

# Fiveways School

## Attendance Policy



### Review

Review Cycle	Date of Current Policy	Author(s) of Current Policy	Review Date
2 Yearly	September 2024	Swavek Nowakiewicz	September 26

### Ratification

Role	Name	Signature	Date
Chair of Governors	Malcolm Gulliver		20.09.24
Head Teacher	Swavek Nowakiewicz		20.09.24

### Details of Policy Updates

Date	Details
August 2024	<p>The DfE has published a new version of working together to improve school attendance. This will become statutory guidance on 19 August 2024.</p> <p>The current version is non-statutory and remains in effect until then.</p> <p>The changes are a mixture of clarification on existing guidance and updates to reflect changes in the law, including the upcoming School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.</p> <p>New requirements on keeping and sharing registers</p> <p>You must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep registers electronically (paragraph 31)</li> <li>• Preserve every entry in the attendance or admission register for 6 years (previously it was 3 years) from the date the data was entered (paragraph 36)</li> <li>• Use the revised attendance and absence codes (paragraphs 283 to 407)</li> <li>• Share school's daily attendance data (paragraph 51)</li> </ul> <p>Maintained schools and non-maintained special schools must (and other schools are expected to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only grant leaves of absence for specific circumstances set out in regulation 11 of</li> </ul>

	<p>the 2024 attendance regulations (paragraphs 37 to 40)  All schools can also grant absence for education off site (paragraphs 41 and 42).  Where applicable, you're also expected to report unexplained absences to the pupil's youth offending team worker (paragraph 52).  New rules around issuing fines for unauthorised absences  The new national framework for issuing penalty notices is designed to help ensure consistency across the country.  Fines will increase to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £80 to be paid within 21 days, or</li> <li>• £160 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days</li> </ul> <p>See paragraphs 174 to 200 for more details of the new framework.  Clearer expectations for the school's senior attendance champion  This is an ongoing responsibility of the senior leader responsible for attendance. The champion is expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance</li> <li>• Establish and maintain effective systems for tackling absence</li> <li>• Have a strong grasp of absence data</li> <li>• Regularly monitor and evaluate progress</li> </ul> <p>See paragraph 25.  More detail about supporting pupils with physical or mental ill health  This section provides more clarification about where the role of your school starts and ends. It also provides more information about medical evidence, support for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), and part-time timetables.  See paragraphs 53 to 68.  More detail about supporting pupils with physical or mental ill health  This section provides more clarification about where the role of your school starts and ends. It also provides more information about medical evidence, support for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), and part-time timetables.  See paragraphs 53 to 68.  Clearer link between improving attendance and wider school culture  The guidance puts greater emphasis on working in partnership with families to find supportive routes to improve attendance (paragraphs 17 to 24).  'Parenting contracts' will be called 'attendance contracts'  This better reflects the agreement between parents, schools and/or LAs (see paragraph 138 to 150).</p>
January 2024	Additional information regarding reporting attendance to parents and part-time timetables

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## 1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance.
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence.
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled.
- Acting early to address patterns of absence.
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school.
- We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

## 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

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

### **3. Roles and responsibilities**

#### **3.1 The governing board**

1. Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents
2. Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
  - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
  - Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
3. Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
4. Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
5. Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs
6. Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
  - a. Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
7. Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils needs
8. Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
9. Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
  - The importance of good attendance
  - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
  - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
  - The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
10. Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data
11. Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

#### **3.2 The Headteacher**

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school.
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils.
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies.
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising Deputy Headteacher to be able to do so
- Working with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers

- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels

### 3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school.
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement.
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes.
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data.
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues.
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families.

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is **James Holgate** (Assistant Headteacher) and can be contacted via email [jholgate@fiveways.school](mailto:jholgate@fiveways.school) or the school phone number **01935 476227**.

### 3.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7).
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement.
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the Headteacher.
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence.
- Advising the Headteacher/ Assistant Headteacher (authorised by the Headteacher) when to issue fixed penalty notices.

