



**Brighter Futures**  
Educational Trust

# ATTENDANCE POLICY

**Policy Number:** 40

**Review Committee:** Standards

**Type of Policy:** Statutory

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## VERSION CONTROL

V1.1	March 2025	New policy
V1.2	April 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• New Layout due to rebranding</li></ul>

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## 1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Brighter Futures Educational Trust recognises that positive behaviour and good attendance are essential in order for pupils to get the most of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing and wider life chances.

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.

Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly, on time. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

The Department for Education (DfE) has produced statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities. It is called "[Working together to improve school attendance](#)" and it includes a National Framework in relation to absence and the use of legal sanctions. Our School Attendance Policy reflects the requirements and principles of that guidance.

This policy is written with the above guidance in mind and underpins our school ethos to:

- promote children's welfare and safeguarding.
- ensure every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled.
- ensure that pupils succeed whilst at school.
- ensure that pupils have access to the widest possible range of opportunities at school, and when they leave school.

It has been developed in consultation with trustees, teachers, local Headteacher Associations, the Local Authority and parents and carers. It seeks to ensure that all parties involved in the practicalities of school attendance are aware and informed of attendance matters in school and to outline the school's commitment to attendance being everyone's responsibility. It details the responsibilities of individuals and groups involved and the procedures in place to promote and monitor pupil attendance.

In addition, all schools follow the DfE's statutory safeguarding guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education, which emphasises the importance of understanding the potential vulnerabilities of children who are missing or absent from education.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

Our policy aims to raise and maintain levels of attendance by:

- Promoting a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure, and valued.
- Raising and maintaining a whole school awareness of the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- Ensuring that attendance is monitored effectively and reasons for absences are recorded promptly and consistently.

For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. **It is a rule of this school that pupils must attend every day, unless there are exceptional circumstances, and it is the Head Teacher not the parent, who can authorise the absence.**

## 2. PROMOTING REGULAR ATTENDANCE

At Brighter Futures Educational Trust, we believe in developing good patterns of attendance and set high expectations for the attendance and punctuality for all our pupils from the outset. It is a central part of our Trust's vision, values, ethos and day to day life. We recognise the strong connections between attendance, attainment, safeguarding and wellbeing.

**The name and contact details of the SLT Attendance Leads (the senior leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in our Trust) are:**

Paul Smith - Brandles

[head@brandles.herts.sch.uk](mailto:head@brandles.herts.sch.uk)

01462 896351

Todd Baines - Larwood Stevenage

[Todd.baines@larwood.herts.sch.uk](mailto:Todd.baines@larwood.herts.sch.uk)

01438 236333

Joe Scales - Larwood Dunstable

[Joe.scales@larwood.herts.sch.uk](mailto:Joe.scales@larwood.herts.sch.uk)

01525 868981

The Trustee on the Standards committee will have responsibility for monitoring attendance.

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is the responsibility of parents, pupils and all members of school staff.

To help us all to focus on this, we will:

- Submit a daily attendance return to the Department of Education, in line with the legal expectations placed on all schools.
- Build strong relationships and work jointly with families.
- Give parents/carers details on attendance in our newsletters.
- Promote the benefits of high attendance.
- Accurately complete admission and, with the exception of schools where all pupils are boarders, attendance registers and have effective day-to-day processes in place to follow-up absence as required by law.
- Celebrate excellent attendance by displaying and reporting individual and class achievements.
- Reward good or improving attendance.
- Report to parents/carers regularly on their child's attendance and the impact on their progress.
- Contact parents/carers should their child's attendance fall below the school's target for attendance.

### 3. UNDERSTANDING TYPES OF ABSENCE

Any absence affects the routine of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning journey and ability to progress. Any pupil's absence or late arrival disrupts teaching routines and so may affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parental responsibility and allowing absence from school, without a good reason, creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parent), as either **authorised** or **unauthorised**. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required. Each half-day is known as a 'session'.

