

Attendance Policy

Next to be reviewed: September 2028

Last reviewed: September 2026

(Policy revised to include the statutory guidance published by the DfE 29 February 2024 'Working together to improve school attendance' that is now a statutory requirement since in KCSIE July 25)

CONTACT US

 01924 251 605

 @ketthighschool

 www.kettlethorpehigh.co.uk

Contents

MVE	4
Mission	4
Vision.....	4
Ethos.....	4
Purpose	5
Why attendance matters	5
How attendance affects attainment (DfE)	5
The long-term impact on earnings	5
The law on school attendance and a right to full time education	6
Working together to improve attendance	6
Support.....	7
Duties and Responsibilities	8
Pupil registration	8
Parents' and carers' roles	9
Deputy Head Teacher and Progress Leaders	9
Year Managers.....	10
Form Tutors.....	10
Subject Teachers	10
School Attendance Team.....	11
Local Authority Educational Welfare Officer (EWO).....	11
Punctuality to school and lessons	12
Rewards and Incentives.....	12
Absence (First day)	13
Unplanned Absence	13
Fifth Day Absence.....	14
Authorised Absence / Leave of Absence Requests.....	14
Appointments.....	14
Other authorised absence	14
Unauthorised absence.....	15
Holidays in term time	15
Persistent absentees	15
Broken weeks	15
Mental Health	16
Teenage pregnancy	16
National threshold to issuing a penalty notice	16

Dual registration.....	19
Suspensions (with no alternate provision made).....	19
Attendance legal intervention.....	19
Attendance Plans.....	20
Education supervision orders	21
Parenting orders.....	21
Attendance prosecution	22
Useful Links	23
Appendix 1 – National framework for penalty notices	25
Appendix 2 – Attendance codes.....	26

MVE

At Kettlethorpe High School, staff and pupils embrace the mission, vision and ethos of the school. These should be at the forefront of our minds when setting objectives to further our professional development to support a community of belonging for all stakeholders and the wider community of the school.

Mission

‘Together, be the best we can be.’

Working as a team to support each other, share our strengths, and strive for excellence in everything we do. We embrace collaboration, respect, and growth, so that we can achieve our dreams as individuals and as a community.

Vision

Present

Being fully engaged, both physically and mentally, in all aspects of teaching & learning and as a result creating a positive and focused environment for learning. We arrive on time, we are known, we are focused during lessons and actively participate in school activities to make the most of every opportunity.

Achieving

Setting personal and academic goals, then working hard and persevering to reach them. We push ourselves to grow, overcoming challenges, and celebrating progress, whether it's through improved grades, developing new skills, or contributing to our school community.

Excelling

Going beyond the minimum expectations and consistently striving for excellence in all areas—academics, extracurriculars, and personal development. We push our limits, demonstrate pride in our work, and continually seek ways to improve and make a positive impact.

Ethos

Be Kind

Be Respectful

Be Reflective

Be Resilient

Be Responsible

Purpose

This is to promote excellent attendance which will contribute to maintaining a positive school ethos and culture so that each pupil flourishes academically and personally. It is vital pupils attend school **everyday** to secure success in their academic achievements and personal wellbeing. Our Mission is '**Together, be the best we can be**', working as a Team to support each other and by ensuring all students are **present** and are on time. Students who are **present** will **achieve and excel dependent** on their Attitude to Learning.

Why attendance matters

At Kettlethorpe High School we insist on the highest level of attendance from all our pupils so they may thrive during their time at school. It is our aim to maintain a culture of strong academic progress, excellent attendance and punctuality. Missing out on education has a significant effect on pupils' life opportunities. There is a clear link shown in research between attendance and attainment in GCSEs. Irregular attendance can have a significant impact on pupil achievement. At Kettlethorpe High School we have strong evidence which links pupils progress with good attendance.

The DfE have provided evidence of the impact of attendance on students' learning and lifetime earnings.

How attendance affects attainment (DfE)

Recent research by the Department for Education shows just how closely [attendance](#) and attainment are linked.

At primary school, children who attend school nearly every day in Year 6 (95-100% attendance) are 30% more likely to reach the expected standard in reading, writing and maths compared to similar pupils who attend 90-95% of the time.

The link is even stronger at secondary school. Year 11 pupils with near-perfect attendance are almost twice as likely to achieve grade 5 in English and Maths GCSE, compared to similar pupils attending 90-95% of the time. In other words, missing just 10 extra days a year reduces the likelihood of achieving these grades by around 50%.