The attendance officer is Chloe Baker and can be contacted via email [cbaker@fiveways.school](mailto:cbaker@fiveways.school) the school phone number 01935 476227 or a mobile phone number 07557 671013.

### 3.5 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and recording this information on SIMS/Bromcom twice daily. **Morning session must be recorded by no later than 9:20am and the afternoon session must be recoded between 12:00 and 12:30pm.**

### 3.6 School admin/office staff

School admin staff will:

- Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system.
- Contact parents by no later than 9:35am if the child did not arrive at the school and the parents did not call the school to inform us about the reason for the child's absence. Admin staff will text using SchoolComs- a communication messaging service and parents can reply to this text. If no reply to the text is received by 10.30, they will ring parents. If they cannot get hold of

parents, the admin staff needs to inform the Attendance Officer or Business Manager on days Attendance Officer not in. Headteacher or a member of senior team.

- Contact other carers, for example respite carers if pupil has not been at home the evening before the absence.
- Transfer calls from parents to the teachers or a member of senior team if parents would like to provide more detailed explanation or share concern.

### 3.7 Parents/carers

Where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult the school and/or local authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them)

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time.
- Call the school to report their child's absence **before 8:00am and no later than 8:15am** on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence and advise when they are expected to return.
- Provide evidence of medical appointments, hospital etc., these can be delivered by hand, posted, or scanned/photographed and emailed to the school.
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child.
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day.
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting Attendance Officer, **Chloe Baker** who can be contacted via email [cbaker@fiveways.school](mailto:cbaker@fiveways.school) or telephone **01935 476227**

### 3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time.

## 4. Recording attendance

### 4.1 Attendance register

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

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session (**by 9:20am**) of each school day and once during the second session (between **12:00 and 12:30pm**). It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

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

We will also record:

- [For pupils of compulsory school age] Whether the absence is authorised or not.
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity.
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

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

Pupils must arrive at school by 8.50 on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 09.00 and will be kept open until 9:20. The register for the second session will be taken at 12.00 and will be kept open until 12.30.

## **4.2 Unplanned absence**

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence between 8:00am and 8:15am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school on 01935 476227.

You will need to provide us with the reason for your child's absence and estimated return date to school. If the child will be absent for more than 5 school days we will arrange a member of staff to visit them at home unless arranged otherwise.

We recognise that a number of Fiveways pupils have significant medical needs and at times may be absent from school for a long period of time. In these circumstances we will be in regular communication with the parents and agree how welfare calls will be conducted.

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

Where the absence is longer than 5 days, or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

## **4.3 Planned absence**

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

Parents/carers will be required to provide evidence of medical or hospital appointment etc. These can be delivered by hand, posted, or scanned/photographed and emailed to the school.

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

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

## **4.4 Lateness and punctuality**

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.

## **4.5 Following up unexplained absence**

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

- Call the pupil's parents/carers on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may arrange a welfare call. This means that a member of Fiveways School will arrive at the child's address to check the reason for absence. If we have a concern about the pupil's safety, we will call the police.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not.
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session.
- Call the parent/carers on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer.
- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the pupil's youth offending team officer
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with: we may issue a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention (see section 5.2 below), as appropriate

#### **4.6 Reporting to parents/carers**

At Fiveways we believe that all children should attend school 100%. However, we recognise that due to medical conditions and other circumstances for some of our pupils this may not be possible.

All parents/carers receive a half-term attendance letter. Pupils who achieve above 90% will also receive a certificate. If the pupil's attendance drops below 80%, we will arrange a meeting with parents/carers and put in place an attendance improvement plan. These meetings may be face-to-face, via phone call or Teams call.

**Once again, we recognize that some pupils' attendance may be significantly affected, for example by their medical condition or a condition that forms part of their SEND diagnosis. These facts will be taken into consideration when arranging/not arranging attendance improvement meetings.**

### **5. Authorised and unauthorised absence**

#### **5.1 Approval for term-time absence**

The headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings.

