



Chapel-en-le-Frith High School

Attendance and Punctuality policy

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Context

Chapel-en-le-Frith High school recognises that pupils will only benefit from their education if they attend school regularly and on time. Attendance will be maximised through an effective partnership between pupils, their parents and the school.

1. Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#), through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of 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

By law, all children of compulsory school age must receive a suitable full-time education as stated in section 576 of The Education Act 1996. Parents have a legal responsibility to make sure this happens either by registering their child at a school or by making other arrangements to give them a suitable full-time education. As a last resort schools and local authorities have legal powers to deal with poor attendance.

The school seeks to operate in ways which maximise student potential while supporting parents in meeting their legal requirements.

The school fulfils its responsibilities by taking registers at every lesson using Go4schools, of being open for the required 190 student school days (unless prevented by extreme weather or other unforeseen exceptional circumstance), and by using the nationally recognised attendance codes.

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) and [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set 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](#)

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents
- 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
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- 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
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
- 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

- Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
- 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
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy
- The link governor for attendance is Jayne Jodrell, who can be contacted via the clerk to governors. (jemsley@chapelhigh.org.uk)

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
- 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 (also known as the 'senior attendance champion') is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting 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
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers

- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Sue Dunn and can be contacted via 01298 813118 or sdunn@chapelhigh.org.uk

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 the leadership and pastoral team and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- Working with the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the Family Outreach Officer to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher/ assistant headteacher (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is Mrs Bagshaw and can be contacted through the school office (01298 813118)

3.5 Form tutors

Form tutors are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office by 8.55am every day. Afternoon registers will be taken by the class teacher.

Every half term the attendance officer will provide pastoral leaders and tutors with the previous half term's attendance and lates data for their house and tutor group. The attendance board will be updated with this data and the tutor group with the top attendance will be identified and rewarded.

Attendance will be recorded on all progress reports that go home to parents.

Regular attendance at school is extremely important and is the responsibility of students, parents and all staff to ensure that students attend school as regularly as possible. When a child returns from an absence, form tutors will have a conversation with the student about the importance of excellent attendance and inform the pastoral leader of any concerns.

3.6 School office staff

School office staff will:

- Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents to the pastoral leader in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

3.7 Pastoral Leaders

Pastoral leaders will:

- Follow up any cases of absence transferred from the attendance officer
- Support with any home visits for missing students
- Support with the reintegration of students after extended periods of absence
- Conduct attendance support meetings

3.7 Parents

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 are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 8.35am on the day of the absence (and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return. This should be by telephone using our dedicated absence line 01298 811878 and leave a message or telephone 01298 813118 after 8am if you wish to speak to a member of staff, or email: attendance@chapelhigh.org.uk
- 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
- Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or local authority
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting their child's pastoral leader via the school office (01298 813118)

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend every timetabled session on time

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

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

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- 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 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- 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 in school by 8.35am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.35am and will be kept open until 9.05am, the register for the second session will be taken at 1pm and will be kept open until 1.15pm.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.35am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office staff (see also section 7). This should be by telephone using our dedicated absence line 01298 811878 and leave a message or telephone 01298 813118 after 8am if you wish to speak to a member of staff, or email: attendance@chapelhigh.org.uk

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

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent to provide medical 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 will be notified of this in advance.

Parents cannot authorise absence. This decision rests with the school in accordance within the boundaries set by The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1997. Where deemed necessary the school reserves the right to request medical evidence to support absence due to illness.

4.3 Planned absence

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

However, we encourage parents 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 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 attendance code L.
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using attendance code U. This is an unauthorised absence for the whole session and will affect your child's overall attendance percentage and can be used to calculate absence thresholds for legal decision making.

Morning registration starts at 8.35am and students are advised to be in school by 8.30am to enable them to be in their tutor rooms at this time. It is the students' responsibility to ensure that they are registered in school for morning and afternoon registration as well as at the start of each lesson. A student who does not register is assumed to be absent from school and parents will be contacted.

All parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their child attends school on a punctual basis.

If students are late for school, they will sign in with a member of office staff at the main reception and make their way to their tutor room.

Students who are consistently late in a morning will be closely monitored and appropriate action will be taken.