The long-term impact on earnings

Missing school does not just affect exam results and a child's time in education – it can impact future earnings too.

Persistently absent pupils in secondary school could earn £10,000 less at age 28 compared to pupils with near-perfect attendance.

For each additional day of absence between Years 7 to 11, the typical pupil could miss out on an average of £750 in future lifetime earnings. ([Source, DfE](#))

Everyone associated with the school - pupils, parents, carers, all teaching and support staff and external agencies - must do all in their power to ensure that excellent attendance and punctuality maintain an integral part of the school's work. We aim to highlight and resolve any difficulties regarding a pupil's attendance as early as possible, using our rigorous monitoring and intervention procedures and pastoral support.

If necessary, the Educational Welfare Officer will be involved in more complex cases.

The law on school attendance and a right to full time education

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. Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 states that "if a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, his parent is guilty of an offence."

Where parents/carers decide to have their child registered at school, **they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly**. 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.

Working together to improve attendance

Successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance - at home, in school or more broadly - requires schools and local partners to work collaboratively with, not against families. All partners should work together to:

Expect

Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents/carers and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.

Monitor

Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.

Listen and understand

When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents/carers to listen to and understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.

Facilitate support

Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents/carers to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.

Formalise support

Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through an attendance contract or education supervision order.

Enforce

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention: a penalty notice in line with the National Framework or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

Support

Many children will experience normal but difficult emotions that make them nervous about attending school, such as worries about friendships, schoolwork, examinations or variable moods. It is important to note that these pupils are still expected to attend school regularly - in many instances, attendance at school may serve to help with the underlying issue as being away from school might exacerbate it, and a prolonged period of absence may heighten anxious feelings about attending in future.

In these cases, the school will work alongside families to ensure that such circumstances do not act as a barrier to regular attendance by mitigating anxious feelings in school as much as possible.

Some pupils face more complex barriers to attendance. This can include pupils who have long term physical or mental health conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Their right to an education is the same as any other pupil and therefore the attendance ambition for these pupils should be the same as it is for any other pupil, but additional support may need to be provided.

In developing this support, the school will:

- Understanding the individual needs of the pupil and family

- Working in partnership with the pupil and family to put in-school support in place and working with other the local authority and other agencies where external support is needed (and available)
- Regularly reviewing and updating the support approach to make sure it continues to meet individual needs.

In cases of both long-term physical or mental ill health, school staff are not expected to diagnose or treat physical or mental health conditions, but they are expected to work together with families and other agencies with the aim of ensuring regular attendance for every pupil.

In developing this support, the school will:

- Facilitate any relevant pastoral support with the clear aim of improving attendance as much as possible whilst supporting the underlying health issue.
- Consider adjustments to practice and policies to help meet the needs of pupils who are struggling to attend school. Any adjustments should be agreed by and regularly reviewed with the pupil and their parents/carers.
- Ensure joined up pastoral care is in place where needed and consider whether a time-limited phased return to school would be appropriate, for example for those affected by anxious feelings about school attendance.
- Make a sickness return to the local authority if a pupil is recorded in the attendance register as absent using code I (unable to attend because of sickness) and there are reasonable grounds to believe the pupil will have to miss 15 consecutive school days or more for illness or the pupil's total number of school days missed during the current school year because of illness (whether consecutive or cumulative) will reach or exceed 15 school days.

Duties and Responsibilities

Pupil registration

There are four broad classifications in attendance registers:

Present – the pupil is on the premises at the time of registration.

Approved Educational Activity – the pupil is engaged in an approved, supervised activity off site, for example field trip, educational visit, sporting activity or work experience.

Authorised Absence – an absence authorised by school which includes illness, medical appointments, bereavement or other circumstances where the school deems attendance to be inappropriate.

Unauthorised Absence – an absence where the pupil does not have good cause to be missing from school. Unauthorised absence can be defined in the following ways:

Truancy – this is action by pupils who fail to attend school when they should, including leaving the school premises after registration.

School refusal – this is chronic non-attendance over a period of time, usually an indicator of wider family, psychological or behavioural problems.