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the **2024 school attendance regulations**. These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances



A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as compassionate grounds e.g. terminal illness, bereavement etc.

Leave of absence will not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

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

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least **4 weeks** before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via school-home link book or the school's website. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence. If a pupil is over compulsory school age (e.g. sixth form), leave can be requested or agreed by the pupil or a parent they normally live with.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** may include:

- Illness and medical appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail).
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision.
- Hospice / respite attendance: To request a period of absence to enable your child to attend a hospice or respite care please complete a 'Request for Authorised Absence' form available from the school office.
- 'Make a Wish' or charity funded/once in a lifetime type trip.
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

Other reasons the school may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
- Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority
- Attending work experience
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

Parents/carers are required to complete a request form if they feel their request meets the above criteria. Please see **Appendix C**

## **5.2 Legal sanctions**

Our school will make use of the full range of potential sanctions – including, but not limited to, those listed below – to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

## Penalty notices

The headteacher (or someone authorised by them), local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

If the school issues a penalty notice, it will check with the local authority before doing so, and send it a copy of any penalty notice issued.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks)
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

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

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

If issued with a first penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

If a second penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days.

A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day). These penalty notices are not included in the National Framework, not subject to the same considerations about support being provided, and do not count towards the limit as part of the escalation process.

In these cases, the parent must pay £60 within 21 days, or £120.

Quick guide table showing penalty costs:

<b>Penalty Notice</b>	<b>Amount</b>
If national threshold of 10 sessions in a rolling 10 school week period: 1 <sup>st</sup> letter	£80 if paid within 21 days £160 if paid within 28 days
2 <sup>nd</sup> letter to same parent for same pupil	£160 if paid within 28 days.
If a pupil is in a public space within first 5 days of a suspension	£60 if paid within 21 days £120 if paid within 28 days

## **Notices to improve**

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

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

They will include:

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

## **6. Strategies for promoting attendance**

Fiveways School is dedicated to promoting good attendance. We are doing this via parent's newsletter, communication books, parent open days and annual reviews. We also celebrate pupil's good attendance and engagement weekly with Star of the Week assembly as well as end of half-term Special Star assembly.

## **7. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school**

### **7.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance**

Fiveways School is committed to ensuring that all pupils attend school regularly. However, we understand that some pupils face significant barriers to daily attendance. These challenges may be related to diagnoses, complex medical needs, anxiety, sensory sensitivities, or difficulties transitioning from home to school. In such cases, the school will work closely with families and relevant professionals to support the pupil in attending as frequently as possible, with the goal of achieving full-time attendance.

A part-time timetable may be implemented as part of this process and will be regularly reviewed. In certain situations, staff may visit a pupil's home to assist with the transition to school. All arrangements will be tailored to the individual needs of each pupil. We will maintain communication with the Local Authority and keep them informed of progress throughout.

### **7.2 Pupils absent due to mental or physical ill health or SEND**

At Fiveways School, a significant number of our pupils have complex medical needs, which can sometimes prevent them from attending school on a full-time basis or may limit their attendance. Factors such as frequent illness, medical interventions, hospitalizations, or extended recovery periods at home can impact on some pupil's ability to attend regularly. Additionally, some of our pupils have compromised immune systems, making them more susceptible to illnesses.

We approach each case individually and maintain close contact with families when a pupil is unable to attend. Our attendance and safeguarding team will coordinate how and when this contact occurs to

monitor the pupil's mental and physical well-being. We work directly with families to plan the pupil's return to school, aiming to gradually increase attendance and ultimately achieve full-time attendance where possible.

Where a pupil has an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that related to the pupil's needs, the school will inform the local authority.