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/text the pupil's parent 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 send a member of staff on a home visit and appropriate safeguarding procedures will ensue, which may involve contacting the police or social services.
- 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 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 the case will be referred to the local authority for the issue of a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention.

4.6 Reporting to parents

The school will regularly inform parents (see definition of 'parent', as used in this policy, in section 3.8 above) about their child's attendance and absence levels via written reports. Parents are also able to monitor their child's attendance using the Go4schools app.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

Authorised absence

An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or carer. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent telephones the school to explain the absence

Unauthorised absence

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the school even if the absence is supported by the parent.

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.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. Parents should be aware that circumstances such as not being able to get leave from work, or to attend a family wedding, would not meet the criteria for exceptional circumstances

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 2 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school website, or alternatively a paper copy can be collected from the school office. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence. Parents will be notified of the Headteacher's decision by letter

Other valid reasons for **authorised absence** include (but are not limited to):

- Illness and medical/dental 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
- Parent(s) 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
- 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

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 that came into effect on 1st September 2013 make it clear that Headteachers should not grant approval for any leave of absence during term time, including holiday, unless there are exceptional circumstances. These regulations also state that holidays cannot be authorised retrospectively. It is entirely the schools' decision and not a parental right to authorise absence from school. Parents should be advised that absence without the consent of the school could result in further action and sanctions including a penalty notice.

5.2 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

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.

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

Good attendance is rewarded using the schools reward system. This includes certificates and prizes at an individual and tutor group level. Tutor group and House attendance will be celebrated weekly and postcards will be sent home to celebrate good attendance.

6.1 Attendance contracts

An attendance contract will be issued when there are ongoing serious concerns over a student's attendance. Parents and the student will be invited into school for a meeting with the Pastoral Manager and the Assistant Headteacher in charge of attendance, to discuss what measures can be implemented to improve attendance.

At the initial contract meeting, a supportive discussion will take place with specific targets and interventions set. The contract will be reviewed approximately every five weeks to update any targets or intervention and evaluate any impact on attendance.

If there is no significant improvement, then the school will make a referral to the local authority for formal LA monitoring.

7. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

7.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

Students with complex barriers to attendance are supported by a range of staff in school including their Pastoral Leader and potentially the Family Outreach manager, SENDCO, the ELSA teaching assistant and external agencies where deemed appropriate. Phased reintegration plans are used as needed. Some students may also benefit from time in our Learning Centre before returning to the classroom. For some students a Tailor Made Provision might also be considered.

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

Where a pupil is absent from school due to mental or physical ill health or their SEND, students and their families are supported by a range of staff in school. The Pastoral Leader would usually be the initial point of contact and would meet with parents to look at what adjustments and support might be needed and would make any necessary referrals, this could include the SENDCO, the school MHST team or school health. Parents will be kept informed at all stages.

Where a pupil has an education health and care (EHC) plan 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

When a student is returning after a lengthy period of absence, the pastoral leader will meet with the student and parent to formulate a personalised reintegration plan based on the child's needs. This might include making use of the Learning Centre.

8. Attendance monitoring

The school attendance team will meet regularly to monitor and analyse the attendance and absence data. Students that require support with attendance will be identified and families will be offered support to improve attendance.

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

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 severe absence, and their families (see section 8.4 below)
- › Provide regular attendance reports to pastoral leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinator, designated safeguarding lead and pupil premium lead)
- › Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

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 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
- Enlist the support of the Family Outreach Manager to work with families to promote good attendance
- 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 two years by the senior leader with responsibility for attendance. At every review, the policy will be approved by the learning and pastoral governors committee.

10. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

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

Code	Definition	Scenario
I	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
I	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
Attending a place other than the school		
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
Absent – leave of absence		
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
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a ‘mobile child’ who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	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
Y1	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
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	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
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly	Every pupil absent as the school is closed

	closed	unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	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
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

Appendix 2: sample attendance letters

These sample letters will be used to communicate with parents/carers about absence, attendance and punctuality.

