



## THE BASILDON UPPER ACADEMY ATTENDANCE POLICY

<b>Policy Number</b>	0040a	<b>Policy Author</b>	G Smith
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**All student attendance queries and concerns should be raised via email to:**

**[upperattendance@basildonacademies.org.uk](mailto:upperattendance@basildonacademies.org.uk)**

**or by phone to:**

**01268 498882**

## Introduction and Background

The Basildon Upper Academy recognises that positive behaviour and good attendance are essential in order for students to get the most of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing and wider life chances.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



## Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence.
- Ensuring every student has access to full-time education to which they are entitled.
- Acting early to address patterns of absence.
- Promoting a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which students feel safe, secure and valued.
- Raising and maintaining a whole school awareness of the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- Ensuring that attendance is monitored effectively and reasons for absences are recorded promptly and consistently.

**The designated member of the Senior Leadership Team responsible for attendance is:**



**Suzanne O'Neill**  
**soneill@basildonacademies.org.uk**

**The Senior Attendance Officer for The Upper Academy is:**



**Lisa Butler**  
**upperattendance@basildonacademies.org.uk**  
**01268 498882**

## The Board of Trustees

The board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for all schools in the Trust on at least a termly basis. It also holds the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

The name of our linked Trustee with responsibility for monitoring attendance is: **Keith Bobbin**

## 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 students
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

The Headteacher for the Upper Academy is Rebecca Rees.

## **The Senior Attendance Officer**

The Senior Attendance Officer:

- Monitors attendance data across the school and at an individual student level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the senior leader responsible for attendance.
- Works with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence.
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues.
- Advises the Headteacher when to issue fixed penalty notices

## **Absence Procedures**

**The name and contact details of the school staff member students and parents should contact about attendance on a day-to-day basis is:**

Lisa Butler and/or Sarah Painter - [Upperattendance@basildonacademies.org.uk](mailto:Upperattendance@basildonacademies.org.uk)

We monitor and review all student absences, and the reasons that are given, thoroughly.

### **If a child is absent from school the parent/carer must follow these procedures:**

- Contact the school on the first day of absence before *8:30 am, when our register opens*;
- Contact the school on every further day of absence, again before *8:30 am*;
- Ensure that your child returns to school as soon as possible and you provide any medical evidence, if requested, to support the absence. Medical evidence may be requested after the third consecutive day or where your child is having multiple periods of absence over the term where attendance has fallen below 95%. When determining whether a child is too ill to attend school, parents, carers and school staff can consider the advice contained within the NHS and Essex County Council Guidance on School Absence and Childhood Illness (appendix A).

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

- Telephone or text you on the first, and every subsequent day of absence, if we have not heard from you. However, it remains your responsibility to contact us;
- If we are unable to make contact with parents or carers by telephone, we will telephone emergency contact numbers, send letters home and a home visit may be made, in the interests of safeguarding;
- A referral will be made to Local Authority if no contact has been made with parents or carers by the 10<sup>th</sup> day of absence (or sooner if deemed appropriate), at which point your child will be considered to be "missing from education."

### **If absence continues, we will:**

- Write to you if your child's attendance is below 95% and/or where punctuality is a concern;
- Arrange a meeting so that you may discuss the situation with our Senior Attendance Officer or member of staff allocated to support.
- Create a personalised action/support plan, such as an attendance contract, to address any barriers to attendance and make clear each person's role in improving the attendance patterns of your child;
- Offer signposting support to other agencies or services, if appropriate;
- Refer the matter to the Local Authority for relevant legal sanctions if attendance deteriorates following the above actions.

## Planned Absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be considered as authorized, if the student's parent or carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment and provides medical evidence (e.g. appointment card).

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

The student's parent or carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Appendix 1 identifies the term-time absences the school can authorise.

If a student is absent, it is their responsibility to liaise with subject teachers on their return to school to catch up on any missed work. Where absence has been agreed in advance, it is the student's responsibility to collect their work from the subject teachers prior to the absence.

## Lateness and Punctuality

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

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

A student arriving late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code ('L')
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code ('U')

Students are expected to arrive to school at the following times:

### **The times of the start and close of the school day for all students at The Basildon Upper Academy School are:**

Gates open: 8:00am

Registration starts: 8.30am

Registration closes: 9.00am

End of the school day: 3.00pm for Year 10 & 13 and 3:30pm for Year 11 & 12

### **How we manage lateness:**

- The school day starts at **8.00am** when children can begin to come into school;
- Registers are taken at **8.30am**;
- Children arriving after **8.30am** are required to come into school via the school reception. If accompanied by a parent/carer they must sign in at reception and provide a reason for their lateness, which is recorded.
- At **9.00am** the registers will be closed. In accordance with the regulations, if your child arrives after that time, they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site – 'U', but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean that they have an unauthorised absence;
- The school may contact parents/carers regarding punctuality concerns;
- From time to time a member of school staff will undertake a 'Late Gate' check, greeting late arrivals at the main entrance to the school.
- Unauthorised lateness could result in the school referring to the Local Authority for sanctions and/or legal proceedings. If your child has a persistent lateness record, you may be asked to meet with the Senior Attendance Officer or member of staff allocated to support.