**Authorised absences** are morning or afternoon sessions away from school for a genuine reason such as illness (although you may be asked to provide medical evidence for your child before this can be authorised), medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

**Unauthorised absences** are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been granted. This type of absence can lead to the school referring to the Local Authority for penalty notices and/or legal proceedings.

Unauthorised absence includes, (however this list is not exhaustive):

- parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily e.g. because they had a late night or for non-infectious illness or injury that would not affect their ability to learn.
- absences which have never been properly explained.
- children who arrive at school after the close of registration are marked using a 'U'. This indicates that they are in school for safeguarding purposes, however, is counted as an absence for the session.
- shopping trips.
- looking after other children or children accompanying siblings or parents to medical appointments.
- their own or family birthdays.
- holidays taken during term time, not deemed 'for exceptional purposes' by the headteacher, including any arranged by other family members or friends.
- day trips.
- other leave of absence in term time which has not been agreed.

#### **4. PERSISTENT ABSENTEEISM (PA) AND SERVE ABSENTEEISM (SA)**

A pupil is defined by the Government as a '**persistent absentee**' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for any reason; this can be authorised or unauthorised absence. Absence at this level will cause considerable damage to any pupil's education and we need the full support and co-operation of parents to resolve this. All pupils who have attendance levels of 90% or below are considered to be a persistent absentee.

A pupil who has missed 50% or more schooling is defined by the Government as '**severely absent**'. Pupils within this cohort may find it more difficult to be in school or face bigger barriers to their regular attendance and, as such, are likely to need more intensive support.

#### **5. ABSENCE PROCEDURES**

**The school office of each site for reporting absences:**

**Brandles**

[admin@brandles.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@brandles.herts.sch.uk)

01462 896351

**Larwood Stevenage**

[admin@larwood.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@larwood.herts.sch.uk)

01438 236333

**Larwood Dunstable**

[admincbc@larwood.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admincbc@larwood.herts.sch.uk)

01525 868981

We monitor and review all pupils' absence, and the reasons that are given, thoroughly.

**If a child is absent from school the parent must follow the individual settings' procedures, which can be found in the relevant settings' Attendance procedures document**

*(see Brandles Attendance Procedures or Larwood Attendance Procedures documentation)*

**If your child is absent, we will:**

*(see Brandles Attendance Procedures or Larwood Attendance Procedures documentation)*

**If absence continues, we will:**

*(see Brandles Attendance Procedures or Larwood Attendance Procedures documentation)*

## 6. LATENESS

Poor punctuality is not acceptable and can sometimes lead to irregular school attendance patterns. Good timekeeping is a vital life skill which will help children as they progress through their school life and out into the wider world.

Pupils who arrive late disrupt lessons and, if a child misses the start of the day, they can feel unsettled and embarrassed and risk missing vital work and important messages from their class teacher.

**The times of the start and close of the school day for all pupils at each setting within the Trust can be found in the relevant Attendance Procedures documentation**

*(see Brandles Attendance Procedures or Larwood Attendance Procedures documentation)*

**How we manage lateness in each setting within the Trust can be found in the relevant Attendance Procedures documentation**

*(see Brandles Attendance Procedures or Larwood Attendance Procedures documentation)*

If your child has a persistent lateness record, you may be asked to meet with the attendance lead within the setting your child attends, but you can approach us at any time if you are having difficulties getting your child to school on time. We expect parents and staff to encourage good punctuality by being good role models to our children and, as a school, we celebrate good class and individual punctuality. Unauthorised lateness could result in the school seeking advice and guidance from the Local Authority.