### **7.3 Pupils returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence**

In cases where a pupil returns to school after a prolonged or unavoidable absence, we will implement a tailored plan to support both the pupil and their family. When needed this plan will focus on gradually increasing attendance, with the aim of eventually achieving full-time attendance. For some pupils, especially those recovering from medical procedures or whose health has been significantly affected, this process may take time. A part-time timetable may be introduced during the reintegration period.

All plans will be individualized to meet the specific needs of each pupil, but the goal will always be to progressively increase their attendance. We will also inform the Local Authority about any pupils returning after an extended absence and share the details of the reintegration plan with them.

## **8. Attendance monitoring**

The Attendance Officer and the deputy Attendance Officer monitor attendance daily.

The attendance officer generates a weekly report, which is reviewed by the senior team during weekly Senior Leadership meetings. This gives us the opportunity to identify pupils with poor attendance at an early stage.

Every half term we review attendance with the Local Authority Attendance Welfare officer. Annual attendance analysis takes place, which includes focus on vulnerable groups of pupils. We also analyse attendance over time.

### **8.1 Monitoring attendance**

The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level.

Specific pupil information will be shared with the DfE on request.

The school has granted the DfE access to its management information system so the data can be accessed regularly and securely.

Data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics.

The school will benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement, and share this with the governing board.

### **8.2 Analysing attendance**

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families.
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns.
- Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends

### 8.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
- Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severed absence, and their families (see section 8.4 below)
- **Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers and department leads** to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinators, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads)
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies.
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate.

### 8.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

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

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils (where possible) who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
  - Discuss attendance and engagement at school
  - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
  - Explain the help that is available
  - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
  - Review any existing actions or interventions
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant

- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
- Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 5.2, above)

## **9. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every 2 years by Swavek Nowakiewicz, Headteacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

## **10. Pupils attending the school part-time**

We recognise that some pupils may, at times, benefit from attending the school on a part-time basis for a temporary period. This may be put in place to support the pupils transition to the school, for example if the pupil was absent from the school for a long time or had a long-term illness etc. All part-time attendance arrangements need to be short term and need to lead to full-time education as soon as possible. All part-time attendance arrangements need to be agreed with the local authority and consented by the parents. Please see **Appendix B**

All part-time attendance arrangements will be closely monitored and will be subject to 6 weekly review meetings. During the meeting we will review the effectiveness of the part-time timetable which must lead to an increase in attendance and finally full-time attendance.

For some pupil we may put in place a flexible timetable. For example, if a pupil is undergoing medical treatment or has a significant medical condition that prevents them from attending the school. On those occasions we will be guided by medical professionals and the parents and agree an alternative plan if the pupil cannot attend school on a full-time basis or attends the school on the days specified in the part-time table.

Please note that all flexible arrangements will be monitored under part-time timetable policies and procedures.

If despite parents/carers commitment to assure good attendance the pupil refuses or cannot attend school full-time or part-time, for example because of not managing transitions between home and the school or due to other factors rooted in their medical condition or a condition that forms part of their SEND diagnosis we will refer this case to an external agency and hold Team Around the Family (TAF) meeting. An agreed plan will be created to support the pupils return to school, which may include a flexible timetable that will be reviewed and monitored under the part-time timetable policy and procedures.

The effectiveness of part-time and flexible time-table arrangements attendance will be shared with the Local Authority Attendance Welfare officer during scheduled meetings.

## **11. Links with other policies**

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- Missing from Education guidance

## Appendix A: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's [guidance on school attendance](#).

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
<b>Attending a place other than the school</b>		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
<b>Absent – leave of absence</b>		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time

		timetable
<b>C</b>	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
<b>Absent – other authorised reasons</b>		
<b>T</b>	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>I</b>	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
<b>E</b>	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
<b>Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause</b>		
<b>Q</b>	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
<b>Y1</b>	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
<b>Y2</b>	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
<b>Y3</b>	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
<b>Y4</b>	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
<b>Y5</b>	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: <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>
<b>Y6</b>	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law



<b>Y7</b>	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
<b>Absent – unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
<b>O</b>	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
<b>U</b>	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
<b>Administrative codes</b>		
<b>Z</b>	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
<b>#</b>	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

## Appendix B: part-time timetable consent form and Review Meeting Form

This should be completed for any pupil on a part-time timetable.

