

Olive Hill Primary School

A member of Stour Vale Academy Trust



Attendance Policy and Procedures

September 2023

**Working together to maintain and improve school
attendance for all children: the responsibility of
EVERYONE.**

Policy Tracker - Responsibility for monitoring this policy: Local Governing Body (Reviewed annually or in response to changes in legislation or operating procedures)			
Date	Reviewed By:	Role	Date Approved by the Governing Board
05/09/22	Hannah Grasby	Headteacher	06/09/22
08/10/23	Hannah Grasby	Headteacher	12/10/23

Attendance Policy

Our core value is the belief that we are here for each and every child. We believe that fairness is giving every child what they need to be **happy** children, **confident** individuals, **responsible** citizens and **successful** learners.

In delivering our core value, we demonstrate a commitment to excellence and continuous growth through developing leadership in every role, trust and transparency.

At Olive Hill we deliver a broad and balanced curriculum that incorporates:

- Character development;
- Academic achievement;
- Oracy.

We are rigorous, robust and relentless in our pursuit of excellence through having the highest expectations of the children and ourselves. We act with integrity and compassion at all times. It is the strength of our relationships that allow us to deliver a high-quality education to all.

We believe in learning without limits.

Introduction:

Attendance is the essential foundation to positive outcomes for all children. Working together to maintain and improve school attendance for all children is everyone's responsibility. At Olive Hill Primary Academy, we expect all children to attend every day the school is open and to be on time.

As a school we provide a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environment where children want to be and are keen and ready to learn. This policy sets out what is expected of everyone when working together to maintain and improve school attendance.

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

- Promoting high levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence.
- Ensuring every child has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled.
- Acting early to address patterns of absence, including punctuality concerns.
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure children have the support in place to attend school.

School will work with children and their parents to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place. Securing high levels of attendance is not something that can be achieved in isolation by one person acting alone, it must be a concerted effort across all parties: the child; parents; all school staff; the governing body; the trust; the local authority; and other partners.

For the purpose of this policy, a parent means:

- all natural parents, whether they are married or not;
- any person who has parental responsibility for a child or young person; and,
- any person who has care of a child or young person (i.e. lives with and looks after the child).

The importance of high levels of school attendance:

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. When parents decide to have their child registered at Olive Hill Primary Academy, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends the school regularly. 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. Permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution. Where parents are separated both parents have equal responsibility in law for their child's attendance at school.

Regular attendance at school is essential for the children to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances. The children with the highest attainment at the end of key stage two have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment. At KS2, children not meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and maths have a higher overall absence rate than those meeting the expected standard. Any absence and/or lateness affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning and wellbeing.

Research has shown associations between regular absence from school and a number of extra-familial harms, including crime and serious violence. Your child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly.

We expect children to maintain an attendance figure of above 96% (fewer than 8 days missed) throughout the academic year. We expect children to be on time for school every day that the school is open.

Failing to attend Olive Hill on a regular basis will be considered as a safeguarding matter.

Promoting high levels of attendance:

High levels of attendance are a learned behaviour, and for children of primary school age it is important that this is role modelled to them on a daily basis. For all adults surrounding the child it is important that we recognise the importance of developing excellent patterns of attendance from the moment they start school (this includes children of non-compulsory school age, for example nursery). Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents, children and all members of school staff. We recognise the connection between attendance, attainment, safeguarding and wellbeing.

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Set high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all children.
- Regularly provide information about attendance through our communication channels.
- Report to you on your individual child's attendance and punctuality.
- Celebrate excellent attendance.
- Recognise good or improving attendance.

- Refer poor attendance to other agencies and keep parents informed.

Legislation and Guidance:

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

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

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

Roles and responsibilities

The governing board:

The governing board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos.
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data.
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school.
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance.
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

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 children.
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies.

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school.
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement.

- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes.
- Having an oversight of data analysis.
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data.
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues.
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to children and families.