## **7. UNDERSTANDING BARRIERS TO ATTENDANCE**

Whilst any child may occasionally have time off school because they are too unwell to attend, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any barriers preventing regular attendance are best resolved between the school, the parents, and the child. If a parent thinks their child is reluctant to attend school, then we will work with that family to understand the root problem and provide any necessary support. We can consider a Families First Assessment, use outside agencies to help with this, such as the School Nurse, Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing support services, a Family Support Worker, or the relevant Local Authority team/s. Where outside agencies are supporting the family, you may be invited to attend a Team Around the Family meeting (TAF) to consider what is working well and what needs to improve. An individual support plan will be agreed and subsequently reviewed.

Some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include pupils who suffer from long-term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities, or other vulnerabilities. High expectations of attendance remain in place for these pupils; however, we will work with families and pupils to support improved attendance whilst being mindful of the additional barriers faced. We can discuss reasonable adjustments and additional support from external partners, where appropriate.

Under the DfE's statutory guidance, schools are required to submit a sickness return to the Local Authority for all pupils who have missed/are likely to miss 15 or more school days (consecutive or cumulative) due to medical reasons/illness.

See Annex A for DfE summary tables of responsibilities for school attendance.

## **8. LOCAL AUTHORITY ATTENDANCE SUPPORT TEAM**

Local Authority Attendance Support Specialists work strategically by offering support to schools, to reduce persistent absence and improve overall attendance.

Parents/Carers are expected to work with the school and local authority to address any attendance concerns. Parent/Carers should proactively engage with the support offered, aiming to resolve any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be resolved in this way, the school may consider more formal support and/or refer the child to the Local Authority. If attendance does not improve, legal action may be taken which may be in the form of a Penalty Notice (see Annex B for the Hertfordshire Code of Conduct) or other legal options available to the Local Authority such as prosecution in the Magistrates Court.

## **9. SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND THE LAW**

New legislation was passed, The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 which introduced a National Framework in England. By law all children of compulsory school age must receive an appropriate full-time education (Education Act 1996). Parent/Carers have a legal duty to ensure their child attends school regularly at the school at which they are registered.

Parent/Carers may be recognised differently under education law, than under family law. Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 states that a 'parent', in relation to a child or young person, includes any person who is not a parent (from which can be inferred 'biological parent') but who has parental responsibility, or who has care of the child.

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

## **10. NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR PENALTY NOTICES**

There is now a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England, of 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period. The 10 sessions of absence do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence (G, O and/or U coded within the school's registers). The 10-school week period can span different terms, school years or education settings.

Sanctions may include issuing each parent (for each child) with a Penalty Notice for £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days (for the first offence). A second Penalty Notice issued

within a three-year period will result in a fine of £160 per parent, per child. If a third offence is committed the matter may be referred to the local authority for consideration of prosecution via the Magistrates Court. If prosecution is instigated for irregular school attendance, each parent/carer may receive a fine of up to £2500 and/or up to 3 months in prison. If a parent/carer is found guilty in court, they will receive a criminal conviction.

See Annex B for the Hertfordshire Code of Conduct.

**There is no entitlement in law for pupils to take time off during the term to go on holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure or recreation, or to take part in protest activity in school hours.** In addition, the Supreme Court has ruled that the definition of regular school attendance is “in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school.”

The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 set out the statutory requirements for schools. All references to family holidays and extended leave have been removed. **The amendments specify that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are "exceptional circumstances" and they do not have any discretion to authorise up to ten days of absence each academic year.**

It is a rule of this school that a leave of absence shall not be granted in term time unless there are reasons considered to be exceptional by the headteacher, irrespective of the child’s overall attendance. Only the headteacher or his/her designate (not the local authority) may authorise such a request and all applications for a leave of absence must be made in writing, in advance, on the prescribed form provided by the school. The school will usually consider that the parent who has made the application is therefore allowing the leave of absence, and that all parents who are on the holiday are allowing the leave. Where a parent removes a child after their application for leave was refused or where no application was made to the school, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. It is likely that penalty notices will be requested, in line with the National Framework and Hertfordshire Code of Conduct, in respect of each parent believed to have allowed the absence.