Pupil Name: ..... Year Group.....

Is the child subject to a Child Protection Plan: YES/NO

Has the pupil had a part-time timetable before? YES/NO – If yes when and for how long for?

Name of parents/carers:				
Name of lead person in school:				
Name of social worker (if applicable):				
Name of SEN caseworker (if applicable):				
Name of Virtual School rep (if applicable):				
Name of Education Welfare Officer (if applicable):				
Reason for the part-time timetable				
Interventions already tried and impact of interventions				
Date of meeting agreeing the part-time timetable:				
Start date of part-time timetable:				
Number of hours in education each week:				
Review date of part-time timetable: <i>(This should be in a 6 week period or more frequently where appropriate)</i>				
Proposed end date of part-time timetable:				
<b>Time table</b> <i>(Indicate precise times of attendance)</i>				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Objectives of the part-time timetable/interventions to support:				
Any other comments relating to this part-time timetable:				

I understand my child has been placed on a part-time timetable for a limited period of time.

<b>Meeting Focus:</b>	Name 6 week Review	<b>Date</b>	
-----------------------	--------------------	-------------	--

**I have**

**discussed the matter fully with the school and agree, during the period of the part-time timetable to:**

- Take full responsibility for my child during the hours when my child does not attend school.
- Ensure there is supervision of school work during those hours.

Furthermore, I understand that the school will check on a regular and adhoc basis, the safety of the pupil whilst not at school.

Parent/carer signature.....Date.....

During the period of the part-time timetable the school will:

- Monitor the effectiveness of the part-time timetable.
- Hold a review on the agreed date.
- Provide work for the child to do whilst at home and mark all work complete.
- Ensure safeguarding protocols are in place to check pupil wellbeing

School signature.....Date.....

Other signatures (if required):

SEN Caseworker.....Date.....

Social Worker.....Date.....

Virtual School Rep.....Date.....

Education Welfare Officer.....Date.....

Once completed this form should be retained with the pupil's school records

## Part Time Placement Review Meeting Form

**Present :**

### Discussion Points

Matters arising from last meeting:

- 
- 
- 

Progress made over the course of the past 6 weeks

School

- 
- 
- 

Home

- 

Is the pupils next step full-time provision?

School view

Yes

No

Parent View

Yes

No

Why?

Areas to develop.

- 
- 
- 
- 

Action points

Timescale

1.

2.

3.

4.

**Appendix C: REQUEST FOR TERM-TIME LEAVE**



**To the Headteacher**

**School/College**

**I wish to apply for term time leave for my child**

Name	Class
1.	
2.	

from  to  inclusive

**The Exceptional Reasons for this request are:**

Signature (Parent/Carer) ..... Date .....

Signature (Headteacher) ..... Approval given: YES/NO

**Please make your request prior to making any bookings and at least four weeks before the anticipated leave date.**

***NB. If the school refuses your request and the child is still taken out of school, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. This may result in a penalty notice being issued or legal action taken for poor attendance.***



## APPROVAL LETTER

Dear

**Name of Child:**

**Re: Request for Term Time Leave**

Thank you for your request for term time leave.

I am in agreement this is for exceptional reasons and have authorised this leave.

The leave is from  to

Should the leave be extended for any reason, the extension may be regarded as unauthorised absence which may be used in any legal action for poor school attendance.

Signature  
(Headteacher) \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



## LETTER OF REFUSAL

Dear

**Name of Child:**

**Re: Request for Term Time Leave**

You have requested \_\_\_\_\_ school days leave.

