Harbour Schools Partnership

A guiding light for education

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Date Adopted:	**March 2026**
Reviewed on:	
Author/owner:	**Board of Trustees**
Anticipated Review:	**March 2028**

The school designates Mr Ben Dawe, Headteacher, as the Senior Attendance Champion They may be contacted through the School Office.

NB. 'Trustees' means the Directors referred to in the Trust's Articles of Association

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1. HISTORY OF MOST RECENT POLICY CHANGES

Version	Date	Page	Change	Origin of change E.g TU request, change in legislation
	Dec 2025		New The Harbour Schools Partnership Policy, based on previous Tarka Policy, Devon Model Attendance Policy and DfE Statutory Guidance Working together to improve school attendance and Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework (EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers)	

This policy will be published on the school website, shared with parents at admission, and reviewed annually or sooner if statutory guidance changes.

2. LINKS TO OTHER TRUST POLICIES

Other policies or guidance that are referenced within this policy document

- **Safeguarding and Pupil/student Protection Policy**
- **Working Together to Improve School Attendance: DfE Statutory Guidance August 2024** Working together to improve school attendance

3. PURPOSE, SCOPE AND LEGAL CONTEXT

3.1 The right of every pupil/student to flourish

3.1.1 We believe that attendance at our schools enables pupil/student to flourish. Good attendance begins with school being somewhere pupils/students want to be and therefore the foundation of securing good attendance is that school is a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environment where all pupils/students are keen and ready to learn. Every pupil/student of compulsory school age is entitled to a full-time education suitable to their age, ability and needs.

3.2 Excellence through collaboration

3.2.1 Improving attendance is everyone's business. The barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates, and are often specific to individual pupils/students and families. Some pupils/students find it harder than others to attend school and therefore at all stages of improving attendance, we work in partnership with pupils/students and parents collaboratively to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place. Securing good attendance cannot therefore be seen in isolation, and effective practices for improvement involve close interaction with schools' efforts on curriculum, behaviour, bullying, special educational needs support, pastoral and mental health and wellbeing, and effective use of resources, including pupil premium. Securing good attendance is not the preserve of a single member of staff. It is a concerted effort across all teaching and non-teaching staff in our school, governors and the wider trust working together.

3.3 Our Graduated Approach to Attendance

3.3.1 All of our schools are committed to working together with our stakeholders to a graduated approach:

Expect: Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils/students and parents 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/students and parents 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/students and parents 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/student's right to an education.

(Department for Education: Working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) (publishing.service.gov.uk)

3.4 Scope of the Policy

3.4.1 This policy applies to all school leaders, staff, parents, and pupils/students.

3.4.2 For the purposes of this policy, references to 'teachers' include all paid staff responsible for the supervision of pupils/students.

3.4.3 For the purposes of this policy, references to 'pupil/student or pupil or student' include all learners in our school.

3.4.4 For the purpose of this policy, references to 'school' refers to all education settings, regardless of type.

3.4.5 For the purpose of this policy and the procedures, we refer to Section 576 of the Education Act which defines the 'parent' of a pupils/student as:

- Both parents with parental responsibility for the pupil/student
- Any person who, although they are not the natural parent, has parental responsibility for the pupil/student as defined in the Children Act 1989.
- Any person who, although not the natural parent, has the care of the pupils/student i.e., a person with whom the pupil/student lives, irrespective of their relationship to the pupil/student.

3.5 Legal Underpinning

3.5.1 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.

3.5.2 This policy is based on the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- The Education Act (1996)
- The Education Act (2002)
- The Education and Inspections Act (2006)
- The Education (Pupil/student Registration) (England) Regulations (2006)
- The Education (Pupil/student Registration) (England) Regulations (Amendment 2010)
- The Education (Pupil/student Registration) (England) Regulations (Amendment 2011)
- The Education (Pupil/student Registration) (England) Regulations (Amendment 2013)
- The Education (Pupil/student Registration) (England) Regulations (Amendment 2016) - The School Attendance (Pupil/student Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations (Amendment 2013)

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

3.6 Formal Responsibilities

3.6.1 All pupil/student aged 5 - 16 years must receive suitable education. (Section 7, Education Act (1996)). A pupil/student at compulsory school age who is registered at a school must, by law, attend regularly.

3.6.2 By law, parents have the prime responsibility for ensuring that pupils/students at compulsory school age attend regularly. (Section 576, Education Act (1996)).

3.6.3 The Local Authority (LA) must offer educational provision for all pupils/students at school age.

3.6.4 By law, all schools (except those where all pupils/students are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils/students must be placed on this register from the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed or has been notified that the pupil/student will attend the school.

3.6.5 Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

3.6.6 By law, all schools must keep an admissions register, the contents of which includes all pupils/students, their personal details, (including at least two telephone numbers for different safe adults, to ensure that we can always contact someone in the event of an emergency), the date of admission (or re-admission), information regarding parents and details of the school last attended.

3.6.7 Pupils/students will be removed from roll only when they complete their education stage, transfer to another school, move out of the area or emigrate or following a parental request for elective home education. We follow statutory guidance for removing pupils/students from roll and notifying the local authority.

3.6.8 Under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996 (EA 1996), a parent commits an offence if they fail to ensure their pupil/student's regular attendance at a school where the pupil/student is registered. We therefore enforce the use of statutory action to encourage and promote attendance; this is done to ensure that all pupils/students can benefit from their legal right to receive an education.

3.6.9 The school will communicate attendance concerns to the pupil/student's social worker, if they have one or the Virtual School Head, if the pupil/student is a looked after pupil/student. This will be done as soon as there is an attendance concern and immediately upon becoming a persistent absentee. Unexplained absences will also be communicated to the social worker and Virtual School Head, where relevant.

3.7 Definitions

3.7.1 A pupil/student is classed as absent if they arrive after the register has closed or if they do not attend for any reason.

3.7.2 An authorised absence is when approval has been given in advance for a pupil/student of compulsory school age to be absent for a specific (legal) purpose, or we have accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence from a parent or carer. This may include:

- An absence for illness for which we have granted leave
- Medical or dental appointments may be granted leave where every attempt has been made to arrange outside of school hours, has been unsuccessful and so cannot be avoided, or where the appointment is a genuine emergency
- Religious or cultural observances for which we have granted leave. The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents or pupil/student belong. Where necessary, we will seek advice from the parents' religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance. Only the day(s) of religious observance will be authorised. Absence in order to travel to and from an event will not be authorised.
- An absence due to exceptional circumstances, such as a bereavement.

3.7.3 An unauthorised absence is defined as one where we are not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence. Reasons may include:

- Parents keeping pupil/student from attending unnecessarily or without good reason
- Missing sessions before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained

- Arrival after the register has closed
- Day trips and holidays in term time that have not been agreed
- Leaving school without authorisation during the day

3.7.4 Persistent Absence is defined as: 10% or more of sessions missed (based on each pupil/student's possible sessions). Absences may be authorised or unauthorised.

3.7.5 Severe Absence is defined as: 50% or more of sessions missed (based on each pupil/student's possible sessions). Absences may be authorised or unauthorised.

3.8 Persistent lateness

3.8.1 For the purposes of this policy, a late mark refers to a pupil/student arriving after the start of the school day but before the morning register has closed. Pupils/students arriving after the register has closed are recorded as absent for that session.

3.8.2 Persistent lateness is defined by the school as five or more late marks recorded within a single half-term, where a pupil/student arrives before the register has closed. This school-defined threshold is used as an early indicator to identify pupils/students who may require additional support and does not replace statutory attendance measures.

3.8.3 Learning begins at the start of the school day. Pupils/students who arrive late miss important learning opportunities and their arrival can be disruptive to the learning of others. The school therefore places a strong emphasis on punctuality and will work with families to address any emerging patterns of lateness at the earliest opportunity.

4. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

4.1 Good attendance and punctuality are essential to pupils/students' learning, wellbeing and sense of belonging. The Trust believes that improving attendance requires a whole-school approach rooted in strong relationships, high expectations and appropriate support.