**At Brighter Futures Educational Trust 'exceptional circumstances' will be interpreted as:**

The fundamental principles for defining ‘exceptional’ are events that are “rare, significant, unavoidable and short”. By ‘unavoidable’ we mean an event that could not reasonably be scheduled at another time, outside of school term time, regardless of who has planned or paid for the holiday or absence (including grandparents or other family or friends).

The headteacher/school may discuss the leave of absence request with other education settings and/or the Local Authority to determine any exceptional circumstances.

If leave of absence is authorised, the school will not provide work for children to do during their absence. Parent/Carers are however advised to read with their children and encourage them to write a diary while they are away.

## 11. DELETION FROM ROLL

For any pupil leaving Larwood Primary School, other than at the end of year 6 or leaving Brandles secondary school other than at the end of year 11, parents/carers are required to complete a '*Pupils moving from school*' form which can be obtained from the school office. This provides school with the following information: Child's name, class, current address, date of leaving, new home address, name of new school, address of new school. This information is essential to ensure that we know the whereabouts and may appropriately safeguard all our pupils, even those who leave us.

It is crucial that parent/carers keep school updated with current addresses and contact details for the pupil and key family members, in case of emergency.

Under Pupil Regulations 2006, all schools are **legally required** to notify their Local Authority of **every new entry** to the admission register **within five days** of the pupil being enrolled. In addition to this, **every deletion** from the school register must also be notified to the Local Authority, as soon as the ground for deletion has been met in relation to that pupil, and in any event no later than the time at which the pupil's name is deleted from the register. This duty does not apply when a pupil's name is removed from the admission register at a standard transition point - when the pupil has completed the final year of education normally provided by that school.

## 12. ABSENCE DATA

We use data to monitor, identify and support individual pupils or groups of pupils when their attendance needs to improve, and schools are required to submit pupil attendance data to the Department for Education on a daily basis Education (Information about Individual Pupils) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024. Persistently and severely absent pupils are tracked and monitored carefully. We also combine this with academic tracking, as increased absence affects attainment.

We share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities, and other partners, when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.

## Annex A – DfE Guidance Summary Table of Responsibilities for School Attendance

(From 19th August 2024)

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65e8ae343649a2001aed63aa/Summary\\_table\\_of\\_responsibilities\\_for\\_school\\_attendance\\_applies\\_from\\_19\\_August\\_2024.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65e8ae343649a2001aed63aa/Summary_table_of_responsibilities_for_school_attendance_applies_from_19_August_2024.pdf)

### All pupils

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Ensure their child attends every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies.</p> <p>Notify the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent (e.g. sickness).</p> <p>Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance.</p> <p>Book any medical appointments around the school day where possible.</p>	<p>Have a clear school attendance policy on the school website which all staff, pupils and parents understand.</p> <p>Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance.</p> <p>Accurately complete admission and attendance registers.</p> <p>Have robust daily processes to follow up absence.</p> <p>Regularly monitor data to identify patterns and trends and understand which pupils and pupil cohorts to focus on.</p> <p>Have a dedicated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance.</p>	<p>Take an active role in attendance improvement, support their school(s) to prioritise attendance, and work together with leaders to set whole school cultures.</p> <p>Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.</p> <p>Use data to understand patterns of attendance, compare with other local schools, identify areas of progress and where greater focus is needed.</p> <p>Ensure school staff receive training on attendance.</p>	<p>Have a strategic approach to improving attendance for the whole area and make it a key focus of all frontline council services.</p> <p>Have a School Attendance Support Team that works with all schools in their area to remove area-wide barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Provide each school with a named point of contact in the School Attendance Support Team who can support with queries and advice.</p> <p>Offer opportunities for all schools in the area to share effective practice.</p>