Your request for term time leave has been carefully considered but unfortunately it has not been possible to authorise it for the following reasons:

The reasons are not considered exceptional

The leave has not been requested in advance

Other


**Please be aware that if you decide to proceed with the Unauthorised term time leave the school may request a Penalty Notice to be issued by the Local Authority.**

Signature  
(Headteacher) \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

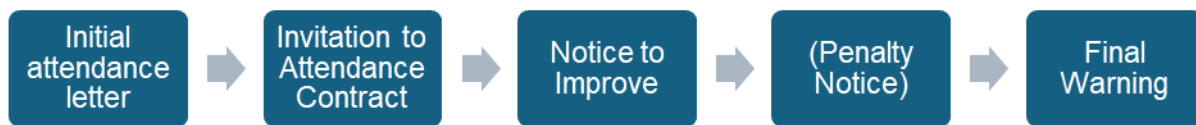
**Please note: If refused an additional letter will be sent. Please see [Appendix D Letter 3](#)**

## Appendix D: Attendance Letters for Schools

### Contents

Stage 1 – Supporting Good School Attendance	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Stage 2 – Attendance Contract Meeting	33
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A typical support-first approach may run as follows:



Additional letters are likely to be required depending on each pupil's circumstances and the type of support needed (e.g. invitations to a Team Around the Child meeting).

Additional templates are available on the Education Engagement Resources page, including:

- Attendance Contract
- Notice to Improve
- Attendance letter for health professionals



# Stage 1 Letters to parents about their child's absence, attendance and punctuality

## Letter 1 – Concerns about a pupil's high level of absence

---

<date\_of\_printing>

<salutation>

<address\_block>

Dear <salutation>

<chosen\_forename> <chosen\_surname> - DOB <date\_of\_birth>

As part of our commitment to improving the attainment of our pupils we monitor attendance on a regular basis and identify any pupil whose attendance causes concern. We would like to update you on your child's attendance for this academic year.

Overall School Attendance	<percentage_attendance>%
Authorised Absence	<total_authorised_absences>%
Unauthorised Absence	<total_unauthorised_absences>%

If your child is unable to attend school, please phone, text or email the office by 8.00 am each day that your child is absent. This is a legal requirement as stated in our attendance policy to ensure our attendance records meet government guidelines.

We recognise that some pupils' attendance may be significantly affected, for example by their medical condition or a condition that forms part of their SEND diagnosis. These facts will always be taken into consideration. If you have any concerns please get in contact.

Yours sincerely



Mrs Chloe Baker  
Safeguarding & Attendance Officer

## Letter 2 – Concerns about a pupil's unauthorised absence

### Unauthorised absence from school

We've noticed that [name] has recently taken an unauthorised [absence/absences] from school.

[Name] has been absent from school for a total of [number] days on the following dates:

> [date]

> [date]

> [date]

It's important that [name] attends regularly, so that they can get the best out of their education.

We know that every family's circumstances are different and want to work with you to provide the best education for your child. Please let us know if there is anything going on at home or at school which might be making it difficult for [name] to attend regularly.

We want to make sure that we can support [name's] education in the best way possible, including looking into how we can help them to address gaps in learning due to absence.

Please contact the school office on [number] as soon as you can so we can arrange to discuss any reasons for these absences, and how we can work together to help [name] catch up on any missed schoolwork.

Please note that unauthorised absences can result in a penalty notice being issued if your child has 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks (10 sessions is equivalent to 5 days). You can find more information about penalty notices in our school attendance policy. Copies of the policy are on the school website, or available from the school office.

Yours sincerely,

[Name]

Headteacher

### Letter 3 – Declining a request for a leave of absence

#### Your request for a leave of absence

Thank you for your request to take [name] out of school between [date] and [date].

In this case I'm afraid I cannot consent to your request.

At [school name] we believe that regular attendance throughout the year is essential to every child's success and fulfilment.