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Miss Grasby and can be contacted via the school office.

The learning mentor for attendance support

The learning mentor for attendance support is responsible for:

- Monitoring late arrivals and absentees (usually daily).
- Monitoring contact made with regard to absence and passing relevant information to the class teacher.
- Telephoning parents when no reason has been given for absence by 9.30am on the first day of absence.
- Monitoring attendance and punctuality weekly, liaising with the headteacher so that we can intervene as soon as absence gives cause for concern.
- Monitoring register coding and alert staff of inconsistencies.
- Liaising with the Education Investigation Service (ESS) and attendance support workers and make referrals and arrange/attend clinics/meetings as needed.
- Liaising with the headteacher with responsibility for medical needs and the School Health Advisor as needed.
- Producing attendance figures for end of year reports and other reports as required.
- 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 and severe absence.
- Advising the headteacher/DHT/AHT (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices.
- Provide mentoring support for any children who are struggling to come to school, supporting the whole family where appropriate.

The learning mentor for attendance support is Mrs Bird and can be contacted via the school office.

Class teacher

The class teacher is responsible for:

- Recording attendance daily, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office without delay.
- Promoting an environment where the children feel happy at school and enjoy attending regularly.

- Working alongside parents to build positive relationships where concerns regarding attendance are addressed and discussed.
- To praise children for punctuality and high levels of attendance.
- To inform the phase leader and learning mentor when absence is impacting on achievement so that appropriate action can be taken.

Staff with specific responsibilities e.g. SENCO, Phase Leader, FSW

Staff with specific responsibilities are responsible for:

- Checking the attendance of children they specifically work with.
- Identifying the impact of attendance on individuals/groups of children.
- Supporting the class teacher and/or learning mentor for attendance support to resolve concerns regarding attendance, involving the parents where appropriate.

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 learning mentor for attendance support in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance.
- Promptly relay any messages regarding attendance to the appropriate members of staff.

Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Take responsibility for and prioritise their child's attendance and punctuality, and to understand that the school will raise concerns regarding attendance and punctuality with parents.
- Make sure their child attends every day on time, properly equipped and in a fit state to learn.
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 8.55am on the day of the absence and advise when they are expected to return. Calls should be made on every day of the child's absence unless the school has specifically given other instructions.
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child and to keep all contact details up-to-date.
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day.
- Take family holidays in the school holiday period.
- Engage with school staff where concerns regarding attendance are raised.

Children

Children are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time.
- Let a trusted adult know if something is worrying them about coming to school.
- To be ready, respectful, and safe.

Admission and Attendance Registers:

The law requires all schools to have an admission register and an attendance register. All children must be placed on the admission register and have their attendance recorded in the attendance register.

The admission register must contain specific personal details of every child in the school along with the date of admission or re-admission to the school, information regarding parents and carers, and details of the school last attended. A child's name can only lawfully be deleted from the admission register if a reason set out in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended, applies.

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 child 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.

Children must arrive in school by 8.55am on each school day.

Unplanned absence

The child's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.55am or as soon as practically possible by contacting the school. This can be done as follows:

- Phone the main school office on 01384 818855 and press option 1 to report your child's absence. This is a recorded service, and it is important that you clearly state your child's name and class with an

explanation for their absence.

- Phone the main school office on 01384 818855 and press option 2 to speak to a member of staff. This will usually be the learning mentor for attendance support.
- Speaking directly to the learning mentor for attendance support when bringing siblings to school in the morning. The learning mentor for attendance support will usually be available to speak with you during this time, if they are not available, please speak to a member of staff in the main school office.

You must explain your child's absence. Unexplained absences will be treated as a safeguarding concern.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness, or where there are on-going concerns regarding the child's attendance and/or punctuality. The school may ask the child's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

If your child has more than 5 days/10 sessions out of school, at any time over an academic year due to illness, then every time your child is absent after this you may be required to provide further information, detail or evidence so we can consider whether the absence can be authorised.

If your child has more than 10 days/20 sessions out of school, at any time over an academic year due to illness, you will may invited to attendance clinic to discuss how we can support improved attendance of your child.

You may also receive a home visit from a representative of the school, you will be aware of this taking place as a note from the school will be left at the property stating the date and time of the visit if no one is at home.

Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the child's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment and provides evidence of the appointment. We would not expect this to be a frequent occurrence unless there are on-going medical needs that the school has been made aware of.

A Leave of Absence form (less than one day) should be completed and returned to the office along with evidence of the reason for the request e.g. appointment card. We require minimum of 48 hours notice for leave of absences for less than one day, unless it is deemed as an emergency.

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

The child's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence (10 days notice is required for leave of absence for a whole day or longer).

Lateness and punctuality

School monitors lateness of children as being punctual for school is crucial. Lateness into school causes disruption to that child's learning and their confidence. It is paramount therefore that all children arrive at school on time.

A child who arrives late:

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

The school opens at 8.45am for all year groups. We expect the children to arrive at school between 8.45am and 8.55am. The school gates close at 8.55am and this indicates that the school day has started. Registers will be marked at this time and your child will receive a late mark if they are not present in the class.

Children arriving after the gates have closed at 8.55am are likely to be late to the classroom and the register will have been marked.

The register will be closed 30 minutes after school's start time. In accordance with the regulations, if your child arrives after that time, they will receive a 'U' mark that shows them to be on site, but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. If unauthorised lateness persists it could result in a referral to the Local Authority for consideration of a Penalty Notice or enforcement proceedings against you.

If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with a member of school staff to resolve the problem, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

Following up unexplained absence

It is vital that parents inform us of their child's absence from school. Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the child's parent/carer (and where appropriate social worker) on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the child's emergency contacts, the school may contact other services, for example the police, if there is a genuine concern regarding the wellbeing of the child and the family.
- 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.
- In the event we are not able to contact you on the first day of your child's absence from school, we will continue with daily phone calls until contact has been made. On the third consecutive day of an unexplained absence, school will attempt to visit the main family residence to do a safe and well check. This may be sooner than the third day if there are specific concerns around safeguarding.
- Invite you in to discuss the situation with our learning mentor for attendance support and/or a member of the senior management team if absences persist.
- Refer the matter to the Local Authority and/or Children's Services if attendance becomes a concern.

➤ Report to child missing from education.

Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels. Parents can also request to view their child's attendance at any time.

Authorised and unauthorised absence

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason such as genuine illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily.
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Children who arrive at school too late to get a mark.
- Shopping, looking after other children, moving house, sickness of siblings/parent, inclement weather or birthdays.
- Unauthorised leave of absence/holiday or day trips in term time.

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend for any reason, please speak to your child's teacher who will work with you to resolve any concerns.

Approval for term-time absence

Holidays in Term Time:

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents not to take children on holiday in school time. **Term time holidays will not be authorised by the school.**

Leave of Absence:

It is an expectation of this school that a leave of absence shall not be granted in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances (exceptional circumstances are rare, unavoidable, and short, and comprehensive evidence will be a part of the request). Only the headteacher (or the DHT/AHT in HT absence) may authorise such a request and all applications for a leave of absence must be made on a form provided by the school. Where a parent takes a leave of absence to which the application was refused or takes a leave of absence where no application was made to the school, the issue of a penalty fine (upon a return from such leave) by the

Local Authority may be requested. When requesting a fixed penalty fine the school may calculate the period of days taken within a 12-month period.

There is no automatic entitlement in law to leave of absence and the government made an amendment to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 in September 2013 to reflect this.

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a child during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the child is authorised to be absent for. Even where exceptional circumstances have been agreed, school will not authorise leave of absence for a period of over five days due to the detrimental impact on a child's education.

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

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and no less than 10 school days before the absence. Requests must be submitted using the school's leave of absence request form, available from the school office. The headteacher will require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

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 child's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.
- Traveller children 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.