4.2 In line with this, each school will:

- recognise that attendance and punctuality are the responsibility of everyone in the school community
- ensure that all pupils/students access a full-time education that meets their needs and enables them to realise their potential
- provide a safe, nurturing and inclusive environment in which pupils/students feel a strong sense of belonging
- work in partnership with pupils/students and their families to promote regular and punctual attendance
- identify and remove barriers to attendance, offering support early and proportionately
- make reasonable adjustments, in line with equality legislation, to support pupils/students with disabilities or long-term health conditions
- work collaboratively with external agencies where appropriate to support pupils/students' attendance

4.3 Attendance concerns will be addressed supportively and consistently, with challenge where necessary, in line with statutory guidance.

5. SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 Improving attendance and punctuality is a shared responsibility between schools, pupils/students and parents/carers. By law, the prime responsibility for ensuring a pupil/student attends school regularly rests with parents/carers (Section 576, Education Act 1996). Schools have a duty to support families in meeting this responsibility and to remove barriers where they can, but the responsibility for attendance sits primarily with parents. The following sets out what each party can expect and what is expected of them:

Each school will:

- promote excellent attendance and punctuality and investigate any unexplained or unjustified absence
- work closely with parents/carers where a pupil/student's attendance gives cause for concern
- support pupils/students to achieve and maintain good attendance and punctuality
- support pupils/students returning to school after a prolonged period of absence
- provide school-based support for pupils/students with additional needs, including health needs, special educational needs and social, emotional or mental health needs, within the school's available resources
- review attendance regularly and alert parents/carers early where patterns of concern begin to emerge
- work with external agencies where appropriate to help overcome barriers to attendance

Pupils/students are expected to:

- attend school regularly and on time
- arrive punctually for all lessons
- ensure messages or notes from parents/carers relating to absence are passed to the appropriate member of staff in line with school procedures
- register at the school office if they arrive late, in accordance with the school's agreed system

Parents/carers are expected to:

- ensure their pupil/student attends school regularly and punctually, dressed appropriately and equipped to learn
- ensure their pupil/student attends school every day it is open unless they are too unwell to do so
- avoid keeping their pupil/student away from school for reasons other than illness or other authorised absence
- arrange holidays during school holiday periods unless exceptional circumstances apply
- inform the school office promptly if their pupil/student is unable to attend, including the reason for absence and the expected date of return (including for nursery pupils/students where applicable)
- contact the school on each day of absence if no return date has been given
- communicate openly and honestly with the school about absence and, where a school has reasonable grounds to doubt an explanation, provide evidence to support the absence

6. ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES AND SCHOOL PROCESSES

6.1 THSP Attendance Non-Negotiables

6.1.1 To ensure consistency, equity and safeguarding across the Trust, the following attendance practices apply in all schools:

- Attendance registers are completed accurately and on time, in line with statutory requirements
- Morning and afternoon registers close in accordance with national regulations
- First-day contact is made for all unexplained absences
- A proportionate safeguarding response is made where a pupil/student cannot be located, based on risk assessment of the individual circumstances
- Emerging patterns of absence are identified and addressed early
- Persistent and severe absence thresholds are applied consistently
- Support is offered before enforcement, unless enforcement is immediately appropriate

6.1.2 These expectations apply to all schools within the Trust and sit alongside school-level procedures and contextualised practice.

6.2 Senior Attendance Champion

6.2.1 The school has a designated Senior Attendance Champion – this person is a member of the school's Leadership Team (SLT). This leader is responsible for setting the vision and culture for high attendance, overseeing strategy, overseeing regular data monitoring (in line with the monitoring standard set out in this policy), reporting termly to governors, and liaising with the Local Authority Inclusion Support Team. These operational tasks may be delegated to others within the school.

6.3 Data Analysis and Reporting

6.3.1 Attendance data will be monitored regularly at pupil/student, cohort, and whole-school level. As a minimum, each school should monitor daily register completion, review whole-school and cohort data at least fortnightly, with weekly monitoring of any pupils/students already identified as a concern. Individual pupil/student data for pupils/students approaching or exceeding the persistent absence threshold (10%+) should be reviewed at least weekly. Half-termly and termly summary reports will be produced for SLT. Attendance data will be reported termly to governors. Analysis will include benchmarking against local and national averages. Persistent (10%+) and severe (50%+) absence will be tracked and prioritised for intervention.

6.4 Trust Attendance Dashboard and Oversight

6.4.1 The Trust is developing a central attendance dashboard to support consistent monitoring, comparison and improvement across all schools. Schools will be informed when the dashboard is operational and how to access it. Until then, schools should continue to use their existing MIS reporting for local monitoring and submit data to the Trust as directed.

6.4.2 Each school is expected to:

- Submit accurate and timely attendance data in line with Trust reporting requirements
- Review Trust dashboard information as part of school-level attendance monitoring
- Engage with Trust-led attendance review discussions where patterns of concern are identified

6.4.3 The Trust will use dashboard information to:

- Identify trust-wide and school-specific patterns and trends in attendance

- Target support, challenge and professional learning appropriately
- Monitor the impact of attendance interventions over time
- Promote consistency and equity of practice across the Trust

6.5 Targeting Support Meetings

6.5.1 Schools will participate in regular Targeting Support Meetings with the Local Authority's Inclusion Support Team (formerly Attendance Partners) to review pupils/students with persistent/severe absence, agree joint action plans, and escalate cases for formal intervention where voluntary support has not worked.

6.6 Registration

6.6.1 The law requires the register to be taken twice a day at the start of the morning session and the start of the afternoon session.

6.6.2 Pupil/student are expected to arrive before 08:45am in order to be ready for the start of the first lesson at 08:50am.

6.6.3 Registers open at the start of each session and must remain open for a period set by the school, which must not exceed 30 minutes. Pupil/student arriving before the register closes will be marked as late (Code L). Pupil/student arriving after the register has closed will be marked as absent (Code U — unauthorised absence), in line with DfE statutory guidance (Working Together to Improve School Attendance, 2024). The only exception is where a pupil/student has been at a medical appointment but arrives at school and is present for the majority of the session, in which case an appropriate absence code should be applied. Schools must set the same register window for every session.

6.6.4 The register is marked using the DfE Attendance and Absence Codes (see Appendix 1).

6.6.5 Guidance on applying the Education (Pupil/student Registration) Regulations 2006, The Education Act 2002 - section 32 , The Education Act 1996 – section 551(1) • The Education (School Day and School Year) (England) Regulations 1999 and The Changing of School Session Times (England) (Revocation) Regulations 2011 can be found in Working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024)

6.7 Authorised/Unauthorised Absence

6.7.1 Authorised absence is where the school has given approval for absence in advance or where the explanation given afterwards has been accepted as satisfactory justification for the absence. Parents/carers may not authorise absence; only the school can do this.

6.7.2 Parents/carers must contact the school office on the morning of absence (preferably before 08:50am) giving a reason and an expected date of return.

6.7.3 Absence may be authorised for such reasons as:

- Significant illness (i.e. too unwell to attend)
- Unavoidable and non-routine medical/dental appointments. These should be arranged out of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, pupil/student should, where practically possible, come to school before the appointment, sign out and return to school after the appointment. If a

pupil/student isn't present for registration due to a medical appointment but is present for the majority of the session a code can be amended to mark the pupil/student as present for the session.

- Exceptional family circumstances e.g. bereavement of a close family member
- Wedding of immediate family member (i.e. parent/carer or sibling).
- Day of religious observance (see Appendix)
- Exclusion from school
- A pupil/student representing a sports team at an elite level or taking part in a national sporting event or playing/performing in a musical event at an elite level. Each case is at the discretion of the headteacher and will depend on frequency, regularity and duration. Absence will be authorised only for the period of actual participation/performance; travel days on days that are not strictly necessary for the event are not automatically authorised. Headteachers should apply consistent judgment and are not obliged to authorise travel days added to avoid inconvenience (for example, Friday travel to avoid weekend traffic).

6.7.4 Absence will not be authorised for such reasons as:

- Looking after brothers/sisters/unwell parents/carers
- Birthdays, weddings (of non-immediate family members) and other family celebrations
- Friends or relatives visiting, or visits to friends or relatives
- Days out
- Sporting events
- Shopping trips
- Family holidays where permission has not been granted (please note, family holidays during term time will not normally be approved).
- Absences where no explanation is provided by parents/carers, or where the explanation given is not accepted by the school

6.7.5 Absence due to physical or mental illness will normally be authorised. In most cases, schools will not routinely request medical evidence for short periods of illness. However, where there are concerns about attendance patterns, the authenticity of absence, or where a pupil/student's attendance is causing concern, the school reserves the right to request medical or professional evidence at any stage. Decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis, taking account of the individual circumstances of the pupil/student and family.