Parents' and carers' roles

Parents/carers have a vital role in promoting good attitudes in attendance as evidence shows that pupils who attend school regularly make better progress both academically and socially. We ask for support from parents/carers to:

- Ensure that their children are present at every opportunity
- Arrive on time
- Avoid allowing children to stay at home unnecessarily
- Avoid taking them out of school without authorisation.
- Inform school promptly, and **before 8.30 am** of any absences due to illness or medical appointments, by telephone or Edulink.
- Seek authorisation for exceptional circumstances by completing a Leave of Absence form at least two weeks in advance
- Not booking holidays during term time

Deputy Head Teacher and Progress Leaders

- Oversee and monitor whole school attendance and punctuality, initiating whole school policies as required. This will be achieved by liaison with the Senior Leadership Team and other relevant members of the Pastoral, Inclusion and Learning Support Teams.
- Support the Form Tutors and teaching staff in promoting good attendance and punctuality.
- Liaise with the Educational Welfare Services (EWS), Attendance Team, Year Managers and SENDCO as well as Progress Leaders to devise any necessary re-integration programmes for pupils who are persistent absentees (PA) or at risk of long-term absence.
- The school senior leader for attendance is the Deputy Headteacher, contacted via headteacher@kettlethorpe.wakefield.sch.uk or by telephone on the main school number 01924 251 605.

Year Managers

- Meet regularly with the Attendance Team and other relevant staff to monitor attendance and punctuality for their year groups (including the monitoring of relevant sub-groups).
- Intervene early to arrange and attend meetings with parents/carers and relevant staff where there are attendance issues (e.g. subject truancy).
- Promote good attendance through assemblies
- Offer support and work closely with the parents/carers of pupils who are persistent absentees or at risk of becoming so. The protocol is built around early intervention and communication with parents/carers to maximise and maintain good attendance.
- Support the Attendance team with morning attendance calls of 'N' coded students and conduct home visits when there are issues with punctuality and/or school refusal.

Form Tutors

- Take a 'Safe register' at the start of each lesson by calling the students' names, checking they are present and counting the students in the lesson
- Encourage all pupils in their form to maintain excellent attendance and punctuality.
- Record attendance in planners of each pupil in the tutor group.
- Direct any correspondence from parents/carers about specific future absences to the Attendance Team.
- Keep an overview of pupils' attendance and check patterns of absence and poor punctuality.
- Discuss attendance with parents as part of the roll in ensuring communication with parents and student wellbeing.
- Recognise any patterns or concerns around punctuality and attendance and consult with parents/carers and/or the Attendance Team and Safeguarding

Subject Teachers

- Take a 'Safe register' at the start of each lesson by calling the students' names, checking they are present and counting the students in the lesson
- Notify colleagues by pressing the 'Missing from Lesson' button within 10 minutes of the lesson starting of any students missing that were present earlier in the day
- Update the register for pupils arriving late and apply necessary sanctions.

- Pass on any concerns about absentees from lessons to the Attendance Team as soon as possible.
- Supply the main office with a list of names and teaching staff if taking pupils out of school or for any reason. The attendance team should be given two weeks' notice to ensure accurate recording of attendance.
- Inform colleagues of any pupils taking part in events in school that require pupils to be off timetable at least two weeks in advance.

School Attendance Team

- Compile all attendance data and information for relevant staff.
- Make contact with parents/carers on the first day of absence for all pupils where the reason for absence is unknown. This may involve telephoning/texting/emailing all parents/carers when contact hasn't been made.
- Contact parents/carers should any pupil leave the site without permission by text or by speaking to parent/carer.
- Work closely with the Senior Leadership Team, Key Stage Progress Leaders, Year Managers, Form Tutors and local authority education welfare officer to monitor pupils who present concerns. This will include home visits.

Oversee the phone calls made to parents regarding absence and update the weekly student visit list

- Updating parents with regards to weekly attendance and celebrating achievements.

Local Authority Educational Welfare Officer (EWO)

- Work closely with relevant staff to establish caseload and feedback information on work in progress.
- Liaise with Attendance Team to ensure communication is up to date.
- Attend school attendance meetings organised by the Attendance Team to monitor individual pupils' attendance who have been identified by the EWO (caseload).
- Organise all panel meetings where necessary.
- Carry out home visits for pupils monitored (caseload).
- Advise on legal proceedings.

