ATTENDANCE POLICY & PROCEDURES

Policy Statement (1)

AKS Lytham recognises that high attendance and punctuality are fundamental to academic success, personal development, and the wellbeing and safety of pupils. This policy sets out expectations, procedures and responsibilities of all pupils, parents, staff, and school leaders at AKS Lytham in relation to attendance.

Its purpose is to promote high levels of attendance and punctuality; to ensure every pupil has access to a full-time suitable education; to support families in meeting their legal obligations; to identify and address patterns of poor attendance early and to ensure there are clear procedures in place for monitoring and intervention.

Whilst all pupils have a right to full-time education and the school has high attendance expectations for all pupils, the school will account for the specific needs of certain pupils and pupil cohorts. In applying this policy, the school will consider its duties under the *Equality Act 2010* and the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child*.

This policy was developed having regard to the following legislation and guidance:

- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance (DfE) 2024
- the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014,
- Children Missing Education (DfE) 2024

This policy follows the updates and guidance based on the August 2024 document: Working together to improve school attendance

At AKS Lytham, we have the highest expectations across all areas of school life including attendance. We value positive relationships between both staff and pupils and want all pupils to feel they belong here and are valued. We work with our families to ensure that pupils have the highest possible attendance at school. We believe that this is the best way for them to succeed and to get the most out of all we have to offer as a school.

There is a clear link between academic outcomes and school attendance. We want all pupils to achieve excellent outcomes to give themselves the very best chance in life.

The Department of Education's research goes beyond academic metrics, highlighting the impact of attendance on pupils' social and emotional well-being. Regular school attendance fosters a sense of belonging and connection within the school community.

Pupils who attend school regularly are more likely to develop positive relationships with peers and teachers, enhancing their overall emotional resilience and mental health.

Conversely, chronic absenteeism has been linked to feelings of isolation, disengagement, and a higher risk of pupils not continuing with their education when they finish secondary school.

There are approximately 190 non-school days per year for holidays, shopping and appointments. There is no need, except in the case of illness or extreme circumstances, to miss a day's education. If you miss one session in a week (remember, there are two sessions per day) your attendance is 90%.

- In the Prep School, such absence would mean you miss 17 days of education in a year and risk not being ready for the next stage of education.
- In Senior School, such absence would mean you miss 17 days of education in a year and you will be statistically likely to achieve lower grades in your GCSEs.

It is vital we work together to teach our pupils the value of attending school each and every day. However, we do appreciate that at times, pupils may not be able to attend school. We ask our parents and carers to follow the processes below. They support our safeguarding procedures.

Should you have a concern about your child's attendance, then we ask that you contact us to discuss this. We believe in strong partnerships across all parts of school life. This includes attending school.

Definitions

The following definitions apply to this Policy:

- **Senior Attendance Champion** – The member of the senior leadership team designated to oversee all attendance-related matters and to champion and promote good attendance.
- **Persistent Absence** – Attendance below 90%.
- **Unauthorised Absence** – Absence that has not been authorised by the school in line with the processes set out below.
- **Parent** – In this document the term 'parent' is to refer to a parent, carer, guardian, or anyone with legal responsibility for the pupil.

Policy Statement (2)

1) This policy applies to all members of the AKS school community, including those in our EYFS setting.
2) AKS implements this policy through adherence to the procedures set out in the rest of this document.
3) This policy is made available to all interested parties in accordance with our *Provision of Information* policy. Practical instructions for all staff concerning the Registration process in the school MIS are available in the *Registration of Pupils* Guidance Document. Related information is also available in the school's *Missing Pupil* and

Uncollected Pupil policies. This document should be read in conjunction with the school's *Anti-Bullying* Policy, *Child Protection Policy* and *Rules, Rewards and Sanctions* document (all available on the school website).

4) AKS is fully committed to ensuring that the application of this policy is non-discriminatory in line with the UK Equality Act (2010). Further details are available in the school's *Equal Opportunity* policy document.
5) This policy is reviewed at least annually, or as events or legislation changes require, by the Whole School Leadership Team and the Local Governing Body. The deadline for the next review is no later than 12 months after the most recent review date indicated above.