6.8 How we respond to absences/lateness

6.8.1 If a pupil/student is absent at morning registration without contact from a parent/carer to explain the absence, the school will contact parents/carers. We take our safeguarding responsibilities seriously and will always do our best to contact parents/carers to ensure that they are aware of their pupil/student's absence.

6.8.2 Contact will be attempted via phone, using all available contact numbers held for the family. Parents/carers are able to respond directly upon receiving this call. Where required, and where it is safe to do so, the school may conduct reasonable enquiries with friends or neighbours. Welfare home visits, where the pupil/student is seen, will be carried out as necessary, taking account of capacity and staff safety. If no contact is made, a welfare check may be requested from the police. Schools will inform social workers and Virtual School Heads immediately for pupil/student with a social worker or those who are

looked after. The response to unexplained absence will be proportionate and based on a risk assessment of the individual pupil/student's circumstances.

6.8.3 The school asks that parents/carers ensure that the school has the most up-to-date contact details at all times, including at least two contact numbers for different safe adults where possible.

6.8.4 Where a pupil/student's absence is cause for concern, the school will write to parents/carers and/or invite the parents/carers into school or visit parents/carers at home.

6.8.5 Where no sustained improvement in attendance is demonstrated despite intervention, the Fast Track to Attendance process will be followed. Fixed Penalty Notices may be issued in line with the Local Authority's Code of Attendance.

6.9 Persistent Absence

6.9.1 Nationally, a pupil/student becomes a 'Persistent Absentee' (PA) when they miss 10% of their schooling across the academic year for whatever reason and results in the pupil/student having an attendance figure of 90% or less. Absence at this level is causing considerable damage to any pupil/student's educational prospects and parents'/carers' fullest support and co-operation is needed to tackle this.

6.9.2 Any pupil/student whose attendance has reached the PA threshold or is at risk of moving towards that threshold is given priority for intervention. Intervention may be via:

- An action plan to improve attendance will be created which may involve an Early Help process and referrals to other agencies alongside meetings between relevant school staff and parents/carers.
- Where parents/carers fail to co-operate with support and strategies provided by the school, further advice may be sought which could lead to legal sanctions being imposed.
- The school, working within the Trust, reserves the right to engage the Local Authority Inclusion Support Team to support the absence policy and work with families to resolve attendance and punctuality matters.

6.9.3 Persistent Absence data is communicated to the relevant Local Authority and Department for Education via the School Census on a termly and annual basis.

6.10 Severe Absence

6.10.1 Severe absence is defined as a pupil/student being absent more than they are present (missing 50% or more of school across the academic year). Severely absent pupils/students may find it more difficult to be in school or face bigger barriers to their regular attendance and as such are likely to need more intensive support across a range of partners. If a pupil/student has been identified as being absent more than they are present, then the school will:

- Work with all relevant services to prioritise pupils/students
- Work together with partners to make this group the top priority for support – this may include specific support with attendance or a whole family plan
- Consider the need for an education, health and care plan or an alternative form of educational provision where necessary to overcome the barriers to being in school.

6.10.2 If all avenues of support have been facilitated by schools, local authorities, and other partners, and the appropriate educational support or placements (e.g. an education, health and care plan) have been

provided but severe absence for unauthorised reasons continues, it is likely to constitute neglect. Schools will work with the Local Authority to identify any potential safeguarding issues in these cases and where these remain, will support the Local Authority in conducting a full pupil/student's social care assessment.

6.11 Leave of Absence during Term Time

6.11.1 Any absence interrupts the continuity of a pupil/student's learning. Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. Parents/carers are strongly urged not to take pupil/student out of school for holidays during term time.

6.11.2 Where a planned absence is foreseeable, parents/carers are asked to submit a Request Form (Appendix) to the school office as far in advance as possible, and in any case at least 4 school weeks before the proposed absence where this is practicable. All relevant factors must be stated on the request form. Submitting a request does not guarantee authorisation. Where a pupil/student is taken out of school without authorisation, the school may refer the case to the Local Authority for consideration of a Fixed Penalty Notice. Fixed penalties require each parent to pay a fine; failure to pay within the specified timescale could result in prosecution. This legislation also applies to any pupil/student taking leave of absence without prior notification to the school.

6.12 Re-integration following Long-term Absence

6.12.1 For the purposes of this policy, long-term absence is defined as a continuous or cumulative absence of 15 or more school days within a term. Where a pupil/student has been absent for a prolonged period of time, perhaps due to illness or other complex circumstances, the school will:

- Welcome the pupil/student back to the school and value their return.
- Provide support for the pupil/student in consultation with parents/carers to enable a successful return to the school.
- Ensure that all relevant staff are informed of the circumstances.
- Work with other agencies, where appropriate, to ensure a successful outcome.
- Consider a personalised programme of return if appropriate.
- Nominate a key member of staff to monitor and review the pupil/student's return if appropriate.

6.13 Promoting Good Attendance and Punctuality

- Parents are regularly informed of their pupil/student's attendance levels and, if appropriate, how they can improve, i.e. reports and clear expectation setting
- Where appropriate, pupil/student whose attendance falls below the appropriate target for the school will be set a target for improvement and progress towards these targets will be regularly reviewed.
- Excellent attendance and punctuality, and improvements in attendance and punctuality, will be promoted and celebrated in line with school policy and systems.
- Pupils/students, parents/carers and staff are regularly reminded about the importance of excellent attendance, for example through assemblies and newsletters.
- Parents/carers are encouraged to contact the school at any time to discuss their pupil/student's attendance.

- Regular meetings will be held with the appropriate members of staff/external agencies to identify and support those pupils/students whose attendance is a cause for concern.
- Pupils/students who have been absent for extended periods of time will be supported as appropriate to re-integrate back into the school.
- Pupils/students' attendance will be reported at least annually in line with our annual pupil/student report system.

6.14 Attendance Data and Targets

- The headteacher will set an attendance target, taking into account national attendance figures.
- The target for all pupil/student is to strive for excellent attendance. High attendance gives every pupil/student the best opportunity to achieve their full potential and to benefit fully from the education they are entitled to.
- Attendance data will be collected and analysed and used to inform the school's attendance practices and interventions.
- Individual pupil/student data will be analysed and monitored to enable early intervention.
- Attendance data is provided on a termly basis to Local Governing Boards (LGBs). Trustees have an overview of this data. This enables the trust to share best practice.
- Attendance data and persistent absence data is communicated to the Local Authority and DfE.
- The school will use its Management Information System (MIS) to monitor attendance regularly, including daily register completion, fortnightly whole-school review and at minimum weekly review of pupils/students identified as a concern.

6.15 Formal Attendance Interventions and Legal Sanctions

6.15.1 Registers are legal documents; regulatory requirements placed on schools regarding the keeping of registers are to be found in the Education (Pupil/student Registration) Regulations 2006. Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that parents/carers are responsible to ensure their pupil/student receives a suitable education. Under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, a parent who fails to ensure their pupil/student attends the school at which they are registered, is guilty of an offence.

6.15.2 The school and trust work together with the relevant Local Authority to ensure that parents/carers fulfil their responsibility. There are a range of legal sanctions that may be imposed for dealing with unauthorised absence: Fixed Penalty Notices, Attendance Contracts and Orders, Education Supervision Orders or referral to the Magistrates Court which can recommend fines (up to £2500) or up to 3 months in prison.

6.15.3 The Trust follows the National Framework for Penalty Notices: a penalty notice may be considered when a pupil/student has 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within 10 school weeks (this is a rolling 10 week period).

6.15.4 Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual circumstances of each case and will apply a graduated and proportionate approach. In doing so, the school will consider whether:

- appropriate support is in place and whether that support is being engaged with and is likely to lead to improvement
- whether a Notice to Improve would be more appropriate where support has not been effective or has not been engaged with

- the absence relates to a circumstance where a penalty notice is normally appropriate, such as a term-time holiday taken without permission
- a penalty notice is the most appropriate and effective tool to improve attendance and change parental behaviour for the individual family
- issuing a penalty notice is appropriate having regard to the school's duties under the Equality Act 2010, including where a pupil/student has a disability or other protected characteristic.

6.15.5 Where these considerations indicate that a penalty notice is appropriate, the school will issue one in line with the National Framework for Penalty Notices, notifying the Local Authority as required. [Note for schools: Devon County Council has confirmed that schools are responsible for issuing penalty notices rather than the Local Authority doing so on schools' behalf. The Trust will provide guidance and a consistent framework to support schools in applying this consistently across THSP. Schools should contact their Trust link for further information.] Where considerations do not indicate a penalty notice is appropriate, alternative support or statutory interventions may be used.

6.16 Use and sharing of attendance data

6.16.1 Attendance information is collected and stored in line with statutory requirements. Schools are required to share attendance data with the Department for Education and the Local Authority for purposes including monitoring attendance, identifying pupil/student missing education, and supporting attendance improvement.

6.16.2 Attendance data may also be shared with other relevant statutory partners where required by law. All data sharing will be carried out in accordance with data protection legislation and statutory guidance.

7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ATTENDANCE

7.1 All members of the Trust have a role to play in improving attendance and reducing absence.

7.2 All staff will receive appropriate training on attendance as part of the Trust's and school's professional development programme. This will include understanding the importance of good attendance and punctuality, the link between attendance, safeguarding and wellbeing, and the early identification of attendance concerns.

7.3 Staff with specific attendance responsibilities will receive additional training to support their role, including the use of attendance data, working with families and understanding local authority processes.

7.4 Trust Board and Local Governing Bodies

7.4.1 The Trust Board and Local Governing Bodies have a strategic role in promoting high attendance and holding school leaders to account for attendance outcomes.

7.4.2 This includes:

- setting high expectations for attendance across the Trust
- reviewing attendance, persistent absence and severe absence data on a regular basis
- challenging patterns and trends, including disparities between groups of pupils/students

- ensuring that appropriate systems, staffing and resources are in place to support attendance improvement
- monitoring the consistent implementation of this policy across schools

7.4.3 Trustees and governors do not have a day-to-day operational role in managing attendance, which remains the responsibility of school leaders.

7.5 Headteacher

7.5.1 The Headteacher has overall responsibility for attendance within the school and will:

- take the lead in raising the profile of attendance and punctuality across the school
- ensure that the school attendance policy is implemented and regularly reviewed
- promote a whole-school ethos that supports excellent attendance and punctuality
- ensure that cases of persistent or complex attendance concerns are appropriately led and managed, either by the headteacher or a delegated senior leader
- work in partnership with the Local Authority where appropriate
- ensure that, where legal action is being considered, a relevant report is prepared in line with Local Authority guidance (either by the headteacher or a delegated member of staff)
- use attendance data to inform strategic planning and school improvement

7.6 Senior Attendance Champion

7.6.1 The Senior Attendance Champion will:

- monitor attendance and absence regularly
- identify emerging attendance concerns and patterns
- discuss attendance concerns with parents/carers and pupils/students and agree targets for improvement
- support pupils/students to improve their attendance through appropriate interventions
- promote attendance through assemblies and other school communications
- work closely with staff to share information and coordinate support for pupils/students and families
- report attendance to governors
- liaise with the Local Authority

7.7 School Office Staff

7.7.1 School office staff will:

- monitor attendance registers on a daily basis
- receive and record calls and messages from parents/carers regarding pupil/student absence
- make first-day contact where no explanation for absence has been received
- alert safeguarding staff as appropriate where concerns arise or families cannot be contacted
- support attendance meetings by contacting parents/carers and sharing relevant information
- produce attendance reports as required
- identify and raise attendance concerns or trends with appropriate members of staff

7.8 Class Teachers

7.8.1 Class teachers will:

- welcome and value the attendance of all pupils/students
- ensure registers are completed accurately and in a timely manner
- ensure pupils/students understand that attendance is monitored
- identify absence from lessons and take appropriate action
- raise attendance concerns or patterns with appropriate staff
- raise and discuss attendance concerns with appropriate staff and, where it is their role to do so, support families where concerns have been identified
- ensure that absence notes or messages are passed to the school office
- discuss attendance and punctuality with parents/carers at parents' evenings or other meetings where attendance is a concern

8. SUPPORTING PUPILS/STUDENTS WITH ADDITIONAL ATTENDANCE NEEDS

8.1 Pupil/student with medical conditions or special educational needs and disabilities

8.1.1 Some pupils/students face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include pupils/students who suffer from long term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities. Their right to an education is the same as any other pupil/student and therefore the attendance ambition for these pupils/students should be the same as they are for any other pupil/student.

8.1.2 Schools will:

- Work with parents to improve attendance, be mindful of the barriers pupils/students face, make reasonable adjustments, and put additional support in place where necessary to help them access their full-time education.
- In line with the Equality Act 2010, schools will make reasonable adjustments for pupils/students with disabilities or long-term health conditions. Examples include phased return plans, adjustments to uniform, transport, or routines, and access to safe spaces and pastoral support. It is also expected that parents will engage with the support offered both internally and with external partners to ensure our pupil/student have all the support they need to thrive.
- Encourage positive conversations so that a good support plan can be put in place including making reasonable adjustments.
- Consider possible explanations for absence including Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA). Schools should be aware that, while EBSA requires a supportive and differentiated response, any part-time or reduced timetable arrangement used in response to EBSA must be time-limited, closely monitored, and have the aim of returning the pupil/student to full-time attendance. The policy does not authorise open-ended non-attendance for EBSA.
- Work with parents to consider whether additional support from external partners (including the local authority or health services) would be appropriate, making referrals in a timely manner and working together with those services to deliver any subsequent support.
- Ensure relevant referrals are made for pupils/students who are too ill to attend school, which may include medical panel (under section 19) and or medical agency support such as CAMHS.

- Establish strategies for removing the in-school barriers this may include considering support or reasonable adjustments for uniform, transport, routines, access to support in school and lunchtime arrangements.
- Ensure joined up pastoral care is in place and consider whether a time-limited, closely monitored and reviewed, phased return to school would be appropriate, for example for those affected by anxiety about school attendance.

8.2 Use of part-time timetables

8.2.1 Part-time timetables will only be used in exceptional circumstances as a short-term measure to support a pupil/student's reintegration into full-time education. They will not be used as a long-term solution or as a response to poor attendance alone.

8.2.2 Any part-time timetable must:

- be agreed in writing with parents/carers
- normally be supported by written advice or agreement from an appropriate professional (for example, the Inclusion Team, Educational Psychologist, health professional or CAMHS)
- be time-limited and include a clear end date
- include a written plan for reintegration to full-time attendance
- be reviewed at a minimum every six weeks, in line with DfE guidance, or sooner where there are concerns about the pupil/student's welfare or progress
- be recorded using attendance code C2

8.2.3 The use of a part-time timetable does not remove a pupil/student's entitlement to full-time education and will be regularly reviewed to ensure it remains appropriate and in the pupil/student's best interests.

8.3 Nursery/Pre School Provision

- Work with the nursery to identify any barriers to attendance, including medical or SEND needs, so reasonable adjustments can be put in place.

The School/Nursery will

- Record attendance daily.
- Monitor patterns of absence and lateness.
- Follow up promptly on any unexplained absences or concerns relating to absences through the school's safeguarding procedures. This will include first day calling.
- Offer support to families where attendance is a concern. This will follow the process outlined earlier in the policy.

8.3.3 Sidbury does not currently have a nursery

8.4 Traveller Pupils/students Travelling for Occupational Purposes

8.4.1 Traveller pupils/students travelling for occupational purposes covers Roma, English and Welsh Travellers, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Circus workers, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers), Showman and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be a mobile family with no fixed abode and they are travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with us, but it is not known whether the pupil/student is attending educational provision.

8.4.2 The aim for the attendance of Traveller pupils/students, in common with all other pupils/students, is to attend school as regularly and as frequently as possible.

8.4.3 To protect Traveller parents from unreasonable prosecution for non-attendance, the law states that a Traveller parent/carer is safe from prosecution if their pupil/student accrues 200 attendances (i.e., 200 half days) in a year. It is important to note that this is only relevant when the family are engaged in a trade or business that requires them to travel and when the pupil/student is regularly attending school when that trade/business permits following a request from parents (and the minimum 200 session criteria is met).

8.4.4 It does not mean that part-time education for Traveller pupils/students is legally acceptable, nor does it relieve parents/carers of their duties to ensure that their pupil/student is receiving a suitable education when not at school.

8.4.5 It is the parent's responsibility to:

- Register their pupil/student's ethnicity with the school. They can ask the school to correct this or update it.
- Share plans ahead of time. (Two weeks' notice is recommended.)
- Ensure their pupil/student attends as much school as possible.
- Ensure that their pupil/student accesses at least 100 days (200 sessions) of school in any 12-month period.
- Have regular contact with their pupil/student's school whilst travelling (Once a week is suggested)
- Support their pupil/student to complete the work set by schools whilst travelling.

8.4.6 If staying in a new area for a week or more, the parent/guardian can register their pupil/student for a temporary place at any school – called 'dual registration'.

8.4.5 It is the school's responsibility to:

- Allow Traveller pupils/students to travel with their parents for work purposes.
- Create work packs for their pupils/students to complete when away.
- Arrange times for at least a weekly 'check in' with the family. This can be through a call or email.
- Contact the Local Authority if they have concerns.
- Mark pupil/student's work and provide valuable feedback.
- Ensure missed opportunities such as parents evening, vaccinations and careers advice are supported on the pupil/student's return.

9. REMOVAL FROM ROLL AND ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION

9.1 The school will proactively work with families to ensure the appropriate provision is in place for pupils/students to successfully attend. Schools should not seek to persuade parents to educate their pupil/student at home as a way of avoiding excluding the pupils/student because the pupil/student has a poor attendance record.

9.2 On receipt of written notification to home educate, schools must inform the pupil/student's local authority that the pupil/student is to be deleted from the admission register. Parents will be offered an exit meeting. Schools must notify the local authority if there is a safeguarding concern. Schools and local authorities should not seek to prevent parents from educating their pupil/student outside the school system. There is no requirement for parents to obtain the school or local authority's agreement to educate their pupil/student at home. Parents have a duty to ensure their pupil/student at compulsory school age receives suitable full-time education, but this does not have to be at a school.

9.3 All schools must notify the LA when they are about to remove a pupil/student's name from the school admission register at a non-standard transition point, otherwise known as an in-year leaver.

9.4 Further guidance is available at:

https://www.devon.gov.uk/educationandfamilies/school-information/school-attendance

https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence/overview

9.5 When removing a pupil/student's name, the notification must include:

(a) the full name of the pupil/student

(b) the full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil/student normally resides

(c) at least one telephone number of the parent

(d) the pupil/student's future address and destination school, if applicable

(e) the ground in regulation 8 under which the pupil/student's name is to be removed from the admission register.

9.6 Schools must make reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the pupil/student jointly with the LA, before deleting the pupil/student's name from the register if the deletion is under regulation 8(1), sub-paragraphs (f)(iii) and (h)(iii).

9.7 All schools must notify the LA upon receipt of written notification from the parents that the pupil/student is receiving education otherwise than at school. The Elective Home Education - Safeguarding Pupil/student Form (smartsurvey.co.uk) should be completed in all cases.

9.8 See Appendix for operational guidance on Removal from Roll and Elective Home Education.

9.9 Further information on elective home education: Elective home education - Support for schools and settings (devon.gov.uk)

APPENDIX 1: ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES AND REFERENCE INFORMATION

Figure 1:

There are 190 school days each year, this means that there are 175 non-school days a year.

Attendance %	Rating	Days absent	Description
100%	Excellent Attendance	0	This is the best chance of success for your pupil/student
97%	Good Attendance	5	
95%	Improvement Required	9	Less chance of your pupil/student succeeding as it is harder for them to make progress
92%	Concern (Approaching Persistent Absence Threshold)	19	
90%	**Serious Concern** Persistent Absence- 90% and below Severe Absence – 50% and below	**30**	**Serious Concern** **Missing this much education will very likely impact your pupil/student and may result in legal action**

*Persistent Absence is defined as: 10% or more of sessions missed (based on each pupil/student's possible sessions). Absences may be authorised or unauthorised.

** Severe Absence is defined as: 50% or more of sessions missed (based on each pupil/student's possible sessions). Absences may be authorised or unauthorised.

** Note: the label "Serious Concern" in the table above refers to pupils/students at or below the Persistent Absence threshold (90% or below). Severe Absence (50% or below) represents an extreme level of absence and will always trigger the most intensive intervention.

APPENDIX 2: DFE ATTENDANCE CODES, DESCRIPTIONS AND MEANINGS

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING	FOR STATISTICAL PURPOSES
/	Present at the school (AM)	Present	
\	Present at the school (PM)	Present	
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Approved Education Activity	Counted as physically present
C	Leave for Absence in exceptional circumstances	Authorised absence	
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Authorised absence	
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil/student subject to a part-time timetable	Authorised absence	
D	Dual registered at another school	Approved Education Activity	Counted as physically present
E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made	Authorised absence	
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Unauthorised absence	
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Authorised absence	
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Approved Education Activity	Counted as physically present
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution	Approved Education Activity	Counted as physically present
L	Late arrival before the register is closed	Present	
M	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment	Authorised absence	
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Unauthorised absence	
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	Unauthorised absence	
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Approved Education Activity	Counted as physically present
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements		
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence	
S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination	Authorised absence	
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Authorised absence	
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Unauthorised absence	
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity	Counted as physically present
W	Attending work experience	Approved Education Activity	Counted as physically present
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil/student not required to attend	Not counted in possible attendances	

	school		
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available	Not counted in possible attendances	
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel	Not counted in possible attendances	
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed	Not counted in possible attendances	
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed	Not counted in possible attendances	
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil/student is in criminal justice detention	Not counted in possible attendances	
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law	Not counted in possible attendances	
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause	Not counted in possible attendances	
Z	Prospective pupil/student not on admission register	Not counted in possible attendances	
#	Planned whole school closure	Not counted in possible attendances	

See Chapter 8: Working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) (publishing.service.gov.uk)

APPENDIX 3: RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE AND OTHER EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Authorised absence may be granted for religious observance, for example, Eid. The Department for Education definition is as follows:

"Absence to take part in any day set aside exclusively for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong, including religious festivals."

If the religious body has not set the day apart, there is no requirement for the school to approve the absence or grant leave of absence. For religious rites, such as Bar Mitzvah or Holy Communion, the headteacher will consider each request for leave of absence individually to determine the number of days approved. Please note that only the day(s) of religious observance will be authorised. Absence in order to travel to and from an event will not be authorised.

Individual religions and their religious observance are too numerous to detail in this document. Parents should contact the school to request leave of absence for all religious observance.

The following might be considered as exceptional circumstances:

- Close family (parent/carer or sibling) wedding if dates cannot be during school holidays.
- Illness or death of an immediate family member; the headteacher should consider time needed for the length of journey when pupil/student needs to travel abroad.
- Pupil/student, parent/carer requires medical treatment overseas or elsewhere in the UK due to language barrier or requiring specialist treatment elsewhere.
- Length of journey from abroad; the headteacher will consider length of journey or limited regional flights.
- Cultural celebrations such as Chinese New Year or Diwali.
- Pupil/student attending their annual exam in their home country. There are exams which are compulsory in some EU countries. They are normally during holidays but can occasionally be requested during term time.
- Pupil/student, parent/ carer's visa has been revoked, and they need to return to their birth country whilst pursuing the renewal of a visa.

APPENDIX 4: APPLICATION FOR ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

APPLICATION FOR ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL (parents of Nursery Pupil/student are permitted leave for holidays without prior permission; a separate Nursery absence form needs to be filled in: see the Nursery Absence Request Form within this appendix)

Parents do not have a right to take their pupil/student out of school for holidays during term time. By law you must ask permission for your pupil/student to miss school. If you don't you risk the school referring the case to the Local Authority and this could result in a fixed penalty notice or court summons. Sidbury CE Primary School follows a clear policy on holiday absence, but it is up to the headteacher of the school to decide whether or not the absence will be authorised. A copy of the full Attendance and Punctuality Policy is available on the School's website)

Parents wishing to apply for their pupil/student to have leave from school should complete this form and return it to school for authorisation at least 4 school weeks in advance of the proposed leave.

Some things to consider in respect of taking pupil/student out of school during term time:

- Pupil/student must attend school regularly to achieve their full potential
- Pupil/student who are kept out of school can feel vulnerable and miss out on key work
- Family Holidays in term time are disruptive to pupil/student's learning, and no holidays will be authorised unless under exceptional circumstances. Cost is not an exceptional circumstance.
- On average pupil/student who miss 10 or more days per school year fall behind significantly and can lose significant ground on their peers.