Punctuality to school and lessons

All pupils are expected to arrive on time and be ready and punctual for lessons. Being **present** is a minimum expectation. They should arrive before 8.40am and enter the school through the gates leading onto the Key Stage 3 area. All other gates to the school site will be locked. Pupils will be in registration by 8.40 am, ready to start learning. The school bell will sound at 8:35 am to indicate pupil movement, another bell will sound at 8.40 am. After 8.40 am all school gates will be locked, pupils will need to enter the school site through the late gate at the Attendance Office next to the main reception. Pupils must record the reason for being late before entering the site. The school will follow a staged response to poor punctuality.

Pupils arriving after 8.40 am will receive a 20 minute detention. Tutors will confirm the late (L) mark on SIMS and input the time that the student arrived.

Pupils arriving regularly late will receive a telephone call home from the Form Tutor to establish the reason for the pupil being late. This will be recorded.

Pupils who continue to arrive late to school will be referred to their Head of Year to determine appropriate incentives and sanctions.

Pupils arriving after 9.10 am, will receive a U code on their registration record and a 40-minute detention. This is an unauthorised absence. If your child continues to be persistently late, you will be contacted by the school via a letter, text message or email. The pupil will be tracked by the attendance team and interventions put in place to improve the child's punctuality. These interventions could include external agencies.

Please be aware, that if a child receives more than ten U codes on their registration record in ten weeks, this could result in a fixed penalty notice being issued. Further details about the national framework for fixed penalty notices can be found in under the heading **National Threshold to issuing a penalty notice (page 16)**. All pupils must arrive at lessons on time and register with their teachers. Pupils not registering create a safeguarding risk to themselves. Failure not to register could lead to pupils being marked not present and awarded an unauthorised absence (O code).

Pupils not arriving to lessons on time will be issued a late mark (L) and a 20-minute detention will be issued to the pupil. Further sanctions, including suspensions, may be used if there are safeguarding concerns resulting from truancy.

Rewards and Incentives

Attendance is monitored weekly. It is celebrated in registration periods, assemblies and award evenings. Our rewards system recognises weekly, half-termly, termly and annual 100% attendance and encourages pupils to monitor their own attendance and punctuality in their pupil planner. We also reward improvements to attendance and other attendance challenges.

Summary Of Attendance Incentives

Frequency	Incentive/Reward
Weekly	Weekly draw in attendance for 100%
	100% attendance text home
Half Termly	Badges for 100%
	Certificates for 100% and/or zero lates
	Recognition of most improved attendance and punctuality
Annually	Attendance at the Kettlethorpe Carnival

Absence (First day)

If a child is too ill to attend school, parents/carers should contact the school as soon as possible. This can be through either:

- Telephone on 01924 251605 **before 8.30am** and leave a voicemail with the child's details and the reason for absence
- Report an absence via the Edulink app or the school website

They must give the child's name, year group and the reason for the absence. We ask that parents and carers contact us **each day** that the child is absent unless there is a clear indication of how long the absence will last. The school will ask for medical evidence for any absence of more than a week or if your child's attendance is below 95%. Without this evidence, in some circumstances, the absence will not be authorised. Parents/carers should not contact the child's tutor directly with regards to attendance related matters. The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

Unplanned Absence

School will contact parents/carers via a text message as a method of first response, if a child is absent without advance warning. When no contact is made for vulnerable children, the school will endeavour to phone or carry out a home visit, or contact the relevant services involved supporting the family where appropriate. When carrying out a home visit, calling cards will be left to identify when and why the caller has visited the property.

When no information has been provided, school will send a text to the parents/carers to inform them that the non-attendance will remain unauthorised until an appropriate response has been provided by parents/carers, also potentially invite the parents/carers for a school meeting to ascertain where support can be offered ensuring that the parents/carers or guardians understand the seriousness of the situation. In the case of a child in care, the social worker must also be informed and invited in their capacity of holding parental responsibility.

Fifth Day Absence

By the fifth day of absence when no contact has been established by the parents/carers and school, therefore the child hasn't been seen, school is required to start child missing from education procedures as set down in the school safeguarding guidance. School and relevant agencies will make all reasonable enquiries to establish contact with parents/carers and the child, including making enquires to known friends and wider family. If it is deemed relevant a police welfare check may be relevant. In the case of a child in care, the social worker must also be informed and invited in their capacity of holding parental responsibility. At home visit may take place before the fifth day, to support the return to school.

Authorised Absence / Leave of Absence Requests

Appointments

We ask that, where possible, parents make routine medical and other appointments out of

school time so as not to impact on your child's learning. If this is not possible, we require notification in advance. Please telephone or use the Edulink app to notify us as far in advance as possible, ideally two weeks prior. Please avoid last minute appointments as staff are not always available to collect a pupil from a classroom. All communication with school should be in accordance with the school's communication policy.