Key Personnel

1) Phil Hayden: Deputy Head (Pastoral)
2) Amanda Ilhan: Head of Nursery and Preparatory School

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Absence through illness or unforeseen circumstances

If your child is unwell, please phone the main reception and leave a message before 8.45am or alternatively email the below communications inbox.
Tel: 01253 784158 (Senior)
01253 784156 (Prep)
Or e-mail: absence@akslytham.com

Attending an Appointment

Where possible please schedule dental and non-urgent medical appointments outside of school hours. We know this may not be possible or advisable for hospital visits.
Where appointments during school time are unavoidable, the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment. Pupils must be picked up and returned to school if their appointment ends during the school day. They must sign in and out at the front Reception office.

Known Absence

Your child may need to miss school for exceptional reasons. If so, parents/carers should ask the Head in writing copying in your child's Head of Year/Class Teacher (Prep). Where possible, this should be made at least four weeks before the required date. If such a request is made, the school expects it to be short. But even then, we may not be able to approve it.

If the Head does not authorise it, then any absence is 'unauthorised' and will be logged on your child's record as well as shared with the local authority in line with reporting guidelines.

We must follow government guidelines. Therefore, we cannot approve holiday requests during term time, unless there are exceptional circumstances that fall within the scope of the guidelines.

Support

We take absence very seriously. We are committed to supporting any child who is finding it difficult to attend school regularly. We will particularly target support for any pupil whose attendance falls below 90%, though it is worth noting that even improving attendance from 98% to 99% (from example) can significantly improve a child's attainment.

Punctuality

The school day starts at 8:45am and we expect your child to be in school at that time. Arrival after that time will mean the child is late. Lateness means they miss out on important routines which help get their day off to a positive start. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons during the day for others.

How we manage lateness to school and lessons

Lateness to school will be followed up by your child's Tutor and then Head of Year, in the Senior School. In the Prep School this will be done by the Head of School. A continued pattern of lateness will lead to the Head of Year asking parents to come into school to put together a support plan to ensure arrival on time.

In the Senior School if a child is repeatedly late to lessons, they will be issued with a misdemeanour, which when accrued will lead to a detention.

The rest of this document outlines our Attendance Policy and Procedures. We encourage all parents to review it. This ensures they understand how we handle attendance. If getting your child to school is hard/challenging, please contact your child's Head of Year in the Senior School or Class Teacher in the Prep School immediately.

Part A – Policy

1. Introduction

This Attendance Policy outlines the culture and approach to supporting good attendance at our school. The second part of the document outlines the more detailed procedures, roles and responsibilities related to pupil attendance that operate at our school. Through all that we do to manage attendance, we are committed to creating a positive learning environment, supporting pupil achievement, and complying with legal requirements.

We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to be proud to belong and to achieve their best. For our pupils to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. It is very important therefore that parents[1] make sure that children attend regularly, and this policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

Regular attendance at school is of critical importance to a child's education. Evidence tells us that the pupils with the highest attainment at the end of key stage 2 and key stage 4 have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment. Any absence affects the pattern of a pupil's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts the learning of others in the same teaching groups by disrupting classroom routines. **Ensuring your child's regular attendance is your legal responsibility**.

The principles of a 'support first approach' are adopted and we seek to:

Support first approach (as set out in DFE Guidance)	
Expect	Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.
Monitor	Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.
Listen and understand	When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents to listen to and understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.
Facilitate support	Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of

[1] *The definition of a parent can be found in the Education Act 1996, and this applies to all the legislation to which this guidance relates. In addition to the child's birth parents, references to parents in this guidance include any person who has parental responsibility (which includes the local authority where it has a care order in respect of the child) and any person (for example, a foster carer) who has care of the child. To reflect this, this guidance uses 'parent' to refer to both parents and carers.*

	school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.
Formalise support	Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through an attendance contract or education supervision order.
Enforce	Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention: a penalty notice in line with the National Framework or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

2. Aims

Our aim is to create a school environment where children feel they belong and want to come to school. We believe our school is a great place to learn, and that being in school day in, day out, is in the best interests of all our pupils. However, we recognise that there will be times when there may be barriers that prevent children from attending school. In these instances, we will act early to understand the issue, provide support and work with the child and their family to get them back to regular attendance as quickly as possible.

We believe that one of the most important factors in promoting good attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards school and a sense of belonging. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children, and to foster positive and mutually respectful relationships with parents.

By promoting good attendance and punctuality we aim to:

- Make good attendance and punctuality a priority for all those involved in the school community.
- Raise our pupils' awareness of the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- Provide support, advice and guidelines to parents, pupils and staff.
- Work in partnership with parents, including regularly informing them about their child's absence and attendance levels.
- Support pupils back into school following a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence and provide support to build confidence and bridge gaps.
- Celebrate and reward good attendance and punctuality.