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Educational Trust



### Persistently absent pupils

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.</p>	<p>Continue support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent and:</p> <p>Where absence becomes persistent, put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers. Where necessary this includes working with partners.</p> <p>Where there is a lack of engagement, hold more formal conversations with parents and be clear about the potential need for legal intervention in future.</p> <p>Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, work with the local authority on legal intervention.</p> <p>Where there are safeguarding concerns, intensify support through a referral to statutory children's social care.</p> <p>Work with other schools in the local area, such as schools previously attended and the schools of any siblings.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Continue support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent and:</p> <p>Work jointly with the school to provide formal support options including attendance contracts and education supervision orders.</p> <p>Where there are safeguarding concerns, ensure joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners.</p> <p>Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, enforce attendance through legal intervention (including prosecution as a last resort).</p>

### Severely absent pupils

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.</p>	<p>Continue support as for persistently absent pupils and:</p> <p>Agree a joint approach for all severely absent pupils with the local authority.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Continue support as for persistently absent pupils and:</p> <p>All services should make this group the top priority for support. This may include a whole family plan, consideration for an education, health and care plan, or alternative form of educational provision.</p> <p>Be especially conscious of any potential safeguarding issues, ensuring joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners. Where appropriate, this could include conducting a full children's social care assessment and building attendance into children in need and child protection plans.</p>



### Support for cohorts of pupils with lower attendance than their peers

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
Not applicable.	<p>Proactively use data to identify cohorts with, or at risk of, low attendance and develop strategies to support them.</p> <p>Work with other schools in the local area and the local authority to share effective practice where there are common barriers to attendance.</p>	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	Track local attendance data to prioritise support and unblock area wide attendance barriers where they impact numerous schools.

### Support for pupils with medical conditions or SEND with poor attendance

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered.</p>	<p>Maintain the same ambition for attendance and work with pupils and parents to maximise attendance.</p> <p>Ensure join up with pastoral support and where required, put in place additional support and adjustments, such as an individual healthcare plan and if applicable, ensuring the provision outlined in the pupil's EHCP is accessed.</p> <p>Consider additional support from wider services and external partners, making timely referrals.</p> <p>Regularly monitor data for such groups, including at board and governing body meetings and with local authorities.</p>	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	<p>Work closely with relevant services and partners, for example special educational needs, educational psychologists, and mental health services, to ensure joined up support for families.</p> <p>Ensure suitable education, such as alternative provision, is arranged for children of compulsory school age who because of health reasons would not otherwise receive a suitable education.</p>



### Support for pupils with a social worker

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered.</p>	<p>Know who the pupils who have, or who have had, a social worker are.</p> <p>Understand how the welfare, safeguarding, and child protection issues that they are experiencing, or have experienced, can have an impact on attendance – whilst maintaining a culture of high aspiration for the cohort.</p> <p>Provide additional academic support and make reasonable adjustments to help them, recognising that even when statutory social care intervention has ended, there can be a lasting impact on children's educational outcomes.</p> <p>Work in partnership with the local authority at a strategic and individual level, sharing data on attendance including, at an individual level, informing the pupil's social worker if there are any unexplained absences and if their name is to be deleted from the register.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Ensure that all Children's Social Care practitioners, understand the importance of good attendance for pupil's educational progress, for their welfare and their wider development – and understand their role in improving it.</p> <p>Through the work of Virtual School Heads, they should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake systemic monitoring and data sharing of the attendance of children with a social worker in their area: developing and implementing targeted cohort level interventions to improve attendance.</li> <li>• Provide advice, challenge and training to schools on how to promote and secure good attendance for children with a social worker.</li> <li>• Develop whole system approaches, with social care, to support the attendance of children in need.</li> </ul>