Sidbury CE Primary School states that absence during term time **cannot be authorised unless under exceptional circumstances.**

If, under the above circumstances, parents or carers take their pupil/student from school for a holiday, their pupil/student's absence will be recorded as unauthorised in the class register.

Other Absence from school will be authorised if it is for the following reasons:

- Genuine illness
- Unavoidable medical/dental appointments (but try to make these after school if at all possible) – evidence may be requested by the school
- Day of religious observance (one day only)
- Exceptional circumstances, such as bereavement
- Seeing a parent who is on leave from the armed forces
- External examinations
- When Traveller pupil/student go on the road with their parents
- When a pupil/student is competing in a sport or playing an instrument at county, regional or national level. (Evidence may be requested by the school)

No holidays will be authorised in term time except in exceptional circumstances.

Application Form

Parents wishing to apply for their pupil/student to have leave from school should complete the form overleaf and return it to school for authorisation.

Thank you

Headteacher

PLEASE COMPLETE ONE APPLICATION PER PUPIL/STUDENT

(Parents of Nursery Pupil/student need to inform the school of any absences for holidays in line with the policy. Please use the Nursery Absence Request Form within this appendix to inform the Nursery of absence.)

WARNING: Parents should ensure that they know whether the absence will be authorised or not before they go away as an unauthorised absence will likely result in a penalty notice or court summons being issued to each parent for each pupil/student affected following the case(s) being referred to the local Authority. It is therefore recommended that this completed form is sent into the school at least four school weeks before the intended absence. (See the School's Attendance and Punctuality Policy)

PARENTS SECTION (to be completed first)

Surname of pupil/student		**First name**	
Class		**Year Group**	
Surname of parent/guardian		**First name**	
Names of siblings at this school and other primary/secondary schools: -			
Name of siblings/other pupil/student(ren) in family:		**School attending:**	
About the request for your pupil/student's leave of absence (attach supporting information	**Reason for absence request. Holidays <u>will not</u> be granted unless under exceptional circumstances.**		

where necessary)	**Did s(he) have leave of absence during term-time in the previous school year?**	**Yes / No**

Length of absence (school days)	From (date)	To (date)
Telephone contact (if school wishes to discuss this request)		
Parent/ guardian signature		Date

Sidbury CE Primary School

Request for absence	**YR – Y6 PUPILS/STUDENTS** (i) **approved** ☐ **school days** (ii) **Not approved** ☐ **school days**		
Attendance this year (to be completed by school)		Attendance last year (to be completed by school)	
Date of Meeting with Parent (if applicable)			
Headteacher's signature		Date	

Please return a copy of this form to the parent after consideration

The School will not authorise absence for:

- Any type of shopping
- Resting after late night
- Look after brother, sister or unwell parents
- Travel to and from family events
- Routine Medical Appointments
- Visiting relative birthdays
- Holiday Request unless under exceptional circumstances
- Minding the house

NURSERY ABSENCE REQUEST FORM

Parents wishing to inform us that their pupil/student will be absent from Nursery should complete the form and return it to school.

As Nursery pupil/student are permitted leave for holidays, it will not be necessary for the school to return the form back to you once you have submitted it. We will use the form just to record your pupil/student's absence.

PLEASE COMPLETE ONE FORM PER PUPIL/STUDENT

PARENTS SECTION (to be completed)

Surname of pupil/student		First name	
Surname of parent/guardian		First name	
Reason for absence			
Length of absence (nursery sessions)	From(date)	To(date)	
Telephone contact (if school wishes to discuss this)			
Parent/guardian Signature		Date	

APPENDIX 5: FAST TRACK TO ATTENDANCE SCHOOL FLOW CHART

The following process outlines how the Fast Track process should be followed and what meetings/letters should be used at each stage. The process may be deviated from to support the individual circumstances of each case where the school deems it necessary to support the needs of the pupil/student.

School support attendance escalation Process
Tutor/class teacher to have a "back to school" conversation with the pupil/student (age appropriate) the day that they return to school or as soon as possible after this date if exceptional circumstances mean that it cannot happen on the first day. Aim of conversation: ➢ See the pupil/student on his/her return to school to show a genuine interest in their wellbeing and to ask how they are. ➢ Check that they are feeling sufficiently fit to be in school ➢ Explain what actions/events have taken place in their absence which have had an impact on their learning and to "bring them up to speed" with events in school ➢ Offer support if required for those pupils/students whose absence may be linked to personal/domestic problems and escalate if appropriate. ➢ If there is any suggestion of a school related absence, the causes of this must be discussed and solutions sought. ➢ Relate absence percentage and time off to attainment. ➢ Highlight any patterns of absence ➢ All discussions must be recorded on the school system

Illness Absences	
Considerations for each absence ➢ Is the level of absence in line with the reasons given by parents? ➢ Does the pupil/student have an ongoing medical condition that needs further clarification? ➢ Do you have evidence or any medical professional guidance that it may affect attendance? ➢ What was their attendance last year? ➢ Is it ad hoc absence or 1 bout of illness?	
95%	**(Letter 1)** Initial letter sent to parent advising concern regarding the amount of absence due to illness. Early Help offered
92/93% Meeting	Further illness – **(Letter 2)** inviting parent to a meeting sent, possibly explaining that all absence will be recorded as unauthorised. Develop a plan of action for parents/pupil/student/school/PHN/other professionals, include an Individual Healthcare Plan if appropriate Supporting pupils/students with medical conditions at school - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk). Offer Early Help. Discuss the unauthorising of medical absences depending on the individual circumstances of the pupil/student.
Review meeting	**(Letter 3)** optional letter to send after the first meeting to enclose a copy of the plan and confirm the date of the next meeting (within 2-4 weeks) It is recommended you phone the parents prior to the review meeting to remind them. **Review Meeting - Review targets set at first meeting and choose from following options:** ➢ Target met, continue to review ➢ Absences were changed to authorised as further documentation received ➢ Targets not met, confirm that it could be escalated to consider legal action if nothing changes

	➢ Some changes have been made, but further support and actions required
Outcome	**(Letter 4**) to parent to confirm outcome of review **(Letter 4a**) to parent to confirm a further review meeting date. (This is optional and only if you feel that adjustments made to the plan at the initial review may have an impact on attendance, or you feel that it may keep the parents on track with the improvements)
Did not attend	**(Letter 5**) to be sent to parent if they did not attend meeting offering them a chance to contact you to rearrange the meeting and possible reconsideration for legal intervention. If appropriate an attendance plan could be made in absence and sent to the parent.
Keep a copy of all letters on school system including the Plan(s)	
Consider legal proceedings – at least 10 sessions of unauthorised absence.	➢ Copy of letters sent to parents ➢ Copy of supportive plan (including IHCP if appropriate) ➢ Outcome of support given ➢ Registration Certificate

Unauthorised Absences	
95% -	unauthorised absences – **(Letter 1a)** sent to parents reminding them of their duties to ensure their pupil/student is in school and on time, to phone in every day their pupil/student is absent. Explaining that U codes are unauthorised late marks. Offer Early Help.
92/93% -	If further unauthorised absences after letter 1a is sent – **(Letter 2a)** sent inviting parents to a meeting to discuss absences. Develop a plan of action for parents/pupil/student/school/other professionals. Early Help offered
Review meeting -	**(Letter 3)** optional letter to send after the first meeting to enclose a copy of the plan and confirm the date of the next meeting (no longer than 2-4 weeks) If you do send the letter, it is recommended you phone the parents prior to the review meeting to remind them. **Review Meeting - Review targets set at first meeting and choose from following options:** ➢ Target met, continue to review regularly ➢ Absences were changed to authorised as further documentation received ➢ Targets not met, confirm that it could be escalated to consider legal action if nothing changes ➢ Some changes have been made, but further support and actions required
Outcome	**(Letter 4**) to parent to confirm outcome of review **(Letter 4a**) to parent to confirm a further review meeting date. (This is optional and only if you feel that adjustments made to the plan at the initial review may have an impact on attendance, or you feel that it may keep the parents on track with the improvements)
Did not attend -	**(Letter 5**) to be sent to parent if they did not attend meeting offering them a chance to contact you to rearrange the meeting and possible legal intervention. If appropriate an attendance plan could be made in absence and sent to the parent.
Keep a copy of all letters on school system including the Plan(s)	

Consider Legal proceedings – at least 10 sessions of unauthorised absence.	➢ Copy of letters sent to parents ➢ Copy of supportive plan ➢ Outcome of support given ➢ Registration Certificate

To ensure flexibility for individual students, when the escalation process is not being followed for a student, Attendance Lead should be notified, consulted and reasons to be recorded on the school system. **School system should have logged:** ➢ **Active support plans to improve attendance** ➢ **Support plans must be actioned, reviewed, and renewed robustly**
The percentage and sessions of absences can conflict with each other; therefore, it is recommended that for weekly monitoring you obtain a percentage report and then look at each pupils/students' records on an individual basis alongside O code and U code reports.