In most cases, wherever possible children must attend school before the appointment and return to school afterwards wherever possible. Pupils should go to the attendance office to sign out and back in on their return. All these procedures are very important as in the event of a fire drill it is vital there is an accurate record of who is on the school site at that time.

We need to see the appointment letter/card as evidence to authorise the absence. All day medical appointments will not be authorised without medical evidence.

Other authorised absence

Certain days hold special relevance for various religious communities including Eid al-Fitr & Eid al-Adha for Muslims, Diwali for Hindus, and Pesach for Jews. Pre-authorised absence can be given for religious observance. Other genuine reasons for absence – with pre-authorisation – include funerals, interviews and attending sporting events. Please complete a leave of absence form on the school website providing evidence of the reason for absence at least two weeks in advance of the absence. The Headteacher will decide if this absence will be classed as authorised or unauthorised. When a pupil is suspended from school, this absence will be authorised.

Unauthorised absence

Certain types of absence will be marked as unauthorised, for example shopping for uniform, looking after siblings, birthdays or day trips, etc. Absences where the parents/carers have not given the school a reason are also recorded as unauthorised.

If your child arrives at school after the morning registers have closed (9.10am) they will be marked as an unauthorised absence. They will get their afternoon mark if they attend as normal.

Holidays in term time

The Government strongly urges parents/carers to avoid taking their children out of school for family holidays as this will disrupt their education. Whilst we understand the difficulties parents/carers may have in organising holidays during the school holidays and the benefits to be had from cheaper term-time holidays, this type of absence is detrimental to a child's education.

There is a common misconception that any child is allowed to take 10 days holiday per year. This is not true. Parents/carers are entitled to request leave of absence from the school. The headteacher will not authorise absence except in exceptional circumstances.

Any request should be made well in advance by completing a leave of absence request form obtained electronically via the school website

<https://kettlethorpehigh.co.uk/attendance/>

Where a parental request has been refused, and parents/carers continue to take their child out of school, this absence will be recorded as unauthorised. We reserve the right to apply to the Local Authority to issue a Penalty Notice under the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003. Failure to pay can result in prosecution in the Magistrates Court. This legislation also applies if no prior application has been made or where a false reason for the absence has been provided. To support parents/carers who wish to book family holidays, school term dates for the current and the next year are published on our website as soon as they are available.

Persistent absentees

The Department for Education's threshold at which a pupil is defined as 'persistently absent' is missing 10% or more of school across the year for whatever reason. Where a pupil's attendance record reaches a concerning level and is approaching persistently absent, we will contact you to discuss ways in which the school can support you and your child.

Broken weeks

The school analyses 'broken weeks' data to identify how often a pupil has at least one day off a week. Multiple broken weeks can lead to lost learning and gaps in knowledge. If we become concerned about the number of broken weeks or a possible pattern developing, we will contact you to discuss our concerns.

Mental Health

A rise in school absence includes a significant number of cases where reasons for not attending include those linked to emotionally based factors, particularly anxiety. 'Emotionally Based School Avoidance' is not a diagnosis, but an umbrella term for this issue, which can be attributed to a multitude of factors and barriers.

The Wakefield approach to attendance difficulties including EBSA aims to enable schools to identify the underlying needs and barriers in each case, so that any which include elements of anxiety can be provided with appropriate support and intervention following an evidence-based framework of support.

It is important to note that these pupils are still expected to attend school regularly - in many instances, attendance at school may serve to help with the underlying issue as being away from school might exacerbate it, and a prolonged period of absence may heighten anxious feelings about attending in future.

School staff play a critical role in communicating this expectation to parents/carers. They should also work alongside families to ensure that such circumstances do not act as a barrier to regular attendance by mitigating anxious feelings in school as much as possible.

In cases of both long term physical or mental ill health, school staff are not expected to diagnose or treat physical or mental health conditions, but they are expected to work together with families and other agencies with the aim of ensuring regular attendance for every pupil.

The DfE also published guidance recently regarding mental health issues affecting school attendance:

[Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools – GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/mental-health-issues-affecting-a-pupil-s-attendance-guidance-for-schools)
(www.gov.uk)

Teenage pregnancy

Schools should follow procedures in line with their safeguarding and risk assessment policies. Further advice may be sought from the School Nursing Service and the Family Nurse Partnership in order to work with the expectant mothers to ensure they reach their educational potential whilst allowing time for medical appointments and an agreed period of maternity leave in addition to a supported return to school after the child is born.

