter the classroom late.

The table below indicates how frequent lateness can add up to a considerable amount of learning being lost. This can seriously disadvantage children and disrupt the learning of others.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Minutes late per Day** | **Equates to Days of Teaching Lost in one Year** | **Which means this number of lessons missed** |
| 5 mins | 3 Days | 15 Lessons |
| 10 mins | 6 Days | 30 Lessons |
| 15 mins | 9 Days | 45 Lessons |

**Appendix 5: Roles and Responsibilities**

3.1 The Trust board

The Trust board is responsible for:

* Promoting the importance of school attendance across the trust’s policies and ethos
* Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
* Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
* Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

The Quality of Education and Welfare sub-committee is responsible for:

* Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
* Monitoring attendance figures for the whole trust

3.2 Headteachers

Headteachers are responsible for:

* Implementation of this policy at the school
* Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to trust leads and the Trust board
* Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
* Requesting fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

3.3 Designated senior leaders responsible for attendance (supported by Attendance Officers where appropriate)

The designated senior leader in each school is responsible for:

* Taking a strategic lead for monitoring and improving attendance across the school
* Monitoring and analysing attendance data by group, including:
  + Pupils entitled to Free-School Meals
  + Pupils in receipt of Pupil Premium
  + Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
  + Children in Care
  + Ethnicity
* Reporting concerns around attendance to the headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) as appropriate
* Arranging calls and meetings with parents and carers to discuss attendance issues
* Co-ordinating requests for Term-time Leave of Absence, liaising with the DSL and advising the headteacher as requested
* Monitoring trends and patterns of absence on an individual pupil level so that appropriate action can be taken.
* Attending the weekly Vulnerable Children’s Meeting alongside other senior staff
* Sharing information across the Trust and working with attendance leads in other schools

3.4 Designated Safeguarding Lead

The DSL is responsible for:

* Attending the weekly Vulnerable Children’s Meeting alongside other senior staff
* Working with the attendance lead to monitor the attendance of vulnerable children and supporting appropriately.

3.5 Pastoral Staff

Pastoral staff, such as Parent Support Advisors and Learning Mentors are responsible for:

* Working with identified pupils and families to overcome barriers and support good attendance
* Liaising with other staff to pass on relevant information to or from the family

3.6 Class teachers and tutors

Class teachers and tutors are responsible for:

* Recording attendance daily (including to each lesson in Secondary), using the correct codes and submitting this to the school office (via the school Management Information System)
* Highlighting concerns around attendance to the relevant staff at the earliest opportunity
* Holding conversations with pupils around attendance, where appropriate

3.7 School office and admin staff

School office and admin staff will:

* Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
* Transfer calls from parents to the relevant pastoral or senior members of staff in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

3.8 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 9am on the first day of the absence 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

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

* Attend school every day on time
* Attend every timetabled lesson on time (for Secondary pupils and Sixth Form students)