



Attendance Policy

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This is our Trust model policy which is adapted by schools accordingly.

1. Introduction

Kingfisher Schools Trust and Sir John Leman High are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all of its children and young people and recognises this can only be achieved by supporting and promoting excellent attendance by all. Only by attending school regularly and punctually, will children and young people be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. Research shows that high attainment often correlates with good attendance.

All schools recognise their responsibilities to ensure children and young people are in school and on time, therefore having access to learning for the maximum number of days and hours.

Our policy applies to all children and young people registered at this school. This policy is made available to all Parents / Carers and other stakeholders on our school website which can be found on the SJLHS attendance page of the school website: <https://www.sirjohnleman.co.uk/Parents/Attendance/>

This policy has been written to adhere to the relevant Children's Acts, Education Acts, Regulations and Guidance from the Department for Education in addition to guidance from the Local Authority.

Although Parents / Carers have the legal responsibility for ensuring their child's good attendance, the whole school community work together with other professionals and agencies to ensure that all children are encouraged and supported to develop good attendance habits. Procedures in this policy are followed to ensure this happens.

Children and young people who are persistently late or absent soon fall behind with their learning. Children and young people who are absent from school frequently develop large gaps in their learning which will inevitably impact on their progress and their ability to meet age-related learning expectations. A child whose attendance drops to 90% each year will, over their time at the school, miss just over 4 half-terms of learning or 19 full school days each year.

This attendance policy ensures that all stakeholders within Kingfisher Schools Trust are fully aware of and are clear about the actions necessary to promote good attendance.

2. 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 which values good attendance, including:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all students
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every student 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 make sure students have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote, support and report on punctuality in attending lessons.

3. Legislation and Guidance

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 7 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The School Attendance \(Student Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- The [Equality Act 2010](#)

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a student's attendance: guidance for schools](#)
- [Ofsted's 2025 framework toolkit](#)

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 The Trust Board is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, students and parents / carers
- 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 students, 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 students who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all students, but adapts processes and support to students' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual students 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 students' 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 students, 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
- Sharing effective practice on attendance management and improvement across schools

- Holding the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

The Trust Board delegates some of these duties to member of the central team at Kingfisher Schools Trust to ensure timely, appropriate support and challenge of schools.

4.2 The Headteacher is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to the members of the Academy Council
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual students
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising the Senior Attendance Officer and Designated Senior Leader to be able to do so
- Working with the parents of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for students with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where students with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a student with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the student's needs
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to students and parents / carers through all available channels
- Sharing information from the school register with the local authority, including:
 - Notifying the local authority when a student's name is added to or deleted from the school admission register outside of standard transition times
 - Providing the local authority with the details of students who fail to attend school regularly, or who have been marked with an unauthorised absence for a continuous period of 10 school days
 - Providing the local authority with the details of students who the school believes will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness

4.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- 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 students, Parents / Carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with Parents / Carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with students and their Parents / Carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to students and families

The Designated Senior Leader responsible for attendance is Mrs S. Bidwell and she can be contacted via the school attendance email: attendance@sirjohnleman.co.uk

4.4 The Attendance Officers are responsible for:

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the Designated Senior Leader responsible for attendance, and the Headteacher
- Working with Education Welfare Officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the Headteacher/Designated Senior Leader (authorised by the Headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The Attendance Officers are Mrs K. Crisp (senior attendance officer) and Miss K Evans, and they can be contacted via the school attendance email: attendance@sirjohnleman.co.uk

4.5 Form Tutors are responsible for:

- Form Tutors and class teachers are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis using BromCom, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1), and submitting this information through BromCom to the Attendance Officers by 9:10am and 12:00pm respectively.
- Form Tutors will also hold weekly tutor time attendance conversations with their tutees regarding their attendance.

4.6 School Office Staff are responsible for:

- Taking calls from Parents / Carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and pass on to the attendance team.
- Transferring calls from Parents / Carers to the attendance team or head or year where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

4.7 Parents / Carers are responsible for:

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

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

Parents / Carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day and timetables session on time
- Report through the MCAS (My Child At School APP) to report their child's absence before 8:30am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return.
- 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 year manager: 1aaj2@sirjohnleman.co.uk or the attendance team: attendance@sirjohnleman.co.uk

4.8 Students are expected to:

- Attend every timetabled session, on time as per the details above.
- Sixth Form ONLY:

- o Punctuality: The school day starts at 8:45am, if you arrive at 8:50am you will be classed as late on BromCom.
- o Absences: Call the sixth form absence line on 01502 719948 to report their absence before 8:30am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence or email on: sixthform@sirjohnleman.co.uk
- o For any known absences i.e. driving tests, music exams, dental & GP appointments etc., evidence will be asked in the form of a letter or screen shot so that the absence can be recorded as authorised and coded correctly as per DfE guidelines.