National threshold to issuing a penalty notice

All state funded schools must consider whether a penalty notice is appropriate in each individual case where one of their pupils reaches the 'National Threshold' for considering a penalty notice. Schools should not have a blanket position of issuing or not issuing penalty notices and should make judgements on each individual case to ensure fairness and consistency across the country. The 'National Threshold' is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks. A school week means any week in which there is at least one school session. This can be met with any combination of unauthorised absence (e.g. 4 sessions of holiday taken in term time plus 6 sessions of arriving late after the register closes all within 10 school weeks). These sessions can be consecutive (e.g. 10 sessions of holiday in one week) or not (e.g. 6 sessions of unauthorised absence taken in 1 week and 1 per week for the next 4 weeks). The period of 10 school weeks can also span different terms or school years (e.g. 2 sessions of unauthorised absence in the Summer Term and a further 8 within the Autumn Term).

More information on penalty notices can be found in Appendix 1.

Dual registration

The law allows for dual registration of pupils at more than one school. The main examples of dual registration are when two institutes have shared responsibility for the pupils. They may be attending a pupil referral unit, a hospital school or a special school on a temporary basis.

Suspensions (with no alternate provision made)

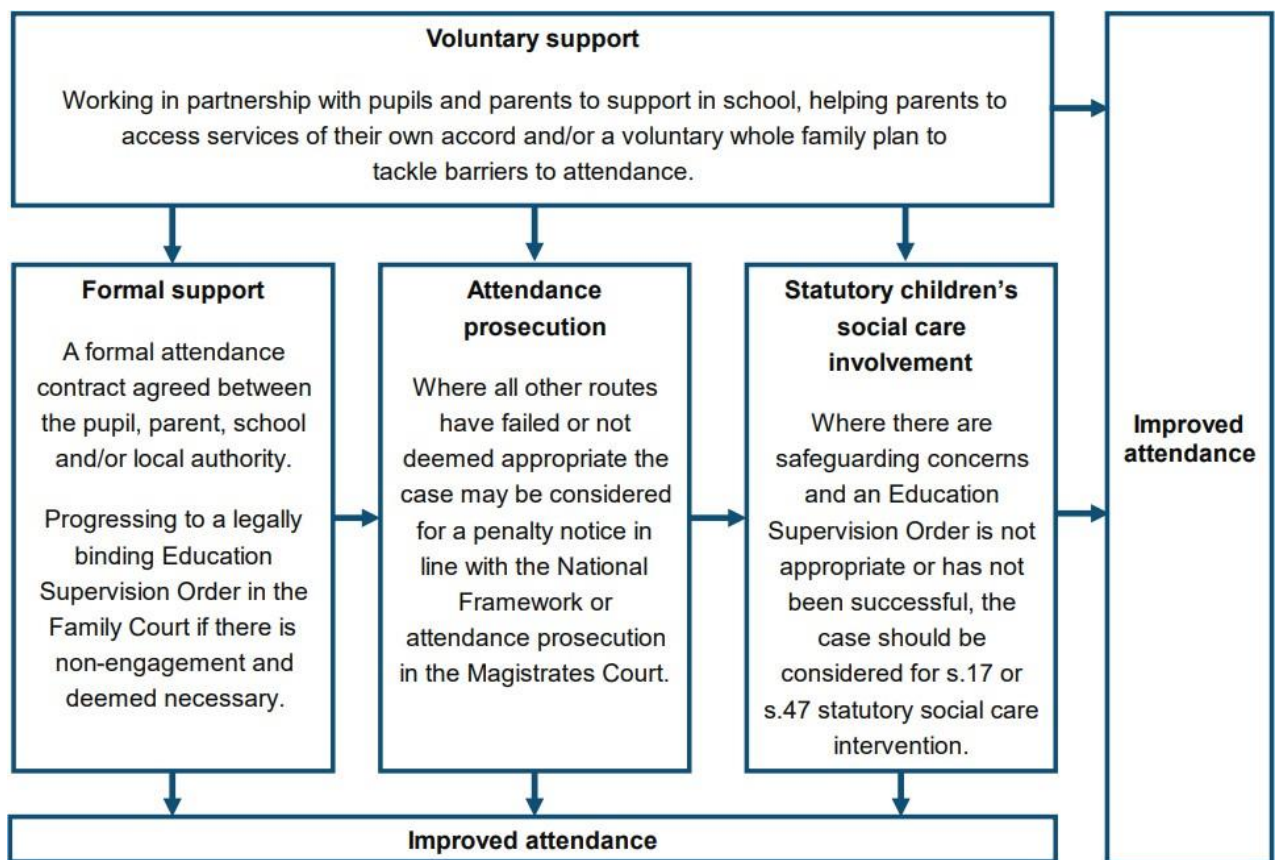
Suspensions are counted as authorised absence. Work will be provided to complete at home.