This policy sets out our school's position on attendance and details the procedures that all parents[2] must follow to report their child's absence from school and to remind them of their legal duty, to ensure their child attends school regularly.

This policy will be applied fairly and consistently, considering the individual needs of our pupils and their families who have specific barriers to attendance. Therefore, in the development of our policy we have considered our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

In the Prep School it is vital that children develop regular attendance habits at an early age. Therefore, the school will encourage parents of children who are not yet of compulsory school age, to send their children to every session that is available to them. If the child is unable to attend the school for any reason, the parent should inform the school of the reason on the first day of absence. If the school is concerned about a pupil's attendance for any reason, we will contact the parent to discuss the matter, in the first instance.

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory[3] school age attend regularly and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

We want our pupils to come to school every day unless they are not well enough to attend. We believe that children who attend school regularly are more likely to feel settled in school, maintain friendships, keep up with their learning and gain the greatest benefit from their education. We want all our pupils to enjoy school, grow up to become emotionally resilient, confident and competent adults who can realise their full potential. Regular attendance and punctuality are essential in the workplace and children who are used to attending school on time, and on every occasion unless they are too unwell to attend, will be better prepared for the attendance expectations in the workplace.

In April 2017 the Supreme Court clarified the definition of regular attendance to be attendance "in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school", therefore if an absence is not authorised by the school, the pupil's attendance is deemed to be irregular.

We will do all we can to encourage our pupils to attend. We will also make available the best provision we can for any pupil who needs additional support in school or who is prevented from attending school, due to a medical condition.

Please see DfE guidance documents 'Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions - December 2015', 'Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs- January 2013' and Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) – or ask the school for printed copies.

2.1. Effects of non-attendance

The table below indicates how what might seem like just a few days absence can result in children missing a significant number of lessons.

[2] Education law defines parents as: 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. In this policy the term 'parent' includes parents and carers.

[3] A child becomes of 'compulsory school age' on the 1st January, 1st April or 1st September following their 5th birthday and ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of Year 11.

Attendance during school year	Days lost in a year	Which is approximately	Approximate number of lessons missed
95%	9 Days	2 Weeks	60 Lessons
90%	17 Days	4 Weeks	120 Lessons

3. Safeguarding and Attendance

Our school will monitor trends and patterns of absence for all pupils as a part of our standard procedures. However, we are aware that sudden or gradual changes in a pupil's attendance may indicate additional or more extreme safeguarding issues. In line with government guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education we will investigate and report any suspected safeguarding cases on to the relevant authorities. As part of our safeguarding duty and our standard procedures, we will inform the Local Authority and/or the Police of the details of any pupil who is absent from school when the school cannot establish their whereabouts and is concerned for the pupil's welfare.

4. Legislation and Guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the government guidance 2024 Working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) (publishing.service.gov.uk) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's 2015 statutory guidance on School Attendance Parental Responsibility Measures. These documents are drawn from legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance including:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Children Act 1989
- The Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- The Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Sentencing Act 2020
- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- The Education (Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders) (England) Regulations 2007
- The Education (Information about Individual Pupils) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendments) Regulations 2024

5. Using data to support improvements in attendance

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence may seriously affect their learning. The Department for Education (DfE) defines a pupil as a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year, for whatever reason. For pupils who miss more than 50% of possible sessions they are defined as 'severely absent'.

The school will ensure that attendance data, is regularly monitored to identify emerging attendance issues and will seek to prevent any pupil becoming persistently or severely absent. This will include: identifying the individual needs of pupils; working closely with families and wider support services to remove barriers to attendance; and where a formalised approach in conjunction with the local authority is required in line with the DfE guidance Working Together to Improve School Attendance.

6. Understanding Barriers to Attendance

In relation to understanding barriers to attendance, we will ensure all pupils and parents are treated with dignity and staff will model respectful relationships to build a positive understanding between home and school that can be the foundation of good attendance. In communicating with parents, we will highlight the link between attendance and attainment and wider wellbeing and enhance their understanding of what good attendance looks like. Where a pupil or family needs support with attendance we will identify who is best placed to work with them to address issues.

We will support pupils and parents by working together to address any in-school barriers to attendance. Where barriers are outside of the school's control, all partners should work together to support pupils and parents to access any support they may need voluntarily.

Where absence intensifies, so should the support provided, which will require the school to work in tandem with the local authority and other relevant partners.

Some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include pupils who suffer from long term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities. In working with parents to improve attendance, we are mindful of the barriers these pupils face and will put additional support in place where necessary to help them access their full-time education.

Reduced timetables will only be used in exceptional circumstances, for a limited period and to support pupils to reintegrate back into education to access fulltime provision.

7. Staff Training on Attendance

Improving attendance requires knowledge of guidance and regulations but also expertise in working with families to remove barriers to attendance and safeguard pupils. Just as those barriers are regularly evolving, so too is the training that school staff require to address them. The school therefore will facilitate training for all staff to understand

- the importance of good attendance and that absence is almost always a symptom of wider circumstances,
- the law and requirements of schools including on the keeping of registers
- the school/trust strategies and procedures for tracking, following up and improving attendance,
- the processes for working with other partners to provide more intensive support to pupils who need it.

For staff with specialist attendance responsibilities, they will receive training to include

- the necessary skills to interpret and analyse attendance data,

and any additional training that would be beneficial to support pupils and pupil cohorts overcome commonly seen barriers to attendance.

Part B - What the Law Says and Our Procedures

1. Roles and Responsibilities

The Local Governing Body

The Local Governing Body is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

The Headteacher

The Head is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.

The Head also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils.

The Attendance Champion

Phil Hayden and Amanda Ilhan are Attendance Champions for the Senior and Prep Schools respectively. They report data to county via WONDE and work with the pastoral teams to monitor trends and attendance patterns in line with safeguarding records.

MIS Manager & Attendance Admin Assistants:

The MIS Manager and Attendance Admin Assistants:

- Monitor attendance data at the school and individual pupil level.
- Reports concerns about attendance to the Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) as appropriate.
- Co-ordinate calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues.
- Co-ordinates requests for Term-time Leave of Absence (this includes liaison with the DSL and Safeguarding Team) and advises the headteacher as requested.

Pastoral Staff

Heads of Year or Head of School in the Prep School will contact home in the first instance if there is a pastoral concern connected to attendance.

Class Teachers/Form Tutors

Form tutors/ class teachers are responsible for recording attendance daily and submitting this information to the school office who will ensure correct codes are being used.

Parents are expected to:

- Be aware of their legal obligation to ensure that their child(ren) of compulsory school age receive an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have.
- Observe the terms of the school's Terms & Conditions relating to conduct and attendance and be aware that failure to ensure a child's attendance or engage with the school about it could amount to a breach of contract or a finding that the parent is treating the school unreasonably.
- Ensure their child attends school daily and on time.
- Notify the school of any absence by 8:45am and provide a reason for it.
- Provide reasons and, if requested, evidence for absences (e.g., medical notes).
- Try to book routine dentist and other appointments outside the school day wherever possible.
- Use the procedure below under "Leave of absence" when seeking advance authorisation for absence.

Threshold / Staff Intervention

Time Period/Attendance Percentage	Action	Staff
One Session Missed	Contact Home – Email or Phone if not notified in advance.	Attendance Admin Assistant
Three Days Missed	Contact Home – Email or Phone	Tutor
Six Days Missed	Contact Home – Phone	Head of Year/Head of Prep
Attendance falls below 90% (Persistent Absence Threshold)	In Person Meeting & Letter to parents	Head of Year/Deputy Head - Pastoral in Senior School Head of Prep
Attendance Falls below 80%	In person meeting + support from external agencies	Deputy Head - Pastoral /SLT

2. Contents of the Admissions Register

The admission register (sometimes referred to as the school roll) must contain specific personal details of every pupil 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. The school will enter pupils on the admission register at the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed with, or been notified by the parent, that the pupil will attend.

A pupil's name can only lawfully be deleted from the admission register if a reason set out in regulation 9 of the **School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.**

It is vital that the admission register is kept up to date, it is a legal document. Therefore, we encourage parents to inform the school of any changes whenever they occur and ensure the admission register is amended as soon as possible.

3. Contents of Attendance Register

The law makes it clear that schools must take the attendance register at the start of the morning session of each school day and once during the afternoon session. On each occasion the register is taken, the appropriate attendance and absence code must be entered for every pupil. Please refer to **Working Together To Improve School Attendance** for the code descriptors and also **Appendix 2** of this document. The school must record whether each pupil is:

- Attending

  or
- Absent

Effective and timely use and sharing of register data is critical to safeguard children, improve attendance and is supported using our electronic Management Information System to record attendance information.

The AKS register is computerised/electronic, but can be printed out; thus entries are in ink. Any amendments are automatically stored in the school's MIS (iSAMS) and can be printed out if required. The name and date of anyone making an amendment will be shown. The electronic register and any print out of the register, after a correction has been made, will distinguish clearly between the original entry and the correction. The register is backed up daily off-site. Printed versions are produced every month and held in respective school offices. They are retained for three years after the end of the school year in question.

4. Attending the School (and Lateness)

Pupils are marked present (/ \) if they are in school when the register is taken. If a pupil leaves the school premises after registration they are still counted as present for statistical purposes.

It is the duty of parents to ensure that children attend school on time. This encourages habits of good timekeeping and lessens any possible classroom disruption.

A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late (**L**) – which counts as present.

If a pupil arrives after the register has closed, they will be marked with the unauthorised absence code "Late after registers close" (U) which is an unauthorised absence mark.

However, if the pupil is late arriving due to a valid reason such as an unavoidable medical appointment, the absence will be authorised and coded accordingly. See DfE guidance Working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) (publishing.service.gov.uk)

5. Attending a place other than the school

Pupils are marked as attending a place other than the school if they are present for the assigned session. These codes include:

- Code K: Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
- Code V: Attending an educational visit or trip
- Code P: Participating in a sporting activity
- Code W: Attending work experience
- Code B: Attending any other approved education activity
- Code D: Dual registered at another setting

Our school retains responsibilities for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils attending an approved educational activity. Our school must be satisfied that appropriate measures have been taken to safeguard the pupil. Our school should ensure that we have in place arrangements whereby providers notify the school of any absence. Our school must record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

6. Absent – Leave of absence

A leave of absence means that the school has given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away from the school. These codes are classified for statistical purposes as 'authorised absence' which means the pupil's absence is with permission granted by the school. These codes include:

- Code C1: Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad
- Code M: Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment
- Code J1: Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
- Code S: Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination
- Code X: Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
- Code C2: Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
- Code C: Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance

6.1. Leave of Absence Requests – 'Exceptional Circumstances'

The law does not grant parents the automatic right to take their child out of school during term time.

Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. Generally, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance. The school will consider each application individually, considering the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. The request must be made by the parent with whom the child normally lives, and permission must be sought in advance. The school will not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. The school must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances, based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case; following consultation with other staff as required, including the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days the pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the school's discretion.

Circumstances which could be authorised include significant family emergencies or funerals. However, parents will also be aware that, wherever possible, it can be better for children to continue to attend school normally during difficult family times.

Parents must contact the Head in writing for permission to take their child out of school during term time.

The request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated; and wherever possible, at least **four weeks** before the absence. **Although such absence may be unauthorised, it is better that we know your child is safe, rather than missing.** Please be aware that you may be required to provide us with additional evidence to support your request. If we have any concerns about possible safeguarding risks such as risk of FGM or Forced Marriage, we will follow the necessary protocols.

All term time absence for children in care should be discussed at the child's Personal Education Planning (PEP) meeting in advance where possible and agreed with the Social Care and Virtual School. This permission should be gained before school is approached for approval. The school will contact the Virtual School in relation to any requests for term time absence for a child in care.

6.2 Medical and Dental Appointments

Parents should try to make appointments outside school hours wherever possible. Where appointments during school time are unavoidable, the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment. It is not acceptable for a child to miss a whole day's schooling for an appointment, unless necessary, in which case the school will need an explanation as to why this is.

No pupil will be allowed to leave the school site to attend a medical appointment during the school day without parental confirmation.

Advance notice is required for medical or dental appointments, unless it's an emergency appointment.

6.3 Part-time timetables - Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable

Pupils are entitled to a full-time education, suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and any special educational needs or disabilities that they may have.

If, for any reason, our school is unable to provide a pupil with a full-time education due to the pupil's needs, we will work with the pupil, parent and other agencies where appropriate, to come to a mutually convenient arrangement. Any reduced timetables will be for the shortest amount of time possible, whilst arrangements are made to support the pupil's return to full-time provision as soon as possible. The school are not permitted to agree to open ended part time timetables.