APPENDIX 6: EXEMPLAR LETTERS TO PARENTS

School letter templates - Support for schools and settings (devon.gov.uk)

Stage 1	Letter 1 – absences due to mixed codes Letter 1a – absence due to illness Letter 1b – lateness
Stage 2	Letter 2 – pre meeting attendance warning letter
Stage 3	Letter 3 – attendance meeting invite
Stage 4	Letter 4 – failed to attend meeting
Stage 5	Letter 5 – review letter – improvements Letter 5a – review letter – not improved

Term-time absence (unauthorised holiday)
Unauthorised term time leave request (sometimes referred to as holiday refusal letter)
DCC bi-annual term-time holiday warning letter (it is strongly recommended that this letter is sent in September and again in March. Note: sending this bi-annual letter is a prerequisite for processing penalty notice referrals through Devon County Council. Schools must ensure this letter is sent each year to maintain the ability to refer cases for fining)

Encouraging good attendance
School letter encouraging good attendance in September

APPENDIX 7: REMOVING A PUPIL/STUDENT FROM THE SCHOOL ROLL

(it is vital that you are always professionally curious when following these processes)

Best practice processes

Elective Home Education (EHE): The Statutory Notification and the EHE form, together with the Safeguarding form must be submitted on the day of receiving the de-registration letter from the parent with a copy of the letter. The pupil/student should be taken off roll from the day the school receives the letter or in cases where the parent is

giving advance notice of the date requested. Do not backdate it to an earlier date than receipt of the letter even if the parent requests this. The school should confirm that the pupil/student has been registered with the LA as EHE to ensure that they have assumed responsibility for the pupil/student. Do not just assume that because the school has submitted the paperwork it has all gone through. An offer of an Exit Interview by the school should be made to all parents who write to school to withdraw to EHE their pupil/student. Where possible, schools should seek to gather the pupil/student's own voice as part of the exit process, as this may surface safeguarding concerns that are not apparent from parental communication alone.

Pupil/student Moves Out of Area: unreasonable distance to travel. Submit the Statutory Notification as soon as the school finds this out. Continue to track destination and liaise with LA admissions team. They will advise the school when a pupil/student may be removed from roll if it has been established that the pupil/student/family have left the last known address, and their new location is known. They may allow the school to backdate the leaving date if they or the school receives confirmation of the pupil/student starting at another school or within the care of a different LA. The school must have written confirmation from the LA to backdate the leaving date. If the school does not receive this and the school has no other confirmation of where the pupil/student is the school must keep them on roll for 20 days.

Pupil/student Emigrates: The school must follow the procedure above for moving out of area but also need to have ascertained from the parent the forwarding address, details of destination school and moving date.

Pupil/student Transfers to a New School: Confirm the pupil/student's start date at the new school and that the pupil/student has started there. Submit the Statutory Notification on the day the school has it confirmed that the pupil/student started at their new school. The school can take the pupil/student off roll from the confirmed start date or the last school day if it precedes it e.g., a Friday and they started on a Monday. If the start date is the first day of a school term the school can back date the leaving date for the school's pupil/student to the last day of the previous term. If the school must investigate in the new term to find out why the pupil/student is 'absent' keep them on roll until the school gets a confirmed start date at the new school. If there is a gap between the leaving date the school has been given by a parent and the start date for a pupil/student, the pupil/student should remain on the school's roll, marked absent, until the transfer school confirms the pupil/student has started there. If after ten days, the pupil/student has still not started, the school should submit a CME form. The school cannot remove a CME pupil/student from the school's roll for a further ten days from the initial notification or safeguarding referral (so 20 days in total from the first day of absence) unless the LA confirms where the pupil/student has gone.

APPENDIX 8: SCHOOL REVIEW FORM AND ATTENDANCE SUPPORT MEETING RECORD AND PLAN

School Review Meeting

The focus of the meeting should be to review the attendance and any improvements made.
It is useful to focus on what has worked well or had a positive influence. This is an opportunity for everyone to share further ideas about anything else that might help, including any new strategies or interventions that may be worth trying to prevent things becoming worse. At the end of the review meeting, a revised plan should be offered if further improvements are required or, where there is no improvement, consideration for escalation to consider legal intervention.

Pupil/student Name:		**Parent name(s):**	
Date:		**Staff Member:**	

Invitee Name:	**Role & Organisation:**	**Attended? (Y/N)**	**Email address:**

% Attendance at start of last meeting	**Attendance target set at last meeting**	**% Attendance presently**

Pupil/student's view: Depending on the age of the pupil/student and their understanding, it would be a good idea to obtain their views of attending school. This must be the most appropriate person, usually the class teacher or someone else who they may be working with.	

PREVIOUS ACTION PLAN INTERVENTION/SUPPORT PROVIDED TO DATE SINCE THE LAST MEETING: (In this section you should discuss the pupil/student's absence to date providing a copy of the registration certificate)	
What has gone well?	**What has not gone so well?**
Parent(s)	Parent(s)
School:	School:
Pupil/student	Pupil/student
Other professional support or family member:	Other professional support or family member:

Has the previous target been met?	
Yes	If the target has been met, it may be that there is no further action, however you may need to continue with a further action plan to keep things on track.
Some Improvement	If there has been some improvement, further support may need to be explored, and another action plan will need to be implemented with another review date.
No	If the target has not been met and there has been no engagement or attendance has not been improved with **further unauthorised absences, there are two options:**

	• A further plan will need to be implemented today but if there is no improvement over the next 3 weeks, legal intervention will need to be considered. Legal intervention will be a last resort, so we are hoping that the attendance of your pupil/student will improve. • If there is no improvement or the improvement is not satisfactory, a further letter will be sent to you inviting you to a further meeting which may result in considering legal intervention.

Further Actions to be taken to achieve improved attendance: (Include school, parent(s), pupil/student, other professionals)		By When:	Person responsible:	How will we know it is working for the pupil/student?
	Identified Barrier:	**Actions/interventions to be taken to address barrier:**	**By when:**	**Person responsible:**
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				

Days off school add up to lost learning!						
365 days in each year	175 – Non-school days each year (104 days of weekends) These 175 days are available to spend on family time such as visits, holidays, shopping, household jobs and other appointments					
	190 school days each year 190 days for your pupil/student's education	180 school days each year	171 school days each year	161 school days each year	152 school days each year	143 school days each year
	100 99 98 97 96	95 94 93 92 91	90 89 88 87 86	85 84 83 82 81	80 79 78 77 76	75 74 73 72 71
	100%	95%	90%	85%	80%	75%
	EXCELLENT/ VERY GOOD/ GOOD	NATIONAL AVERAGE/ CAUSE FOR CONCERN	CAUSE FOR CONCERN/ MAJOR ISSUE	MAJOR ISSUE	MAJOR ISSUE	
	Best chance of success – gets your child off to a flying start	Less chance of success – Makes it harder to make progress	Nor fair on your child – Progress will suffer	Significant impact on outcomes and achievement	Significant impact on outcomes and achievement	

		School contact with support and advice - possible involvement of external support	School contact with support and advice escalated - Involvement of external support with possible Local Authority involvement	Further escalation of external support and Local Authority involvement	Local Authority involvement
	97% and above – pupils/students with attendance at this level throughout their school career, will make the most progress and this should lead to better prospects for work, college, and university.	95% - pupils/students with attendance at this level should reach their target grades and should have good prospects and opportunities for work, college, and university but they are just below the national average rate of attendance	90% - pupils/students with attendance at this level are missing a month of school per year and are likely not to reach their target grades. Progress will be negatively affected, and their attendance will be viewed negatively by employers, further and higher education.	85% - pupils/students with this attendance will find it very difficult to keep up and their chances of achieving their potential will be significantly damaged	Any attendance percentage below this will be very hard for the pupil/student to keep up with the work and feel connected to friends and the school experience as a whole
	> Please don't let your child miss out on the education they deserve. > Every school day counts				