A decision to suspend a pupil will be taken only in response to serious or persistent breaches of the school's behaviour policy. Pupils who are suspended should remain at home. If the school has evidence that a pupil has been present in a public place during a suspension period, the parents/carers of the pupils are at risk of receiving a fixed penalty notice.

Attendance legal intervention

As absence is so often a symptom of wider issues a family is facing, schools, trusts and local authorities should always work together with other local partners to understand the barriers to attendance and provide support. Where that is not successful, or is not engaged with, the law protects pupils' right to an education and provides a range of legal interventions to formalise attendance improvement efforts, and where all other avenues have been exhausted, enforce it through prosecuting parents/carers. Attendance legal intervention can only be used for pupils of compulsory school age and decisions should be made on an individual case by case basis.

Providing support first before attendance legal intervention



Attendance Plans

An attendance plan is a formal written agreement between a parent and either the school or local authority to address irregular attendance at school or alternative provision. An attendance plan is not legally binding but allows a more formal route to secure engagement with support where a voluntary early help plan has not worked or is not deemed appropriate. An attendance plan is not a punitive tool, it is intended to provide support and offer an alternative to prosecution. Parents/carers cannot be compelled to enter an attendance plan, and they cannot be agreed in a parent's absence. There is no obligation on the school or local authority to offer an attendance plan, and it may not be appropriate in every instance, but an attendance plan should always be explored before moving forward to an education supervision order or prosecution. The aim from the outset should be for the parent(s), and the pupil where they are old enough, the school and the local authority to work in partnership. Where a school decides to use an attendance plan, a meeting

should be arranged with the parent(s). It should include the pupil if they are old enough to understand. The meeting should explain the purpose of an attendance plan and why using one would be beneficial in the family's circumstances. The parent(s) should be asked to outline their views on the pupil's attendance at school, any underlying issues and how they believe these should be addressed. The meeting should also allow them to share their views on the idea of an attendance plan and what type of support they think would be helpful to secure the pupil's regular attendance. Where a parent fails to attend the meeting without good reason or notification, further attempts should be made to contact them and arrange another meeting but all attempts at support should be recorded. One attendance plan may be arranged with all parents/carers, or in circumstances where it is desirable to have different requirements for each parent then separate attendance plans for each parent should be arranged.

Education supervision orders

Where a voluntary early help plan, or formal parenting plan has not been successful, an Education Supervision Order (ESO) can be a useful alternative to provide formal legal intervention without criminal prosecution. In deciding whether to progress to an ESO, the school and local authority should have exhausted voluntary support and be clear that making the order would be beneficial for the pupil and parent. Where safeguarding concerns exist, the lead practitioner should also discuss with the school's designated safeguarding lead and children's social care services and agree an ESO would be a more suitable option than a s.17 (Children in Need) or s.47 (Child Protection) plan. In all cases, local authorities must fully consider using an ESO before moving forward to prosecution.

The order initially lasts for one year, but extensions can be secured within the last 3 months for a period of up to 3 years at a time.

Parenting orders

Parenting orders are an ancillary order that can be imposed by the Court following conviction for non-attendance alongside a fine and/or community order. Parents/carers' agreement is not required before an order is made. They may be appropriate where the parent has not engaged in support to improve their child's attendance and where compulsion to do so would help change parental behaviour.

Attendance prosecution

If a child of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly at a school at which they are registered, or at a place where alternative provision is provided for them, their parents/carers may be guilty of an offence and can be prosecuted by the local authority.

Prosecution in the Magistrates Court is the last resort where all other voluntary and formal support or legal intervention has failed or where support has been deemed inappropriate in the circumstances of the individual case.