Leave of absence shall not be granted unless:

- (a) an application has been made in advance to the school by a parent with whom the pupil normally resides: and
- (b) the school considers that leave of absence should be granted due to the exceptional circumstances relating to that application.

In light of the changes to the Pupil Registration Regulations, Olive Hill Primary Academy will only grant leave where parents can prove exceptional circumstances. Only in the case of emergency should these requests be made less than 10 days in advance of leave (for request totalling one day or more) and 48 hours for requests of less than one day. Where the decision is made not to authorise leave in term time, school will inform parent/carers in writing. A general guide for parent's, is leave for any holiday, activity or event that could be arranged during the annual 13-week holiday time would not be authorised. School will not provide work for a child who is away from school due to an unauthorised absence.

On any occasion that school refuses a request for leave in term time, should parent/carers proceed with the leave it will be recorded as a (G) (family holiday not agreed or in excess of agreement), on the school register.

Failure to notify and/or request leave of absence in term time, providing at least 5-day notice will result in all absence being recorded as (O) (unauthorised absence not covered by any other description).

If a child does not return to school after the leave of absence date, school will investigate the reasons surrounding the absence, refer to the Local Authority and under Regulation 8, 1 (f) of The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 consider removal from the school register.

Where requests of leave of absence are made, we would recommend that all parents are made aware of this prior to the leave being requested from the school. The school may communicate the response to the request to all legal parents, irrespective of whether they live together (unless there are safeguarding concerns/court orders in place).

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.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices are issued by the local authority.

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 child is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

Children Who Go Missing from Education:

Children going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. Our procedures for dealing with children that go missing from education are based on the LA and DCSB procedures. We will ensure that we follow these procedures for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future. We will ensure that we report children missing education to the LA CME officer, in line with statutory procedures.

Schools must enter a child on the admission register at the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or been notified, that the child will attend the school. If a child fails to attend on the agreed or notified date, the school should undertake reasonable enquiries to establish the child's whereabouts and consider notifying the local authority at the earliest opportunity.

Where a child has not returned to school for ten days after an authorised absence or is absent from school without authorisation for twenty consecutive school days, the child can be removed from the admission register

when the school and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to establish the whereabouts of the child. This only applies if the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the child is unable to attend because of sickness or unavoidable cause.

Schools have a safeguarding duty in respect of their children, and as part of this should investigate any unexplained absences. Further information about schools' safeguarding responsibilities can be found in the Keeping Children Safe in Education statutory guidance.

If the school has identified a child, who may not be in receipt of a suitable education provision, for example, they are not on the roll of a school, then a 'Missing Education Referral Form' must be downloaded, completed and returned to **ChildrenMissingEducation@dudley.gov.uk** and Education Support Service at ess.cs@dudley.gov.uk. The appropriate, most up to date referral form can be obtained from Revolution.

Attendance monitoring

School will regularly analyse attendance and absence data to identify children or cohorts that require support with their attendance and put effective strategies in place.

Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data daily, weekly, monthly, half-termly, termly, and yearly across the school and at an individual child level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern.

Pupil-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 governing board.

Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify children or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these children and their families.
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns.

Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with children and families.
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies.

- Share attendance information with other school in the area, the multi academy trust, local authorities, children's services, DfE and other partners.

Reducing persistent and severe absence:

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a child misses 50% or more of school for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and wellbeing, and we need parents' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA/SA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and you will be informed of this. PA/SA children are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system and we also combine this with academic mentoring where absence affects attainment.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence.
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of children who the school considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school.
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance.

Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

Telephone Numbers:

There are times when we need to contact parents about lots of things, including absence. We need to always have your contact numbers. So, help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up-to-date number - if we do not then something important may be missed. **You have a duty to notify school as soon as possible of any changes to contact details.**

School is expected to hold at least two contact numbers for every child.