I have not made this decision lightly. A request for an absence is considered on its specific circumstances, and I have taken many variables into consideration.

Because each request is different, this decision can't be compared with decisions made by the school in the past, and it won't affect future decisions.

I'm sorry to have to disappoint you on this occasion.

Yours sincerely,

[Name]

Headteacher

## Letter 4 – After an unauthorised holiday

### Holiday absence

I'm writing about your action in taking [name] out of school for a family holiday between [date] and [date].

We're treating this as an unauthorised absence because [explain the evidence you have].

At [school name] we believe that regular attendance throughout the year is essential to every child's success and fulfilment.

We have the power to grant leaves of absence under exceptional circumstances, and a holiday is not generally considered to come under those circumstances. We expect you to consult the school before making any plans that will involve your child's absence from lessons or other commitments. Absences like these could have a detrimental effect on their education.

Insert the following if the child's absence has reached the threshold for a penalty notice and you have decided it's appropriate to issue one (see paragraph 181 of [Working together to improve school attendance](#) for questions to consider when making this decision):

[Name] has now had 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks (10 sessions is equivalent to 5 days).

In line with our attendance policy and the local authority's code of practice, you will be issued with a penalty notice.

When you receive the notice, you must pay:

£80, if it's paid within 21 days

£160, if it's paid after 21 days but within 28 days

If payment is not made within 28 days, the local authority may decide to pursue further legal action.

Insert the following if the threshold for a penalty notice has not been reached:

Please note that unauthorised absences can result in a penalty notice being issued if your child has 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks (10 sessions is equivalent to 5 days). You can find more information about penalty notices in our school attendance policy. Copies of the policy are on the school website, or available from the school office.

Continue with:

We would like to arrange a meeting so that we can discuss this absence further. Please contact the school office as soon as possible on [phone number].

Yours sincerely,

[Name]

Headteacher

## **Letter 5 – Accepting a request for absence for religious observance**

### **Your request for absence for religious observance**

Thank you for your request to take [name(s)] out of school on [date] because of [religious occasion].

In this case, I'm prepared to agree to your request and it will be considered an authorised absence.

Each request for an absence is considered on its merits at the time. We recognise that a family's religious beliefs and traditions are intrinsic to their sense of identity.

However, please note that my decision in this instance does not set a precedent and does not necessarily mean I'll agree to a similar request, from you or other parents, in the future.

Yours sincerely,

[Name]

Headteacher

## Letter 6 – Concern about punctuality

### Poor punctuality

I'm writing to you because [name] has been late to school [number] times in [timeframe].

They arrived at school after the register had closed on the following dates:

- > [date]
- > [date]
- > [date]

They also arrived at school late (but before the register had closed) on the following dates:

- > [date]
- > [date]
- > [date]

The school day begins promptly at [time] and registration closes at [time]. Afternoon registration takes place between [time slot].

Arriving promptly makes sure that your child doesn't miss schoolwork, and prevents disruption to the teacher and other pupils. Persistent lateness can lead to a significant loss in learning time.

Persistent lateness can result in a penalty notice, if your child arrives late after the register closes in 10 sessions in a rolling period of 10 weeks.

We would like to invite you to come in for a chat about [name]'s punctuality. We would like to find out whether there is anything:

Happening at school that makes it difficult for [name] to get to school on time

Happening at home that we can help with, or that you think we should be aware of

We can do to make it easier for [name] to be on time for school

Please contact the school office on [number] to arrange a meeting.

Yours sincerely,

[Name]

Headteacher

## Letter 7 – Congratulations for improving attendance rate

**Well done [name]!**

I'm writing to you to let you know that [name] has done a great job of improving their attendance rate.

Since [date], their attendance rate has improved from [percentage] to [percentage] - this is equal to [number] days of education no longer being missed.

Well done to [name] and to you at home for your support.

[If you have any schemes to reward pupils for improving their attendance, explain how the pupil will be rewarded here.]