5. Recording Attendance

5.1 Attendance register

We will keep an electronic attendance register and place all students onto this register. We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day (tutor time) and once during the second session (period 3). It will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, whether every student is:

- Present
- Attending a place other than school
- Absent – unable to attend due to unavoidable causes

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:

- For students of compulsory school age, whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity, where a student is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances, where a student is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made. The school day starts at **8:40am** and ends at **3:15pm**.

- Students must arrive in school by 8:40am on each school day.
- The register for the first session will be taken at 8:45am and will be kept open until 9:10am.
- The register for the second session will be taken at 12:00pm and will be kept open until 12:25pm.

5.2 Unplanned absence

The student's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by [time], or as soon as practically possible, by registering their absence through the MCAS (My Child At School APP) or by emailing: attendance@sirjohnleman.co.uk

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised, unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness or your child is persistently absent (their attendance falls below the DfE 90% threshold).

Where the absence is longer than 3 days, or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, and parents/carers will be notified of this. Parental/carer statements that say 'unwell' or 'illness' will be rejected through MCAS (My Child At School APP) as more detail is required by the school for authorisation.

Please note that there can be a delay on the MCAS (My Child At School APP) in recording attendance, therefore, please allow at least 2 hours before highlighting any errors to the attendance team.

5.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as a single authorised session (half day) as long as the student's parent / carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment and provides evidence (this can be a letter or screenshot of the appointment time). This notification can be sent through the MCAS (My Child At School APP) or sent via the attendance email: attendance@sirjohnleman.co.uk

Where possible, the student should:

- Be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary, and attend school before/after their appointment
- Wear school uniform to their appointment, to make it easier to return to school afterwards

However, we encourage parents / carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible.

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

5.4 Lateness / punctuality

A student who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late 8:51 – 9:10 will be coded as 'L' – authorised late.
- After the register has closed will be marked using these coded:
 - o 9:11 – 10:00am will be coded at 'U' unauthorised late, unless exceptional circumstances or medical appointments apply.
 - o 10:01am will be coded as 'O' unauthorised absent, unless exceptional circumstances or medical appointments apply.
- If a student is late twice in one week with no good reason, they will be expected to serve a lunchtime detention.
- If punctuality is an ongoing issue, year mangers and other pastoral staff with work with home to improve the situation.

5.5 Following up unexplained absence

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

- Call the student's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the student's emergency contacts, the school may contact other professionals, complete a home visit or contact the police if the child is believed to be at immediate risk.

- 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(s) for which the student was absent
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure 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 student's social worker and / or youth offending team officer
- Where appropriate, offer support to the student and/or their parents/carers to improve attendance
- Identify whether the student 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: a notice to improve (NTI), a fixed penalty notice (FPN) or other legal intervention (see section 6.2 below), may be employed.

5.6 Reporting to parents

- The school will regularly (half termly) inform Parents / Carers about their child's attendance and absence levels through letters and messages sent via MCAS (My Child At School APP).
- Parents/Carers can see their child's attendance daily through their MCAS (My Child At School APP) and this will also be recorded on school reports.
- Please note that there can be a delay on the MCAS (My Child At School APP) in recording attendance, therefore, please allow at least 2 hours before highlighting any errors to the attendance team.
- The school will use both percentages and number of educational days missed when reporting attendance figures to parents / carers.

6. Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

6.1 Approval for term-time absence

The Headteacher may allow students 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 student 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 student is authorised to be absent for. The DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance so this will not be deemed as an authorised absence. Leave of absence will not be granted for a student to take part in protest activity during school hours.

Exceptional circumstances are rare, significant, unavoidable and short-term events that are outside of a family's control.

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

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 2 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the attendance page of the school website:

[https://www.sirjohnleman.co.uk/docs/Leave of Absence Request Form 2024.pdf](https://www.sirjohnleman.co.uk/docs/Leave_of_Absence_Request_Form_2024.pdf) The Headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence. If a student is over compulsory school age (e.g. sixth form), leave can be requested or agreed through the sixth form office.

If the school does not receive a completed leave of absence form for an extended period of absence, prior to the absence, then this will be coded as an unauthorised and a fixed penalty notice (FPN) will be considered.

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

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the student's parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart for religious observance. Students should attend school on the days surrounding those set apart for religious observance
- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – a student is a mobile child if their parent is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the student is travelling with them. In these circumstances, a student will be considered as a mobile child, provided they are of compulsory school age and have no fixed abode and whose parent is in a trade or business that requires them to travel from place to place
- If the student is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

Other reasons the school may allow a student 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 student is also registered (dual registration)
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority
- Attending work experience
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the student 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

6.2 Sanctions

We want our students to succeed and develop their skills. To do this, Students need to avoid missing lessons and days of school as much as possible. As a school, we want to reward high attendance and not just penalise students for poor attendance. We have a range of strategies to improve attendance but will use the following sanctions as required:

Penalty notices

The Headteacher (or someone authorised by them), local authority or the police can fine parents / carers 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 student
- 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 / carer who is liable for the student's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the Parents / Carers who allowed the absence.

Please note that the school will not authorise student absence due to 'illness' either side of a term-time holiday. This will be recorded as unauthorised and the school will consider issuing a penalty notice if the child has then reached 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10-week rolling period (through illness and holiday).

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 / carer must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

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

A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent / carer 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 by Suffolk County Council.

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents / carers 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 / carers that the student 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 / carer must pay £60 within 21 days, or £120.

Notices to improve

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

They will include:

- Details of the student'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

7. Strategies for Promoting Attendance

Our school will make use of the full range of support and 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.

7.1 Attendance Contract

We use attendance contracts as a form of attendance support.

An attendance contract is a formal written agreement between a parent / carer and the school to address irregular attendance at school. An attendance contract is not legally binding, but it provides a more formal route where previous support has not worked or would not have been appropriate.

Parents / carers cannot be compelled to enter an attendance contract, and the school cannot agree an attendance contract in a parent's absence.

Where an attendance contract would be an appropriate form of support, the school will arrange a meeting with the parent (and student if they are old enough to understand) to discuss how we can work in partnership to improve the student's attendance.

Where parents / carers fail to comply with an agreed attendance contract, the school may seek an alternative course of action. In the first instance, this will include discussions with the parents / carers to seek explanations and determine whether the attendance contract remains useful. Where there is further non-compliance following these discussions, the school may take further action.

7.2 Fast Track

Where voluntary early help plans have been unsuccessful in improving a student's attendance, the school may work in partnership with the Local Authority to initiate the Fast Track Attendance Process. This may involve arranging a Fast Track meeting with the school, parents/carers and an Educational Welfare Officer from Suffolk County Council to discuss ongoing attendance concerns, identify any remaining barriers to regular attendance and agree clear expectations and actions for improvement. Parents/carers will be informed of the process and the support available to them, and attendance will be closely monitored during the agreed period. Where attendance does not improve sufficiently, further action may be considered in accordance with the Local Authority's attendance procedures and statutory guidance.

7.3 Education Supervision Order (ESO)

In cases where voluntary early help plans and attendance contracts have been unsuccessful; we may work with the local authority to issue an education supervision order. If an education supervision order is considered, the local authority will inform the parent(s) / carer (s) in writing and will set up a meeting.

An education supervision order is a formal intervention but **not** criminal prosecution.

An education supervision order initially lasts for 1 year, but it can be extended within the last 3 months for a period of up to 3 years at a time.

In cases where parents / carers persistently fail to meet the directions given under the education supervision order, they may be liable to a fine of up to £1,000 upon conviction.

7.4 Home Visits

The school may undertake home visits as part of its attendance and safeguarding procedures. Home visits may be used to promote and support regular attendance, meet with students and/or parents/carers to discuss attendance concerns and identify or address barriers to attendance, and deliver appropriate curriculum work to students who are unable to attend school due to illness. Where a student has not been seen or contact has not been established for 10 consecutive sessions, a home visit may be undertaken as part of a welfare check. Home visits may also be used where there are concerns about suspected term-time holidays or other unauthorised absence, to establish the circumstances of the absence and reinforce the importance of regular school attendance. All home visits will be undertaken in accordance with the school's safeguarding and attendance procedures.

7.5 Further Strategies:

The school uses several different strategies for promoting attendance, these include, but are not limited to:

- Positive letters or MCAS messages home
- Proactive meetings with parents/carers and their child's year manager
- Forever programme tutor time sessions regarding the importance of attendance
- Student rewards for attendance, for example Love to shop vouchers and atrium rewards
- Support from the CONNECT provision

8. Strategies for Promoting Attendance

8.1 Students absent due to complex barriers to attendance

Where students experience complex barriers to attendance, appropriate school staff will work with the student and their family to identify the underlying barriers and, where possible, develop practical and realistic solutions to support regular attendance. The school may provide access to relevant information, resources and external agencies where these could offer additional support to the student and their family. Support may also be provided through the school's Connect Centre, where appropriate. Where the school identifies barriers relating to a student's needs that require further support or intervention, we will work with and, where appropriate, notify the local authority to help ensure that appropriate support is put in place.

8.2 Students absent due to mental or physical ill health

Where a student is absent from school due to a diagnosed mental or physical health condition, or where their SEND is presenting a barrier to attendance, the school will work with the student, their family and relevant health professionals to identify appropriate support and develop a realistic plan to enable the student to access education as fully as possible. This may include a phased or supported return to school, online or alternative tuition, the provision of appropriate learning resources to support education at home, and access to the school's Connect and Regulate Rooms, where appropriate, to provide a safe and supportive environment to help students manage barriers to attendance and re-engage with learning. Where a student has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and their attendance declines, or where the school becomes aware of attendance barriers related to the student's needs, the school will inform the local authority and work collaboratively to ensure that appropriate support and provision are considered.

Parents / carers should consult the NHS guidance [Is my child too ill for school?](#) when deciding whether to keep their child home due to illness. We will share this guidance with parents / carers, and provide support in understanding it, in order to promote school attendance wherever appropriate.

8.3 Students absent due to other barriers to attendance

Where absence is linked to a student's SEND, disadvantage, involvement with or previous involvement with children's social care, or other barriers to attendance such as caring responsibilities, the school will take a supportive, individualised and targeted approach. We will seek to understand the specific circumstances and barriers affecting the student and work with the student, parents/carers and relevant professionals to identify timely, appropriate and realistic adjustments and interventions that support improved attendance and engagement.

Support may include a phased return to school or to individual lessons, agreed with parents/carers and reviewed regularly to ensure that the approach remains appropriate and effective. Where appropriate, students may also access the school's Connect Centre and Regulate Rooms to provide a safe, supportive environment and help them manage barriers to attendance and re-engage with learning. Academic mentors are available to support students with missed learning and to reduce any anxiety that may arise from concerns about falling behind. Where appropriate, the school will work with external agencies and the local authority to ensure that additional support is coordinated and targeted to the student's individual needs. The school will ensure that reasonable adjustments and interventions are proportionate, timely and regularly reviewed, with the aim of removing barriers and supporting every student to achieve the best possible attendance.

Where a student has an education health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, the school will inform the local authority.

8.4 Students absent due to other barriers to attendance or prolonged absence

Where a student has experienced a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence, the school will work with the student and their parents/carers to support a positive and sustainable return to school. The approach will be individualised according to the student's circumstances and may include a phased or supported return, a gradual increase in lessons or time in school, appropriate adjustments to the school day, and access to the Connect Centre and Regulate Rooms where appropriate. Academic mentors and relevant staff will support students to identify and address gaps in learning and reduce any anxiety associated with returning to school or missed work.

Where a student has been absent for a prolonged period or without notification, the school will make appropriate attempts to contact parents/carers and, where necessary, alternative emergency contacts. When determining the appropriate response, we will consider the pattern and duration of the student's absence, their individual circumstances, vulnerability and any known factors affecting their welfare or ability to attend. Where there are safeguarding concerns, the school will follow its safeguarding procedures and, where appropriate, work with children's social care, the local authority and other relevant agencies. The student's return and subsequent attendance will be closely monitored, with support reviewed and adapted as necessary to promote sustained attendance and engagement.

9. Attendance Monitoring

9.1 Monitoring attendance

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

Specific student information will be shared with the DfE on request. The school has granted the Department for Education (DfE) secure access to its Management Information System (MIS) to enable attendance data to be accessed regularly. This data will be used by the DfE to create an Attendance Benchmarking and Insight Explorer (ABIE) report for the school, providing analysis and benchmarking of attendance data to support the school in identifying trends, evaluating attendance, and informing targeted action. Suffolk County Council may also access relevant attendance data through the agreed data-sharing arrangements.

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 Academy Council.

9.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify students, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance.
- Use a banded model to analyse attendance data, e.g. band 1 >95%+ attendance
- Identify students whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence
- Conduct thorough analysis of weekly, 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

9.3 Using data to improve attendance

Our school will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual students, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis

- Provide targeted support to the students 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 9.4 below)
- Provide regular attendance reports to form tutors, to facilitate discussions with students and families, and to the Academy Council and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinators, designated safeguarding leads and student premium leads)
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a student's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific students, where appropriate

9.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence (PA) is where a student misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence (SA) is where a student misses 50% or more of school. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's strategy for improving attendance.

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 / carers of students 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 students. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
- Implement sanctions, where necessary
- Involve the Suffolk County Council School Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) if appropriate

10. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Board of Trustees.

11. Policy Links

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- Supporting students with medical conditions

Appendix 1 – Attendance Register Codes

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

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Student is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Student is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Student arrives late before register has closed
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Student 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	Student is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Student is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Student is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Student is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Student 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	Student is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Student is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Student has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment

S	Study leave	Student has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
X	Not required to be in school	Student of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Student is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Student has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances

Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Student is a ‘mobile child’ who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Student is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Student is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Student 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	Student is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Student 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	Student is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Student is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every student absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)

Y5	Criminal justice detention	Student 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	Student'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	Student 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	Student has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective student not on admission register	Student 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