Useful Links

1. Document links and acknowledgements

The policy was drawn up using a range of national documents and legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

Children's Act 1989 – section 36

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/section/36>

The Education Act 1996

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/contents>

Education Act 1996 – section 7

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/section/7>

Education Act 1996 - 342

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/section/342>

Education Act 1996 - 437(3)

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/section/437>

Education Act 1996- 444, 444(i) & 444(1A)

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/section/444>

Education Act 1996-576

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/section/574>

The Education Act 2011

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/21/contents/enacted>

Safeguarding Duty under section 175 of the Education Act 2002

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/section/175>

Education and Inspections Act 2006

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/contents>

Education and Inspections Act 2006, section 103

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/section/103>

Education - The Registration (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 – Regulations 8

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/1751/made>

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/1725/contents/made>

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2011/1625/contents/made>

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/756/contents/made>

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2016/792/contents/made>

The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/757/contents/made>

Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE)

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1984/60/contents>

[Working together to improve school attendance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/) May 2022

School Attendance parental responsibility measures – January 2015. Statutory guidance for local authorities, school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and the police.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/581539/School_attendance_parental_responsibility_measures_statutory_guidance.pdf

[School census 2017 to 2018: guide for schools and LAs](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-census-2017-to-2018-guide-for-schools-and-las)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-census-2017-to-2018-guide-for-schools-and-las>

[Designated Teacher for Looked after and Previously Looked After Children](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/designated-teacher-for-looked-after-children)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/designated-teacher-for-looked-after-children>

[Promoting the Education of Looked After and previously Looked After Children](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/promoting-the-education-of-looked-after-children)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/promoting-the-education-of-looked-after-children>

Acknowledgement is given to; Barnsley, Doncaster, Bradford, Leeds Local Authorities, Inspire Trust, St John's Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior and Infant School, Wakefield, and Dane Royd Primary School, Wakefield

Appendix 1 – National framework for penalty notices

National Framework for Penalty Notices, implementation date 19th August 2024.

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS/CARERS

PENALTY NOTICES WILL BE ISSUED FOR:

Term Time Leave: Penalty Notice Fines will be issued for Term Time Leave of 10 sessions or more* (consecutive or accumulative)

10 Sessions of Unauthorised Absence in a 10 Week Period: A Penalty Notice may be considered/issued when a pupil has had 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10-week (school weeks) period.

*There are 2 sessions per school day.

PENALTY NOTICE CAN BE ISSUED PER PARENT/PER CHILD:

Penalty Notice Fines are issued per parent** per child.

For example: 3 Siblings absent for term time leave, would result in each parent receiving 3 separate fines.

** A parent includes any person who is not a parent but who has parental responsibility for the child or who has care of the child, as set out in section 576 of the Education Act 1996.

FIRST OFFENCE

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for a Term Time Holiday or Irregular School Attendance the Penalty Notice will be charged at:

£160 per parent, per child if paid within 28 days of issue, reducing to £80 if paid within 21 days**.

SECOND OFFENCE (within 3 years of the First Offence Penalty Notice)

Where it is deemed appropriate to issue a second Penalty Notice to the same parent for the same pupil within 3 years of the first notice, the second Penalty Notice will be charged at:

£160 if paid within 28 days (no reduced fee for paying early).

(**Unpaid Penalty Notice's after 28 days may result in a parental prosecution)

THIRD OFFENCE (within 3 years of the First Offence Penalty Notice)

On the third time that an offence is committed for either a Term Time Holiday and / or Irregular Attendance a Penalty Notice will not be issued, the case may proceed straight to Parental Prosecution under the Single Justice Procedure. If found guilty of the offence of 'Failure to send a child to school' the Magistrates can impose a fine up to £1000.

(Please note that where a penalty notice is not suitable cases can proceed straight to parental prosecution)

Appendix 2 – Attendance codes

Attendance Codes – September 2026 onwards

Attending the school	
/ \	Present at the school / = morning session \ = afternoon session
L	Late arrival before the register is closed
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip
P	Participating in a sporting activity
W	Attending work experience
B	Attending any other approved educational activity
D	Dual registered at another school
Absent – Leave of absence	
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.
M	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance
Absent – other authorised reasons	
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes

R	Religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)
E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable causes	
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause
Absent – unauthorised absence	
G	Holiday not granted by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances
U	Arrived in school after registration closed
Administrative Codes	
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register
#	Planned whole school closure