### Looked after and previously looked after children

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand the child's barriers to attendance – including the development of Personal Education Plans.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered.</p>	<p>Have high expectations for the cohort – with expert support and leadership provided by the designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after pupils.</p> <p>Work in partnership with the local authority Virtual School Head to develop and deliver high quality Personal Education Plans for looked-after children that support good attendance.</p> <p>Work directly with parents to develop good home-school links that support good attendance. For previously looked-after pupils this could include discussion on use of the Pupil Premium Plus funding managed by the school.</p>	<p>Designate a member of staff to have responsibility for the promotion of the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after pupils.</p> <p>Monitor and review attendance of the cohort and consider how school policies, including behaviour policies, are sensitive to their needs and support good attendance.</p>	<p>Promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children – doing everything possible to minimise disruption to education when a pupil enters care.</p> <p>(LA that looks after the child:) Appoint an expert Virtual School Head (VSH) – will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor, report on, and evaluate the education outcomes of looked after children, including their attendance, as if they attended a single school- whenever they live or are educated.</li> <li>• Ensure schools know when they have a pupil looked after by the authority on their role and that information is shared with the school on issues that may impact on their attendance.</li> <li>• Ensure that all looked-after pupils have high quality, up to date, effective Personal Education Plans developed in partnership with schools, social workers and carers – including, where necessary, clear interventions and use of pupil premium plus funding to support good attendance.</li> <li>• Provide expert advice and information on the education of previously looked-after pupils to schools and parents – including their attendance.</li> </ul>



## Monitoring

Parents:	Schools:	Academy trustees and governing bodies:	Local authorities:
<p>Schools regularly update parents on their child's attendance.</p> <p>(If parents feel the school and or local authority have not delivered what they are expected to they should discuss the case with the school and/or local authority's attendance support team.)</p>	<p>The school's Senior Attendance Champion will ensure all school based staff complete their attendance responsibilities in line with the school's policies and procedures.</p> <p>The governing board or academy trust will hold the headteacher of executive leadership to account for their delegated responsibilities and for compliance with regulatory and statutory requirements. They will review progress and provide challenge when required. The board will help school leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most and ensure that school staff receive adequate training on attendance.</p> <p>Ofsted will expect schools to do all they reasonably can to achieve the highest possible attendance as part of the behaviour and attitudes judgement. This includes, where attendance is not consistently at or above what could reasonably be expected, that schools have a strong understanding of the causes of absence (particularly for persistent and severe absence) and a clear strategy in place that takes account of those causes to improve attendance for all pupils.</p> <p>Ultimately, in cases where a school has not met expectations or statutory duties the Secretary of State can consider a complaint.</p>	<p>DfE Regions Group considers multi academy trusts' efforts on attendance as part of decision making.</p> <p>Ofsted considers governing bodies' efforts as part of inspections.</p>	<p>DfE Regions Group monitors local authority efforts as part of regular interaction.</p> <p>Ofsted may consider the local area partnership's approach to improving attendance of children and young people with SEND as part of the SEND Area Inspection, and the local authority's approach to improving attendance for children with a social worker through inspecting local authority children's services.</p> <p>Ultimately, in cases where a local authority has not met expectations or statutory duties the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman or the Secretary of State can consider a complaint.</p>

## Annex B – Hertfordshire Code of Conduct

### **PENALTY NOTICES FOR PARENTS OF TRUANTS AND PARENTS OF PUPILS EXCLUDED FROM SCHOOL ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR ACT 2003 SECTION 23**

[Penalty notices for unauthorised absence | Hertfordshire County Council](#)

## Annex C - Illness Absence Guidance

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/626669cb8fa8f523b7221b98/UKHSA-should-I-keep-my\\_child\\_off\\_school\\_guidance-A3-poster.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/626669cb8fa8f523b7221b98/UKHSA-should-I-keep-my_child_off_school_guidance-A3-poster.pdf)

[DfE external document template \(childrenscommissioner.gov.uk\)](#)

[Wellbeing: national resources - Hertfordshire Grid for Learning \(thegrid.org.uk\)](#)

[Illness and your child's education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

[Is my child too ill for school? - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)