Attendance
80% - 90% in a test is excellent and generally good news!
The danger is that we feel the same way about attendance until it is explained

90% attendance is equivalent to missing half a day every week (approx. 2.5 hours of learning)
80% attendance is equivalent to missing a whole day every single week (approx. 5 hours of learning)
If attendance is 90% from Year 7 to 11 then this is equivalent to missing half a year of school
If attendance is 80% from Year 7 to 11 then this is equivalent to missing an entire year of school

Attendance %	Missed Days	Missed Weeks	Days Missed Over 5 years	Weeks Missed Over 5 years	Annually	Hours of Learning Missed (approx.)	Impact over 5 years
100%	0	0	0		Excellent	0	None
99%	1.9	0.38	9.5	1.9	Very Good	9.5	
98%	3.8	0.76	19	3.8	Very Good	19	
97%	5.7	1.14	28.5	5.7	Very Good	28.5	
96%	7.6	1.52	38	7.6	Good	38	

95%	9.5	1.9	47.5	9.5	National Average	47.5	Quarter Year missed
94%	11.4	2.28	57	11.4	Below National Average	57	
93%	13.3	2.66	66.5	13.3	Below National Average	66.5	Approximately third year missed
92%	15.2	3.04	76	15.2	Requires Improvement	76	
91%	17.1	3.42	85.5	17.1	Requires improvement/worrying	85.5	
90%	19	3.8	95	19	Cause for concern	95	Half Year missed
89%	20.9	4.18	104.5	20.9	Serious concern	104.5	
85%	28.5	5.7	142.5	28.5	Major issue	142.5	
80%	38	7.6	190	38	Significant impact on outcomes	190	Whole Year missed
75%	47.5	9.5	237	47.5	Significant impact on outcomes	237.5	1 ¼ year missed

School Attendance Support Meeting Record and Plan (SAM)
This format of this form is a guide to help schools identify any barriers to attendance as an early intervention. You are welcome to amend it to suit your needs whilst still addressing all areas for reason of absence.

Attendance %	The focus of the meeting should be on how to improve attendance and really understand the barriers you face and agree how we can all work together to resolve them. (It is also useful to identify on what has worked well or had a positive influence) This is an opportunity for everyone to share ideas about anything else that might help, including any new strategies or interventions that may be worth trying to prevent things becoming worse. At the end of the meeting, everyone will have a clear plan of the way forward.

Date of Meeting:		**Location:**			
Parent Name:		**Parent name:**			
Address: (If different from school records)		**Address:** (If different from school records)			
Name of pupil/student:		**Year Group:**		**Attendance %**	
Name of pupil/student:		**Year Group:**		**Attendance %**	
Siblings:		**School:**		**Year group:**	
Siblings:		**School:**		**Year group:**	

Invitees Name:	**Role & Organisation:**	**Attended? (Y/N)**	**Email address:**

Sibling(s):					
Name:		DOB:		School:	
Name:		DOB:		School:	
Name:		DOB:		School:	
Name:		DOB:		School:	

EARLY HELP: Support/Services already involved?			
Is there anyone that is working with your family that has not been invited to this meeting?	**Y/N**		
If Yes: Who are they and organisation? What support is in place and how is it working?	**Right for Pupil/student system number** (if applicable):		
If No: Would you like us to explore support for you and your pupil/student at the end of this meeting?	**Y/N**		
Is the pupil/student subject to a	**Y/N**	**Social worker name** (if applicable)	

Pupil/student Protection or Pupil/student in Need			

Pupil/student's view: Depending on the age of the pupil/student and their understanding, it would be a good idea to obtain their views of attending school. This must be the most appropriate person, usually the class teacher or another significant adult who they may be working with. If they have not been given chance to have their voice heard and they are at the meeting, ask if they would a chance to talk to someone now. See relational and restorative practice on suggestions when working with a Relational and Restorative Practice in Devon - Workforce Development – form attached below.

Attendance is presently:					
% Attendance	**Authorised sessions**	**Unauthorised sessions**	**Sessions available**	**Full weeks your pupil/student could have attended**	**Full weeks your pupil/student has only attended**

To put this in perspective, any broken weeks will impact on their academic and social progress.
85% and below - Any attendance percentage below this level will be very hard for the pupil/student to keep up with the work and feel connected to friends and the school experience as a whole, and their potential could be significantly damaged.

What are the main reasons for not attending:	

SCHOOL INTERVENTION/SUPPORT PROVIDED TO DATE: (In this section you should discuss the pupil/student's absence to date providing a copy of the registration certificate, log of school support provided both academic and pastoral including phone calls/letters sent home)
Include EHCP – what's in plan? Do you understand what actual support is in place and what it looks like for your pupil/student? *Does your pupil/student know what support is in place, what it means for them, how it may help, are they happy with the support in place, does it need to change?* *If there are SEND needs – what reasonable adjustments have been made in school?*

Present situation – You already may know what is impacting the attendance so any questions can be adjusted to suit the family circumstances.	
What has impacted/caused the current low attendance? Worries at home, school issues, relationships, friendship group. All relevant safeguarding concerns Impact of absence on the pupil/student's attainment and progress)	

Include any SEND requirements	
What actions are you currently taking to improve the attendance?	
What has worked previously? What helped me the past? When have things been better? Why were things better?	
What strengths do you think your family and the pupil/student has? Identify and record pupil/student strengths that can be built upon to secure improved attendance	
What can we do to help them with improving attendance?	
Is there anything you could be doing to improve attendance?	

Other key issues discussed: (please ensure you record any issues/key points not captured above):

We need to set up a plan to support you and your pupil/student to attend school with a target for attendance over the next 2-4 weeks initially. The target is up to you and may vary according to circumstances	
Action Plan Aim:	

Actions to be taken to achieve this Aim: (Include school, parent(s), pupil/student, other professionals)					
If there is a medical condition that requires support in school - complete an Individual Healthcare Plan (IHCP) Supporting pupils/students with medical conditions at school - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)					
	Identified Barrier:	**Actions/interventions to be taken to address the barrier:**	**By When:**	**Person responsible:**	**How will we know it is working for the pupil/student?**
1					
2					

3					
4					

Everyone is to be given a copy of the plan. **A review of your pupil/student's attendance will be carried out in 2-4 weeks.**					
Review Meeting Date:		**Time:**		**Venue:**	

School could either • **send a letter with a copy of the plan to the parents with a reminder of the review meeting date.** • **Phone parents prior to the review date to remind them.**	
If there are any difficulties or concerns that they have forgotten to mention after, they must contact the school rather than wait for the review as the earlier any concerns are addressed the better. If things change for your family, you must also contact the school in the first instance	**SCHOOL CONTACT NAME:**

OPTIONAL: Day in the life of the pupil/student: On days that the pupil/student is not in school, what does it look like? The questions asked would depend on why they are not attending school:	
Do the parents work?	
What time do they leave for work? **Is the pupil/student at home all day on their own?** **Does anyone visit them throughout the day?**	
How does the day start?	
What time do they get up, who wakes them? **Alarm/Mobile phone/parents – what happens?** **Do they get up straight away, do they have to be reminded?** **Do they get angry/upset?**	
What do they do after they get up?	
Do they go on computer? **Are they on their phone?** **Playstation/Xbox/TV?** **What games are they playing?** **Are they inactive all day?**	
What does bedtime look like?	
What time do they go to bed? **Do they have their mobile phone with them?** **Do they have their laptop/Computer/games in their room?**	
Does the poor attendance affect his friendships?	
How does the low attendance affect friendships, In and Out of school? **Do they see their friends in the evenings or at weekends?** **What do they do?** **Could friends meet them before school?**	
Medical support: Anxiety/Mental/Physical Health needs?	
CAMHS – engagement/waiting – What are you doing while waiting **Have you seen your GP?** **When did you see them? (In person appointment)** **Has any evidence been given to school?** **What School support is in place?**	

When are the next appointments? **What do you think will help?**	
What school support is in place?	
What support is offered in-house **Counselling/121/pastoral support/Safe place** **Have any reasonable adjustments been made?** **Has the school received medical advice on what reasonable adjustments could/should be made?** **How is the pupil/student in school?**	