You can approach us at any time if you are having difficulties getting your child to school on time. We expect parents, carers and staff to encourage good punctuality by being good role models to our children and, as a school, we celebrate good class and individual punctuality.

The Headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to students during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the Headteachers discretion. Term time holidays/leave of absence applications are not a parental right.

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

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the student's parents/carers belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent/carers religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.
- Traveller students 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 student is attending educational provision.

The Headteacher or Senior Attendance Officer may discuss the leave of absence request with other education settings and/or the Local Authority to determine any exceptional circumstances.

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

## **Reducing Persistent Absence (PA) and Severe Absence (SA)**

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

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

Parents or carers will be invited into school to attend a School Based Meeting to discuss their child's attendance if there are unauthorised absences.

If further unauthorised absences persist, the Academy will make a referral to the Local Authority to see if legal action needs to be initiated.

If the absence is not authorised and the leave is taken, the matter will be referred to the Local Authority who may issue a Penalty Notice for £160 (or £80 if paid within 21 days) to each parent/carer for each child taken out of school. Failure to pay will lead to prosecution. Parents can be fined up to £2,500 and/or imprisoned for failing to ensure that their child attends school regularly.

## **Legal Sanctions**

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

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

A second Penalty Notice issued within a three-year period will result in a fine of £160 per parent or carer, per child.

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

Penalty notices can be issued by a Headteacher, Local Authority Officer or the Police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded student is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

## **Strategies for Promoting Attendance**

### **Good relationships between home and the academies are essential in developing a rise in the level of attendance.**

At The Basildon Upper Academy, we believe in developing good patterns of attendance and set high expectations for the attendance and punctuality for all our students from the outset. It is a central part of our school's vision, values, ethos and day to day life. We recognise the strong connections between attendance, attainment, safeguarding and wellbeing.

- First day absence contact shows the concern of the academy. It enables problems to be dealt with immediately. Parents and carers feel more able to ask for advice and assistance.
- Request to parents and carers that they should inform the academy immediately when they know their child will be absent. Phone, email, text, contact us form and in person are all appropriate methods of contact.
- The expectation is for parents/carers to inform the Academies on each and every day of absence by 8:30am. It is at the Headteacher's discretion to authorise absences.
- If no reasons are received within 30 minutes, The Academies will initiate First Day Calling and may conduct an unannounced home visit.
- Medical evidence will be requested for absences requested in advance (to attend a pre-arranged medical appointment for example) or after the third consecutive day or, following multiple periods of absence over the term where attendance has fallen below 95%, for the academy to consider authorising the absence.
- Contact with parents or carers through information about attendance e.g. through personal attendance target letters; website etc.
- Regular internal truancy audits – spot checks on classrooms to identify internal truants and inform parents/carers.
- Submit a daily attendance return to the Department of Education, in line with the legal expectations placed on all schools.

- Build strong relationships and work jointly with families.
- Give parents/carers details on attendance in our newsletters.
- Promote the benefits of high attendance.
- Accurately complete admission and attendance registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence as required by law.
- Celebrate excellent attendance by displaying and reporting individual and class achievements.
- Reward good or improving attendance.
- Report to parents/carers regularly on their child's attendance and the impact on their progress.
- Contact parents/carers should their child's attendance fall below the school's target for attendance.

### **Rewards and Incentives**

- Rewards for 100% attendance.
- Attendance information read out in assemblies.
- Reward trips.
- Positive home school liaisons.

We may issue letters to parents/carers to praise good attendance or to raise concerns.

### **Attendance Monitoring**

The attendance team at the Academy monitors student absence on a daily basis.

A student's parent or carer is expected to call the school each morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health.

If a student's absence continues to rise after contacting their parent/carers, we will consider involving an education welfare officer.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a student's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the student will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Student-level absence 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 compare attendance data to the national average and share this with the Trust Board.

### **Absence Data**

We use data to monitor, identify and support individual students or groups of students when their attendance needs to improve, and schools are required to submit student attendance data to the Department for Education on a daily basis. Persistently and severely absent students are tracked and monitored carefully. We also combine this with academic tracking, as increased absence affects attainment.

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



## **Appendix 1: Attendance Codes**

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
<b>/</b>	Present (am)	Student is present at morning registration
<b>\</b>	Present (pm)	Student is present at afternoon registration
<b>L</b>	Late arrival	Student arrives late before register has closed
<b>B</b>	Off-site educational activity	Student is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
<b>D</b>	Dual registered	Student is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
<b>J</b>	Interview	Student has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
<b>P</b>	Sporting activity	Student is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
<b>V</b>	Educational trip or visit	Student is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
<b>W</b>	Work experience	Student is on a work experience placement

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
<b>Authorised absence</b>		
<b>C</b>	Authorised leave of absence	Student has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
<b>E</b>	Excluded	Student has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
<b>H</b>	Authorised holiday	Student has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances

<b>I</b>	Illness	School has been notified that a student will be absent due to illness
<b>M</b>	Medical/dental appointment	Student is at a medical or dental appointment
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Student is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Year 11 student is on study leave during their public examinations
<b>T</b>	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Student from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
<b>Unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Unauthorised holiday	Student is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	Reason not provided	Student is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for student's absence
<b>U</b>	Arrival after registration	Student arrived at school after the register closed

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Student of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>Y</b>	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or student is in custody
<b>Z</b>	Student not on admission register	Register set up but student has not yet joined the school

#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day
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## **Appendix 2: Working Together to Improve Attendance**

### **Step 1: Expect**

We aspire for all students to have high expectations across our academies, building a culture that all can and want to be in school. Readiness to learn is key and our non-teaching pastoral team are committed to removing any barriers to attendance and punctuality.

### **Step 2: Monitor**

Our dedicated Attendance Team use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance as soon as possible, at individual and cohort level. Contact with parents/carers and if necessary, other agencies, will be made as soon as possible to resolve issues before they become entrenched.

### **Step 3: Listen & Understand**

When a pattern is spotted, our Attendance Team will discuss with students and parents/carers. We will listen to help understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.

### **Step 4: Facilitate Support**

We will help remove barriers in school, accessing early help for students and parents/carers where this is needed. This might include a whole family plan or individual referral where absence is a symptom of a wider issue.

### **Step 5: 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 improvements in attendance to school. Depending on the circumstances, this could include support through a parenting contract or education supervision order via the local authority.

### **Step 6: Enforce**

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working to improve school attendance, enforcing of school attendance through statutory intervention or prosecution can be sought in order to protect a student's right to an education.

## Appendix 3

DfE guidance summary table of responsibilities for school attendance. From 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65e8ae343649a2001aed63aa/Summary\\_table\\_of\\_responsibilities\\_for\\_school\\_attendance\\_applies\\_from\\_19\\_August\\_2024\\_.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65e8ae343649a2001aed63aa/Summary_table_of_responsibilities_for_school_attendance_applies_from_19_August_2024_.pdf)

### All pupils

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

## Pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered to prevent the need for more formal support.</p>	<p>Proactively use data to identify pupils at risk of persistent absence.</p> <p>Work with each identified pupil and their parents to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-school barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Where out of school barriers are identified, signpost and support access to any required services in the first instance and act as lead practitioner if attendance is the only issue and/or the local threshold for formal early help is not met.</p> <p>If the issue persists, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the local authority and other partners. If a case meets the local threshold for formal early help/family support, this includes conducting the early help assessment and acting as the lead practitioner where all partners agree that the school is the best placed lead service. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the school, continue to work with the local authority and partners.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Hold a regular conversation with every school to identify, discuss and signpost or provide access to services for pupils who are persistently or severely absent or at risk of becoming so.</p> <p>Where there are out of school barriers, provide each identified pupil and their family with access to services they need in the first instance.</p> <p>If the issue persists, and there are multiple needs consider whether the threshold for early help is met and facilitate access where it is. Regardless, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the school and other partners. Provide the lead practitioner in cases where threshold is met and all partners agree that a local authority service is best placed to lead. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the local authority, continue to work with the school and partners.</p>

## Persistently absent pupils

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

## Severely absent pupils

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

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

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

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

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

## Support for pupils with a social worker

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

## Looked after and previously looked after children

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

## Monitoring

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

## Appendix 4

Essex code of conduct. Penalty notices for parents or truants and parents of students excluded from school anti-social behaviour act 2003 section 23

<https://www.essex.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/schools/school-attendance-and-absence/penalty-notice>

## Appendix 5



## Helping parents to understand the changes to fines for term time holidays

With the introduction of the new National Framework for Penalty Notices, the following changes will come into force for Penalty Notice Fines issued for unauthorised holidays recorded by schools after 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024.

**Who may be fined?**

Penalty Notice Fines are issued to each parent who allows their child to be absent from school.

For example: 3 siblings absent for term time leave, would result in each parent who allowed the holiday receiving 3 separate fines.

**First Offence**

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for an unauthorised term time holiday the fine amount will be:

£80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.

Increasing to £160 if paid between days 22-28.

**National Threshold**

There will be a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England of 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period.

These sessions do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence, including the U code (late after registers have closed).

For example: a 5 day holiday would meet the national threshold.

The 10-school week period can span different terms or school years.

**Second Offence (within 3 years)**

The Second time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence the amount will be:

£160 per parent (who allowed the holiday), per child, payable within 28 days.

**Third Offence and Any Further Offences (within 3 years)**

The third time an offence is committed a Penalty Notice will not be issued and local authorities will need to consider other available measures to address the absence concerns. This may mean that cases are presented before a Magistrate's Court. Prosecution can result in criminal records and fines of up to £2,500.

Cases found guilty in the Magistrates' Court can show on the parent's future DBS certificate due to 'failure to safeguard a child's education'.

### Appendix 6 - Illness Absence Guidance

[DfE external document template \(childrenscommissioner.gov.uk\)](https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk)