

Attendance & Punctuality Policy

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Committee Responsible	Curriculum & Pastoral
Lead Trustee for Attendance	Eleni Chrysopoulou

Changes made since last review:	
Whole policy	Reviewed for 2026/27 against DfE attendance guidance (July 2026), KCSIE 2026 and the current statutory framework.
Pg 4	Policy structure, introduction and aims revised. Greater emphasis placed on attendance as a whole-school and safeguarding responsibility, early identification of concerns, understanding barriers, partnership with families, reasonable adjustments and a support-first approach.
Pg 4	Roles and responsibilities updated and clarified for the Trust Board, Headteacher, designated senior attendance lead, Attendance Team/Student Services, Heads of Year, tutors, parents/carers and pupils.
Pg 6	Recording and absence procedures updated. Clarified statutory registration requirements, attendance codes, follow-up of unexplained absence, medical evidence and support for pupils whose physical or mental health affects attendance.
Pg 8	Punctuality procedures substantially revised. Pupils are expected on site before gates close at 8:32am. Unjustified lateness results in a same-day lunchtime detention. Clarified distinction between the school's 8:32 punctuality expectation and the statutory register closing time. Persistent

	lateness is addressed through monitoring, parental contact and targeted support rather than an automatic numerical trigger.
Pg 8	Previous automatic staged response for attendance below 95% replaced with a graduated, support-first response. 95% retained as an early review trigger rather than an automatic escalation threshold. Persistent absence (10%+) and severe absence (50%+) definitions retained and clarified.
Pg 8	Additional-needs section strengthened, including expectations for pupils with SEND, medical/mental health needs, young carers, pupils with a social worker and looked-after/previously looked-after children. Added expectations around reasonable adjustments, phased reintegration and temporary part-time timetables.
Pg 9	Authorised and unauthorised absence section revised and simplified. Term-time leave and exceptional circumstances clarified.
Pg 9	Legal intervention section revised. Clarified use of Notices to Improve and that reaching the national threshold of 10 unauthorised sessions in 10 school weeks does not automatically result in a penalty notice; individual circumstances and appropriate support must be considered. Penalty notice arrangements updated/clarified.
Pg 10	Elective Home Education and children-not-in-school section revised to reflect the current statutory framework and developing requirements arising from the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026.
Pg 10	Monitoring arrangements strengthened. Added regular analysis of attendance by pupil group/cohort, evaluation of interventions and benchmarking. Policy review changed from every two years to at least annually.
Pg 11	Links to related school policies expanded to include SEND, Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions, Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions and Alternative Provision.
Pg 11	Legislation and statutory guidance references updated for 2026/27, including the July 2026 edition of <i>Working together to improve school attendance</i> .

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1. Introduction

Westfield Academy recognises that regular attendance and good punctuality are essential to pupils' attainment, wellbeing, safeguarding and wider life chances. Attendance is everyone's responsibility and is supported by a calm, orderly, safe and supportive school environment in which pupils are ready to learn.

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child receives that education. Where a child is registered at school, parents have a legal duty to ensure regular attendance unless a statutory reason for absence applies.

This policy has been reviewed with regard to the Department for Education (DfE) statutory guidance *Working together to improve school attendance*, updated in July 2026, and *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026*. It should be read alongside the Academy's safeguarding, behaviour, SEND and supporting pupils with medical conditions policies.

2. Aims and principles

Westfield Academy aims to secure high levels of attendance and punctuality for every pupil through high expectations, strong relationships with families, accurate data, early identification of emerging concerns and timely support.

- Set high expectations for attendance and punctuality and communicate them clearly to pupils and parents.
- Promote the educational, social and wellbeing benefits of regular attendance.
- Identify patterns of absence and lateness early, before they become entrenched.
- Listen to pupils and families to understand barriers to attendance and work in partnership to remove them.
- Provide reasonable adjustments and targeted support where pupils face additional barriers, including pupils with SEND, medical needs, mental health needs, young carers and pupils with a social worker.
- Use formal support and legal intervention only where appropriate, proportionate and consistent with the National Framework.
- Ensure that attendance is understood as a safeguarding matter as well as an educational priority.

Promoting regular attendance

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Paul Smith, Assistant Headteacher, who can be contacted at psm@westfield.academy. Day-to-day attendance enquiries should be directed to the Attendance Team at attendance@westfield.academy.

The Lead Trustee for Attendance is Eleni Chrysopoulou.

- Submit attendance data to the DfE in line with statutory requirements.
- Celebrate good and improving attendance in ways that do not disadvantage pupils with protected characteristics, disability or unavoidable absence.
- Use attendance information in tutor, year-group and whole-school monitoring.
- Communicate regularly with parents about attendance and punctuality, using supportive, clear and respectful language.
- Work with Hertfordshire County Council and relevant partners where additional support or statutory intervention is required.

3. Roles and responsibilities

The Trust Board

- Set high expectations for attendance and ensure that statutory duties are fulfilled.
- Regularly review attendance data and challenge leaders on patterns, vulnerable groups and the impact of improvement work.

- Ensure sufficient leadership, staffing and training are in place to manage and improve attendance.
- Promote attendance across the Academy's ethos, policies and improvement priorities.

The Headteacher

- Ensure this policy is implemented effectively.
- Ensure attendance and admission registers are maintained in accordance with statutory requirements.
- Support the designated senior attendance champion and hold leaders to account for attendance improvement.
- Authorise leave of absence where exceptional circumstances are demonstrated.
- Authorise or delegate decisions relating to penalty notices and other formal action in accordance with law and local arrangements.

The designated senior leader for attendance

- Lead, champion and improve attendance across the Academy.
- Maintain a clear whole-school vision and ensure attendance systems are understood and followed.
- Oversee analysis of attendance, absence and punctuality data and evaluate the impact of interventions.
- Ensure pupils and families receive appropriate support and that cases are escalated proportionately.
- Work with Heads of Year, the Attendance Team, safeguarding staff, SEND staff and external agencies.
- Report attendance information to senior leaders and trustees.

Attendance Team / Student Services

- Maintain accurate attendance records and process absence information.
- Follow up unexplained absence promptly and undertake safeguarding checks where required.
- Provide regular attendance information to Heads of Year and senior leaders.
- Coordinate letters, meetings, Attendance Improvement Plans and referrals where appropriate.
- Advise leaders about formal attendance procedures and local authority processes.

Heads of Year and pastoral staff

- Review attendance and punctuality patterns regularly and identify pupils requiring support.
- Meet pupils and families to understand barriers and agree appropriate actions.
- Coordinate pastoral, safeguarding, SEND and external-agency support as required.
- Review the impact of interventions and escalate concerns to the senior attendance lead when necessary.

Class teachers and form tutors

- Complete registers accurately and on time using the correct codes or marks.
- Promote the importance of regular attendance and punctuality.
- Raise concerns about patterns of absence or lateness through the Academy's pastoral systems.
- Support positive reintegration following absence.

Parents and carers

- Ensure their child attends every day the Academy is open, on time and ready to learn.
- Notify the Academy promptly when their child is unexpectedly absent and provide the reason for absence.
- Keep the Academy informed during continuing absence and provide information requested reasonably by the Academy.
- Arrange medical and dental appointments outside the school day wherever possible.

- Work with the Academy and relevant services to address barriers to attendance and engage with agreed support.

Pupils

- Attend school every day and arrive on time.
- Attend every timetabled lesson and registration period punctually.
- Engage with support offered to help improve attendance or punctuality.

4. Recording attendance

The Academy will maintain electronic admission and attendance registers in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and current DfE guidance.

The morning register is taken at 8:35am for all pupils. The register remains open until 9:00am. The afternoon register is taken at the Academy's designated afternoon registration point at the same time for all pupils in the relevant cohort. Registers will be completed accurately and promptly.

The attendance register records whether each pupil is present, attending an approved educational activity or place, absent, or unable to attend because of an unavoidable cause, using the national attendance and absence codes in Appendix 1.

Any amendment to the register will retain the original entry and record the amended entry, the reason, the date of amendment and the name or position of the person making the amendment. Register entries will be retained for the statutory period.

Late arrival and attendance codes

A pupil arriving after the school's expected arrival time may be subject to the Academy's punctuality procedures. For statutory attendance coding, a pupil who arrives after the register is taken but before it closes is recorded using code L. A pupil who arrives after the register has closed is recorded using code U for that session unless another code is appropriate.

5. Absence procedures

Unplanned absence

Parents should report an unplanned absence as soon as possible on the first day and, wherever possible, before 8:35am, using the Academy's attendance contact arrangements. Parents should continue to keep the Academy informed on subsequent days unless another arrangement has been agreed.

Where a pupil is absent and no reason has been provided, the Academy will contact the parent or carer on the first day. Where contact cannot be made, the Academy may contact emergency contacts, undertake a home visit and/or make enquiries with other services according to the level of safeguarding concern.

The Academy will not wait for a fixed number of days before taking safeguarding action. The response will reflect the pupil's circumstances, known vulnerabilities and the risk presented by the unexplained absence.

Illness and medical evidence

Absence due to genuine physical or mental illness will normally be authorised. The Academy will not routinely request medical evidence for every illness. Evidence may be requested where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness, where absence is frequent or prolonged, or where evidence is needed to help the Academy understand and support the pupil's needs. Any request will be reasonable and proportionate.

Where health needs are affecting attendance, the Academy will work with the pupil, family and relevant professionals to identify reasonable adjustments and support. Remote education will not be treated as a

routine alternative to attendance and, where used, will normally form part of a time-limited reintegration plan.

Planned absence and appointments

Parents should notify the Academy in advance of medical or dental appointments. Wherever possible these should be arranged outside school hours. Where an appointment must take place during the school day, pupils should attend school before and/or after the appointment where practicable.

6. Lateness and punctuality

Good punctuality is an important part of regular attendance. Pupils are expected to arrive on site before the gates close at 8:32am so that they are ready for registration at 8:35am.

The gate closure time is an Academy punctuality expectation and is distinct from the statutory attendance register closing time. A pupil may therefore be considered late under the Academy's behaviour and punctuality procedures even where they are still recorded as present for attendance purposes.

- Pupils arriving after 8:32am without an acceptable reason will receive a same-day lunchtime detention.
- Reasons for lateness will be considered individually. Routine traffic, oversleeping or poor personal organisation will not normally be accepted as valid reasons.
- Where a pupil is persistently late, the Head of Year will review the pattern, contact parents and seek to understand the causes.
- Where necessary, a pupil may be placed on a personalised Punctuality Improvement Plan. The Academy will not rely on a single automatic numerical trigger; decisions will consider frequency, pattern, barriers, previous support and impact.
- Persistent or significant punctuality concerns may lead to further pastoral intervention and, where lateness results in unauthorised absence after registration closes, may contribute to formal attendance action.

7. Supporting attendance and reducing absence

The Academy uses a support-first, needs-led approach. Attendance percentages are an important indicator but do not, on their own, determine the response. The Academy will consider the pattern, reason, duration and context of absence alongside the pupil's needs and circumstances.

Early identification

Attendance and punctuality are reviewed regularly. Attendance below 95%, repeated short absences, emerging patterns, declining attendance, frequent lateness or other concerns may trigger an early review. A figure below 95% is an internal prompt for scrutiny and support rather than an automatic sanction or fixed escalation pathway.

Persistent and severe absence

A pupil is persistently absent when they miss 10% or more of possible sessions, regardless of whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. A pupil is severely absent when they miss 50% or more of possible sessions. Pupils approaching or meeting these thresholds will receive increased attention and support, with severely absent pupils treated as a high priority.

Graduated response

- Expect and monitor: communicate high expectations and identify emerging concerns through accurate data.
- Listen and understand: discuss barriers with the pupil and family, including in-school factors such as bullying, SEND, relationships, curriculum or anxiety.
- Facilitate support: remove barriers within school and help families access appropriate external services.

- Formalise support: where absence persists, agree a clear written plan such as an Attendance Improvement Plan, with actions, responsibilities, review dates and success measures.
- Enforce where necessary: where support is not appropriate, is not successful or is not engaged with, consider statutory intervention in partnership with the local authority.

Pupils with additional needs

The Academy will maintain the same ambition for attendance for pupils with SEND, medical conditions, mental health needs, young carers, pupils with a social worker, looked-after children and previously looked-after children, while recognising that some pupils face additional barriers. Reasonable adjustments, individual healthcare plans, EHCP provision, phased reintegration or external support may be appropriate. Any part-time timetable will be exceptional, temporary, reviewed regularly and used only in the pupil's best interests with a clear plan to return to full-time education.

8. Authorised and unauthorised absence

Only the Academy, not a parent, can authorise an absence from school. Absence is authorised only where a statutory or otherwise permissible reason applies and the correct national code is used.

Leave of absence

The Headteacher may grant leave of absence only in circumstances permitted by the 2024 attendance regulations. Requests will be considered individually on their merits. The Academy will not operate blanket policies that automatically grant leave for particular circumstances.

Family holidays and trips abroad to visit family are not normally considered exceptional circumstances. Parents should make requests as far in advance as possible using the Academy's absence request process and should provide supporting information where requested.

Religious observance

Absence may be authorised for a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs. Additional days beyond those set apart may be unauthorised unless another permitted reason applies.

Unauthorised absence

- Absence where no satisfactory reason has been provided.
- Holiday or other leave taken without permission.
- Arriving after the register has closed without another authorised reason.
- Keeping a pupil off school unnecessarily or for reasons that do not prevent attendance.
- Absence beyond the period authorised by the Academy.

9. Legal intervention and penalty notices

The Academy will use legal intervention only where appropriate and in accordance with the DfE National Framework and Hertfordshire County Council arrangements. Before formal action, the Academy will consider whether support is appropriate, whether it has been offered and engaged with, and whether another intervention would better secure attendance.

Notices to improve

Where the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate but has not been successful or engaged with, a Notice to Improve may be used as a final opportunity to improve attendance before a penalty notice is considered. The notice will set out the attendance concern, support offered, the required improvement and the review period in line with the local code of conduct.

Penalty notices

The national threshold for considering a penalty notice is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling period of 10 school weeks. Meeting the threshold does not mean that a penalty notice must automatically be issued; the Academy and local authority will consider the circumstances and the most appropriate intervention.

Where a first penalty notice is issued to a parent in respect of a pupil, the current national framework provides for a payment of £80 if paid within 21 days, rising to £160 if paid within 28 days. A second penalty notice to the same parent for the same pupil within three years is £160. A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent for the same pupil within that three-year period and alternative legal action will be considered.

Penalty notices are issued and administered in accordance with current legislation and the local authority code of conduct. Where national amounts or procedures change, the current statutory framework will take precedence over figures printed in this policy.

10. Elective home education and children not in school

Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure that their child receives a suitable full-time education, either through regular attendance at school or otherwise. A parent considering elective home education should contact the Academy so that the family can discuss the reasons for the proposed withdrawal, the support already available and any concerns about the pupil's education, welfare or safeguarding.

For most pupils in mainstream school, a parent may choose elective home education by notifying the school in writing. However, additional legal requirements can apply to particular pupils, including pupils at certain special schools and pupils subject to specified safeguarding processes. The Academy will follow the current law, DfE guidance and Hertfordshire procedures before deleting a pupil from the admission register.

The Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026 introduces further measures concerning children not in school, local authority registers, school attendance orders and consent requirements for some vulnerable pupils. Some provisions depend on commencement regulations and local implementation. The Academy will apply those provisions when they are in force and will not remove a pupil from roll where local authority consent or another statutory process is required.

Elective home education will not be used by the Academy as a strategy to manage poor attendance or behaviour. Where a family is considering home education because of difficulties attending school, the Academy will first seek to understand and address those barriers wherever possible.

11. Monitoring, data and review

The Academy will monitor attendance, absence and punctuality at individual, year-group, cohort and whole-school level. Analysis will include patterns over time and groups that may experience additional barriers, including pupils with SEND, disadvantaged pupils, pupils with a social worker, young carers and other vulnerable groups.

- Heads of Year and the Attendance Team will review pupil-level attendance regularly.
- Senior leaders will review trends and the impact of interventions at least half-termly.
- Trustees will receive attendance information regularly and will provide challenge and support.
- Attendance interventions will be evaluated and adapted where they are not having the intended impact.
- The Academy will benchmark attendance appropriately against local, regional and national information where available.

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner where there is a significant change to legislation, statutory guidance or Academy procedures.

12. Links with other policies

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy / SEND Information Report
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions procedures

- Alternative Provision procedures

13. Legislation and guidance

This policy has been prepared with regard to current legislation and statutory guidance, including:

- Education Act 1996, including parental duties relating to school attendance.
- Education Act 2002, including safeguarding duties.
- Education and Inspections Act 2006.
- School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.
- Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007, as amended, including the 2024 national framework changes.
- Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026, where relevant provisions are in force.
- DfE: Working together to improve school attendance (July 2026).
- DfE: Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.
- DfE guidance on children missing education, elective home education, supporting pupils with medical conditions, and mental health issues affecting attendance.

Appendix 1: Attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on Academy 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
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school

P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances

Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a ‘mobile child’ who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open

Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: · In police detention · Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or · Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent  unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		

Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

Appendix 2 : Summary table of school responsibilities for attendance¹

All Pupils

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

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:
Work with the school and local authority to help them understand	Proactively use data to identify pupils at risk of persistent absence.	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on	Hold a regular conversation with every school to identify, discuss and signpost

¹ [DFE - Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance](#)

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

authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance. Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.	becoming persistently absent and: Where absence becomes persistent, put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers. Where necessary this includes working with partners. 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. Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, work with the local authority on legal intervention. Where there are safeguarding concerns, intensify support through a referral to statutory children's social care. Work with other schools in the local area, such as schools previously attended and the schools of any siblings.	help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	becoming persistently absent and: Work jointly with the school to provide formal support options including attendance contracts and education supervision orders. Where there are safeguarding concerns, ensure joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners. Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, enforce attendance through legal intervention (including prosecution as a last resort).
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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:
Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.	Continue support as for persistently absent pupils and: Agree a joint approach for all severely	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	Continue support as for persistently absent pupils and: All services should make this group

Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.	absent pupils with the local authority.		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. 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.
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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.	Proactively use data to identify cohorts with, or at risk of, low attendance and develop strategies to support them. Work with other schools in the local area and the local authority to share effective practice where there are common barriers to attendance.	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:

Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance. Proactively engage with the support offered.	Maintain the same ambition for attendance and work with pupils and parents to maximise attendance. 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. Consider additional support from wider services and external partners, making timely referrals. Regularly monitor data for such groups, including at board and governing body meetings and with local authorities.	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	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. 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.
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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:
Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance. Proactively engage with the support offered.	Know who the pupils who have, or who have had, a social worker are. Understand how the welfare, safeguarding, and child protection issues that they are experiencing, or have experienced, can have an impact on attendance – whilst maintaining a culture of high aspiration for the cohort.	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	Ensure that all Children's Social Care practitioners understand the importance of good attendance for pupil's educational progress, for their welfare and their wider development – and understand their role in improving it. Through the work of Virtual School Heads, they should: Undertake systemic monitoring and

	Provide additional academic support and make reasonable adjustments to help them, recognising that even when statutory social care intervention has ended, there can be a lasting impact on children's educational outcomes. Work in partnership with the local authority at a strategic and individual level, sharing data on attendance including, at an individual level, informing the pupil's social worker if there are any unexplained absences and if their name is to be deleted from the register.		data sharing of the attendance of children with a social worker in their area: developing and implementing targeted cohort level interventions to improve attendance. Provide advice, challenge and training to schools on how to promote and secure good attendance for children with a social worker. Develop whole system approaches, with social care, to support the attendance of children in need.
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Looked after and previously looked after children

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
Work with the school and local authority to help them understand the child's barriers to attendance – including the development of Personal Education Plans. Proactively engage with the support offered.	Have high expectations for the cohort – with expert support and leadership provided by the designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after pupils. Work in partnership with the local authority Virtual School Head to develop and deliver high quality Personal Education Plans for looked- after children that support good attendance. Work directly with parents to develop good home-school links that	Designate a member of staff to have responsibility for the promotion of the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after pupils. Monitor and review attendance of the cohort and consider how school policies, including behaviour policies, are sensitive to their needs and support good attendance.	Promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children – doing everything possible to minimise disruption to education when a pupil enters care. (LA that looks after the child:) Appoint an expert Virtual School Head (VSH) – will: Monitor, report on, and evaluate the education outcomes of looked after children, including their attendance, as if

	support good attendance. For previously looked-after pupils this could include discussion on use of the Pupil Premium Plus funding managed by the school.		they attended a single school - wherever they live or are educated. Ensure schools know when they have a pupil looked after by the authority on their role and that information is shared with the school on issues that may impact on their attendance. Ensure that all looked-after pupils have high quality, up to date, effective Personal Education Plans developed in partnership with schools, social workers and carers – including, where necessary, clear interventions and use of pupil premium plus funding to support good attendance. Provide expert advice and information on the education of previously looked-after pupils to schools and parents – including their attendance.
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Monitoring

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
Schools regularly update parents on their child's attendance. (If parents feel the school and/or local authority have not delivered what they are expected to they should discuss the case with the school and/or local authority's attendance support team.)	The school's Senior Attendance Champion will ensure all school based staff complete their attendance responsibilities in line with the school's policies and procedures. The governing board or academy trust will hold the headteacher or executive leadership to account for their delegated responsibilities	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. Ofsted may consider the local area partnership's approach to improving attendance of children and young people with SEND as part of the SEND Area Inspection, and the local authority's approach to improving

	and for compliance with regulatory and statutory requirements. They will review progress and provide challenge when required. The board will help school leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most and ensure that school staff receive adequate training on attendance. Ofsted will expect schools to do all they reasonably can to achieve the highest possible attendance as part of the behaviour and attitudes, judgement. This includes, where attendance is not consistently at or above what could reasonably be expected, that schools have a strong understanding of the causes of absence (particularly for persistent and severe absence) and a clear strategy in place that takes account of those causes to improve attendance for all pupils. Ultimately, in cases where a school has not met expectations or statutory duties the Secretary of State can consider a complaint.		attendance for children with a social worker through inspecting local authority children's services. Ultimately, in cases where a local authority has not met expectations or statutory duties the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman or the Secretary of State can consider a complaint.
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