The letters cover the following scenarios:

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

Letter 2 – Concerns about a pupil's unauthorised absence

Letter 3 – Inviting parents/carers in to discuss attendance

Letter 4 – Inviting parents/carers of a pupil with SEND in to discuss attendance

Letter 5 – Formal notice about unauthorised absence

Letter 6 – Accepting a request for a leave of absence

Letter 7 – Declining a request for a leave of absence

Letter 8 – Concern about punctuality

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

Dear [Parent name]

Absences from school

We've noticed that [pupil name] has missed a lot of school recently. We're concerned that they are missing out on key experiences because of this, and that they risk falling behind.

[Name] has missed [insert number of days missed and over what time period].

We know that every family's circumstances are different, and want to work with you to provide the best education for your child. We are aware of [insert known reasons for absence]. Please let us know if there's anything else 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 01298 813118 as soon as you can so we can arrange for you to discuss any reasons for these absences with your child's Pastoral Leader, and how we can work together to help [name] catch up on any missed schoolwork.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs S Dunn

Assistant Headteacher

Letter 2 – Concerns about a pupil's unauthorised absence

Dear [Parent name]

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 01298 813118 as soon as you can so we can arrange a time for you to discuss any reasons for these absences with your child's Pastoral Leader, 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,

Mrs S Dunn

Assistant Headteacher

Letter 3 – Invite parents/carers in to discuss attendance

Dear [Parent name]

Invitation for a meeting to discuss attendance

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

Happening at school that makes it difficult for [name] to attend

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 attend school regularly

Please contact the school office on 01298 813118 as soon as you can so we can arrange for you to discuss the above with your child's Pastoral Leader, and how we can work together to help [name] catch up on any missed school work.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs S Dunn

Headteacher

Letter 4 – Invite parents/carers of a pupil with SEND in to discuss attendance

Dear [Parent name]

Invitation for a meeting to discuss attendance

We would like to invite you to come in to have a chat about [name]'s attendance at school. We would like to find out whether there is/are:

Anything happening at school that makes it difficult for [name] to attend

Any issues around the level of support we are offering [name] to support their special educational needs

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

Anything we can do to make it easier for [name] to attend school regularly

Please contact the school office on 01298 813118 as soon as you can so we can arrange to discuss the above, and what support we can offer to make regular attendance easier.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs S Dunn

Assistant Headteacher

Letter 5 – Formal notice about unauthorised absence

Dear [Parent name]

Unauthorised absence

We got in touch with you on [date] to discuss [name] taking unauthorised absence. Since then, we haven't seen much improvement in [name]'s rate of attendance. They missed the following days of school:

[date]

[date]

[date]

[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.

We would like to invite you to come for a discussion about [name]'s attendance at school. We would like to find out whether there is anything:

Happening at school that makes it difficult for [name] to attend

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 attend school regularly

Please contact the school office on 01298 813118 as soon as you can so we can arrange for you to discuss any reasons for these absences with your child's Pastoral Leader, and how we can work together to help [name] catch up on any missed schoolwork.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs S Dunn

Assistant Headteacher

Letter 6 – Accepting a request for a leave of absence

Dear [Parent name]

Absence from School

Thank you for your application requesting leave of absence for CHILD'S NAME, for NUMBER school days, from DATE to DATE, for the purpose of a family holiday.

In September 2013 the **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013** came into force. These regulations make it clear that Headteachers should not grant approval for any leave of absence during term-time, including holidays, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Having carefully considered your application, in line with Government guidelines, I am able to grant approval for your request for NUMBER school days on the basis that the reason given is exceptional.

Yours sincerely

Simon Grieves
Headteacher

Letter 7 – Declining a request for a leave of absence

Dear [Parent name]

Absence from School

Thank you for your application requesting leave of absence for CHILD'S NAME, for NUMBER school days, from DATE to DATE, for the purpose of a family holiday.

In September 2013 the **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013** came into force. These regulations make it clear that Headteachers should not grant approval for any leave of absence during term-time, including holidays, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Having carefully considered your application, in line with Government guidelines, I am unable to grant approval for your request as the reason given is not exceptional. If your child is absent from school during the specified dates you may be issued with a Penalty Notice for this unauthorised absence.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you wish to discuss this matter further.

Yours sincerely

Simon Grieves

Headteacher

Letter 8 – Concern about punctuality

Dear [Parent name]

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 01298 813118 to arrange a meeting with your child's Pastoral Leader.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs S Dunn

Assistant Headteacher