## Annex D – Attendance Codes



**Statutory Attendance and Participation Team**  
**Summary of Attendance Codes and Meanings**  
**September 2024**



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

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

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

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

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

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

Code	Meaning	Criteria	Statistical Value
K	Attending Education provision arranged the LA.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The nature of the provision must also be recorded.</li> <li>Code K can only be used if the child is present at the provision.</li> </ul>	Attending an approved educational activity (present)
V	Attending an Educational visit or trip	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The pupil is attending a place, other than the school or any other school at which they are a registered pupil, for an educational visit or trip.</li> <li>Arranged by or on behalf of the school and supervised by a member of school staff.</li> <li>The visit or trip must take place during the session for which it is recorded.</li> <li>Code V can only be used if the pupil is present at the visit.</li> </ul>	Attending an approved educational activity (present)
P	Participating in a Sporting Activity P code can only be used if the pupil is present at the activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>P code can only be used if the pupil is present at the activity The sporting activity must take place during the session for which it is recorded.</li> <li>The place is somewhere other than the school, another school where the pupil is registered, or a place where educational provision has been arranged for the pupil by a local authority under section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996 or sections 42(2) or 61(1) of the Children and Families Act 2014.</li> <li>the activity is of an educational nature.</li> <li>the school has approved the pupil's attendance at the place for the activity; and</li> <li>the activity is supervised by a person considered by the school to have the appropriate skills, training, experience, and knowledge to ensure that the activity takes place safely and fulfils the educational purpose for which the pupil's attendance has been approved.</li> </ul>	Attending an approved educational activity (present)



W	Attending Work Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• W code can only be used if the pupil is present at the activity Under arrangements by school or LA</li> <li>• In session for which it is recorded</li> <li>• The place is somewhere other than the school, another school where the pupil is registered, or a place where educational provision has been arranged for the pupil by a local authority under section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996 or sections 42(2) or 61(1) of the Children and Families Act 2014.</li> <li>• the activity is of an educational nature.</li> <li>• the school has approved the pupil's attendance at the place for the activity; and</li> <li>• the activity is supervised by a person considered by the school to have the appropriate skills, training, experience, and knowledge to ensure that the activity takes place safely and fulfils the educational purpose for which the pupil's attendance has been approved.</li> </ul>	Attending an approved educational activity (present)
B	Attending any other approved Educational Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• B code can only be used if the pupil is present at the activity Under arrangements by school or LA</li> <li>• In session for which it is recorded</li> <li>• The place is somewhere other than the school, another school where the pupil is registered, or a place where educational provision has been arranged for the pupil by a local authority under section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996 or sections 42(2) or 61(1) of the Children and Families Act 2014.</li> <li>• the activity is of an educational nature.</li> <li>• the school has approved the pupil's attendance at the place for the activity; and</li> <li>• the activity is supervised by a person considered by the school to have the appropriate skills, training, experience, and knowledge to ensure that the activity takes place safely and fulfils the educational purpose for which the pupil's attendance has been approved.</li> <li>• As set out in the DfE's guidance on 'Providing remote education', pupils who are absent from school and receiving remote education still need to be recorded as absent using the most appropriate absence code. Schools should keep a record of, and monitor pupil's engagement with remote education, but this is not formally tracked in the attendance register</li> </ul>	Attending an approved educational activity (present)
D	Dual Registered at another school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school at which the pupil is scheduled to attend must record the pupil's attendance and absence with the relevant code.</li> <li>• Code D may only be used by either school for a session where the pupil is scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered.</li> </ul>	Not a possible attendance (neither present or absent)



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby all unexpected and unexplained absences are promptly followed u</li> </ul>	
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**3. If a pupil is absent with leave (NB schools not required to follow regulation 11 in granting a leave of absence should still use the relevant code)**