Yours sincerely,

[Name]

Headteacher

# Attendance Special Certificate

Awarded to

«chosen\_forename» «chosen\_surname»

For making a big effort in attendance  
this term



Fiveways Special School





## Stage 2 – Attendance Contract Meeting

Use this letter where initial attempts to improve attendance have not been successful and a more structured approach is needed. Schools should consider forming an attendance contract early to ensure parents are engaged in a structured, more formal approach to improving attendance.

### Invitation to an Attendance Contract Meeting

Dear **Parent Name**

#### **Pupil name (DOB)**

We are concerned that **pupil name** continues to be absent too frequently, as their attendance is now **0.0** per cent.

Each absence is recorded on your child's register, which current shows they have **0** authorised and **0** unauthorised absences.

Regular absence from school is often a sign that additional support is needed, and we would like to ensure that this is put in place to support **pupil name's** improved attendance.

You are invited to attend an Attendance Contract Meeting on **long date** at **time**.

Attendance contracts allow us to work together to identify and understand barriers to attendance and agree a plan to overcome them.

We are keen to work collaboratively with you to improve **pupil name's** attendance and I would welcome you contacting me on **phone number**.

Please be aware, however, that unauthorised absences or non-engagement with this process may result in you being issued with a Notice to Improve or a request for support from the Local Authority being made.

I look forward to meeting you soon.

Yours sincerely

Enc. Registration Certificate

### Stage 3 – Penalty Notice Requested

Use this letter to inform a parent that a penalty notice request has been submitted following attempts to improve attendance being unsuccessful.

Dear **Parent Name**

#### **School Attendance Concerns – Penalty Notice Requested** **Pupil Name (DOB)**

I am writing to inform you that a request has been made to Somerset Council for a penalty notice to be issued to you in relation to pupil name's unauthorised absences from school.

Pupil name's attendance is currently **0.0** per cent and they have **0** unauthorised absences.

Penalty notices are issued to parents under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 when their child does not attend school regularly and those absences are unauthorised. They are also issued in line with statutory guidance and the Somerset Penalty Notice Code of Conduct.

Penalty notices are for a fixed amount of £160, but a reduced rate of £80 may be payable, if paid within 21 days.

**Further information about penalty notices is available in our attendance policy, which is published on the school website.**

If you would like to discuss ways to work together to improve **pupil name's** attendance, I would welcome a call from you on **phone number**.

Your sincerely

Enc. Registration Certificate

## Stage 4 – Final Warning

Use this letter where attempts to improve attendance have not been successful and Formal support is now required. This will be following attempts to contact/meet with family, and where a Notice to Improve and/or Attendance Contract has not been successful in improving school attendance.

Dear **Parent Name**

### School Attendance Concerns – Final Warning

#### **Pupil Name (DOB)**

I am writing to you in relation to ongoing, significant concerns about **pupil name's** attendance, which is currently 0.0 per cent.

Each absence is recorded on your child's register, which currently shows they have 0 authorised and 0 unauthorised absences.

We have attempted to engage with you through:

[Delete/edit as appropriate, consider adding any other key offers of support]

1. Attendance discussion on **long date**
2. Attendance meeting on **long date**
3. Notice to Improve, issued on **long date**
4. Attendance Contract, commenced on **long date**

Despite the above support being offered, we have not been successful in improving **pupil name's** attendance, therefore, a request is now being made to the Education Engagement Service for Formal Attendance Support.

The Education Engagement Service will work with us to support and promote good school attendance but may consider legal action against you if **pupil name's** attendance does not improve and further unauthorised absences occur.

While poor school attendance is often a sign that additional support is needed, parents are required by law to ensure their child attends school regularly. Failing to do so is an offence under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

Legal action is always a last resort in relation to poor school attendance and may be prevented by us working together to improve attendance and ensure the right support is in place for **pupil name**.

Yours sincerely

Enc. Registration Certificate

**To be Updated**