Deletion from Roll:

For any child leaving, other than at the end of year 6, parents are required to complete a 'Leavers' Form' which can be obtained from the school office. This provides school with the following information: child's name, class, current address, date of leaving, new home address, name of new school, address of new school. This information is essential to ensure that we know and safeguard the whereabouts of all of our children, even those who leave us. Children cannot be deleted from the school roll without this information and will be classed as absent until we have confirmation they are safe and attending another school.

Parents need to be aware that their child's name may be deleted from the school roll if your child does not return to school within 10 days of the agreed return date for an AGREED Leave of Absence. This action will be

taken in consultation with the local authority who may agree to the removal, upon any return you will have to reapply for admission to a school within the borough. A place at your previous school cannot be guaranteed.

Addressing Attendance Concerns:

School will always show a commitment to building strong relationships with families and it is these relationships that can be the foundation of good attendance. School will keep you informed of your child's attendance and will communicate with you if your child's attendance is a concern. Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. Our learning mentor for attendance support is available to support our families in ensuring high levels of attendance for all children.

However, if your child's attendance does not improve and unauthorised absences persist school may refer the case to Dudley Council, Education Support Service (ESS). They are a statutory service who issue sanctions such as Penalty Notices or refer the case for prosecution in the Magistrates Court, based on the evidence provided by the school.

We understand that there can be barriers to attendance, and that some children will face greater barriers than their peers. We can use outside agencies to support with this, such as the school nurse. This can include children who suffer from long-term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities, or other vulnerabilities. High expectations of attendance remain however, we will work with families and children to support improved attendance whilst being mindful of the additional barriers faced. We can discuss reasonable adjustments and additional support from external agencies where appropriate.

Summary:

All school staff are committed to working with parents and children as the best way to guarantee as high a level of attendance as possible and that through good attendance ensure every child's welfare and life opportunities are promoted.

Appendix 1: attendance codes

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

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

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

I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil 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)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	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 pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil 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: Attendance Descriptions

Percentage Attendance	Descriptor	Number of days missed over the academic year
98- 100%	Excellent	
96 - 97.9%	Good	96% - 8 days missed
95 - 95.9%	Expected	95% - 9 days missed
90 - 94.9%	Requires Improvement	91% - 18 days missed
Below 90%	Persistent Absentee	90% - 19 days missed 85% - 28 days missed 80% - 38 days missed
Below 50%	Severe Absentee	

Five minutes lates late every day means your child will miss three days of learning each year.

15 minutes late every day means two weeks of learning missed each year

Appendix 3: DFE guidance summary table of responsibilities for school attendance

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>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>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:
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<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 poor attendance.</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.</p> <p>If the issue persists, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the local authority and other partners. Act 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 termly 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, facilitate a voluntary early help assessment where appropriate. Take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the school and other partners. Provide the lead practitioner where 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>
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Persistently absent pupils

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
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<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>Continued 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 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>Continued support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent and:</p> <p>Work jointly with the school to provide formal support options including parenting 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>
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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>Continued 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>Continued 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:
Not applicable.	<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>	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	Track local attendance data to prioritise support and unblock area wide attendance barriers where they impact numerous schools.

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>Inform 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>Regularly monitor the attendance of children with a social worker in their area.</p> <p>Put in place personal education plans for looked-after children.</p> <p>Secure regular attendance of looked-after children as their corporate parent and provide advice and guidance about the importance of attendance to those services supporting pupils previously looked after.</p>

Monitoring

Parents:	Schools:	Academy trustees and governing bodies:	Local authorities:
Schools regularly update parents on their child's attendance.	Ofsted considers schools' efforts to improve or sustain high attendance as part of inspections. Multi-academy trusts regularly review attendance data and support schools.	DfE Regions Group considers multi academy trusts' efforts on attendance as part of decision making. Ofsted considers governing bodies' efforts as part of inspections.	DfE Regions Group monitors local authority efforts as part of regular interaction.