Code	Meaning	Criteria	Statistical Value
<b>C1</b>	Leave of absence – performance or regulated employment abroad	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Performance licence issued by LA or</li> <li>Body of Persons Approval issued by LA or</li> <li>Justice of peace has given licence for pupil to go abroad for performance or regulated purpose</li> </ul>	Authorised absence
<b>M</b>	Leave of absence for Medical or dental Appointment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agreement in advance</li> <li>Application by parent child normally lives with</li> <li>Minimum time necessary</li> <li>Where pupil is absent at registration</li> </ul>	Authorised absence
<b>J1</b>	Leave of absence for Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agreement in Advance</li> <li>Application by parent child normally lives with</li> <li>In session absence recorded</li> </ul>	Authorised absence
<b>S</b>	Leave of absence for Studying for public examination		Authorised absence
<b>X</b>	Non – Compulsory School age pupil not required to attend school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For part time attendance</li> <li>Absence for timetabled sessions to use appropriate code and not X</li> </ul>	Not a possible attendance (neither present or absent)
<b>C2</b>	Leave of absence – compulsory school age pupil subject to part time timetable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exceptional circumstances</li> <li>if the school and a parent who the pupil normally lives with have agreed that, exceptionally, the pupil should temporarily be educated only part-time.</li> <li>Temporary</li> <li>See Working Together to improve attendance</li> </ul>	Authorised Absence
<b>C</b>	Leave of absence exceptional circumstances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exceptional circumstances</li> <li>No blanket approach</li> <li>School discretion</li> <li>Generally, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance.</li> </ul>	Authorised absence

**4. Pupil Absent other Authorised reasons**

Code	Meaning	Criteria	Statistical Value
<b>T</b>	Parent travelling for occupational purposes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The pupil is a mobile child, and their parent(s) is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with them. A mobile child is a child of compulsory school age who has no fixed abode and whose parent(s) is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require them to travel from place to place.</li> <li>To help ensure continuity of education for pupils, when their parent(s) is travelling for occupational purposes in England, it is expected that the pupil should attend a school</li> </ul>	Authorised absence



		where their parent(s) is travelling and be dual registered at that school and their main school.	
R	Religious Observance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The pupil is absent on a day that is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body the parent(s) belong to (not the parents themselves)</li> </ul>	Authorised Absence
I	Illness ( not medical appointment)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The pupil is unable to attend due to illness (both physical and mental health related). Schools should advise parents to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness.</li> </ul>	Authorised Absence
E	Suspended or permanently excluded with no alternative provision made	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The pupil is suspended from school or permanently excluded from school, but their name is still entered in the admission register, and no alternative provision has been made for the pupil to continue their education</li> </ul>	Authorised Absence

**5. Pupil Absent – Unavoidable Cause**

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



<b>Y5</b>	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention	<p>The pupil is unable to attend the school because they are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in police detention,</li> <li>• remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial, or sentencing, or</li> <li>• detained under a sentence of detention.</li> </ul> <p>A pupil's absence should be recorded under code Y7 (Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause) if they are unable to attend because they are serving a community based (i.e., non-detained) part of a sentence of detention, referral order, or youth rehabilitation order that requires them to be absent during the school day</p>	<b>Not a possible attendance</b>
<b>Y6</b>	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law	<p>The pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• contrary to any guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of infection or disease published by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care (or the equivalent in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland), or</li> <li>• prohibited by any legislation relating to the incidence or transmission of infection or disease.</li> </ul>	<b>Not a possible attendance</b>
<b>Y7</b>	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause	<p>This code should be used only where something in the nature of an emergency has prevented the pupil from attending the session in question. The unavoidable cause must be something that affects the pupil, not the parent. The fact that a parent has done all they can to secure the attendance of the pupil at school does not, in itself, mean the pupil has been prevented by unavoidable cause. Schools must also record the nature of the unavoidable cause (regulation 10(6))</p>	<b>Not a possible attendance</b>

**6. Absent for unauthorised reasons.**

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



		parent. All schools are expected to set out in their attendance policy the length of time the register will be open, after which a pupil will be marked as absent. This should be the same for every session and not longer than 30 minutes	
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**Administrative Codes**

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