7. Absent – other authorised reasons

Absent due to other authorised reasons means that the school has given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away from the school or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence. These codes are classified for statistical purposes as 'authorised absence'. These codes include:

- Code T: Parent travelling for occupational purposes
- Code R: Religious observance
- Code I: Illness (not medical or dental appointment)
- Code E: Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made

7.1. Mobile pupil - Parent travelling for occupational purposes

The school will authorise the absence of a mobile pupil of no fixed abode who is unable to attend school because they are travelling with their parent who is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require them to travel from place to place. This is subject to certain limits, depending on the child's age and number of sessions absent. The school will discuss cases individually with Traveller parents as necessary. Parents should let the school know of their plans as far in advance as possible. Authorised Traveller absence will be recorded appropriately in the register.

To help ensure continuity of education for Traveller children, wherever possible, the child should attend school elsewhere when their family is travelling for occupational purposes. In which case the child will be dual registered at that school and this school, which is their 'main' school.

Children from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities whose families do not travel for occupational purposes are expected to register at school and attend as normal. They are subject to the same rules as other children in terms of the requirement to attend school regularly.

7.2. Religious Observance

Our school acknowledges the multi-faith nature of the school community and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside of school holidays or weekends.

In accordance with the law, the school will authorise **one day's absence** for a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs. Should any additional days be necessary, they should be requested in advance using the leave of absence in term time process. Additional days taken without exceptional circumstances will be recorded in the register as unauthorised absence. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body, to confirm whether the day is set apart.

7.3 Illness

In most cases, absences for illness which are reported by following the school's absence reporting procedures will be authorised. That is unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

The school follows Department for Education guidance 'Working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) (publishing.service.gov.uk)' 2024[4] which states that if the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the parent to provide medical evidence, such as a prescription, appointment card, or other appropriate form of evidence.

Where a parent cannot provide any written evidence, we will endeavour to have a conversation with the parent and pupil, if appropriate, which may itself serve as the necessary evidence to record the absence.

We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily. In some instances, the school may ask the parent to obtain a letter from a GP, or the school may seek parental permission to contact the pupil's GP directly to help support the needs of the individual pupil.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Where a pupil has a high level and/or frequency of absence, the school may require medical evidence of some description in order to authorise any future medical absences. If this is the case, the school will make the parent/s aware of this expectation in advance.

The reporting of absence due to illness remains the responsibility of the parent. Absences due to illness which have **not** been reported to the school by the parent on the first day of absence may not be authorised.

If a child is absent for more than one day, the parent should contact the school each day to provide an update on the child's condition, unless otherwise agreed by the school. Daily contact with parents also helps to ensure that nothing has happened to the child on the way to school.

7.4 Mental Health and Wellbeing

Parents who have concerns about their child's mental wellbeing can contact our school's Pastoral Team, Head of Year or Form Tutor for further information on the support available.

Parents should also contact their GP or the NHS Helpline by phoning telephone number 111 for advice if they are concerned. In case of emergency parents should dial 999.

[4] Please ask the school for a printed copy of Working Together to Improve School Attendance if required

7.5 Pupils taken ill during the school day

If a pupil needs to be sent home due to illness, this should be by agreement with an appropriately authorised member of school staff. In such circumstances, no pupil will be allowed to leave the school site without parental confirmation. Parents can only collect their child when school have contacted them.

7.6 Suspensions

In this policy, the word 'suspension' is used to refer to what legislation calls an exclusion for a fixed period. Suspensions and permanent exclusions are both types of exclusion, and where this policy uses the word 'exclusion' this includes both suspensions (fixed-period exclusions) and permanent exclusions.

If the school decides to send a pupil home due to their behaviour, this will be recorded on the child's permanent record.

Any suspension **must** be agreed by the Headteacher.

The school will notify the parent of the exclusion in writing. If the pupil is a Child in Care, the school will notify the pupil's carer, social worker and the Virtual School. In other instances, where a pupil is open to Children's Social Care for any reason, the school will also inform their allocated social worker.

7.7 Study Leave

Study Leave may be offered to students in the immediate run up to public exams and is authorised by the school. This is done at the discretion of the school. Following consultation with parents, some pupils may not be offered full study leave and will be expected to attend clinics/additional sessions as required.

8. Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause

In accordance with DfE school attendance guidance, our school will record pupils as 'Unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause' in the circumstances listed in appendix B.

9. Absent - unauthorised absence

Unauthorised absence is where a school is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence or no reason for absence was provided.

Absence will be unauthorised if a pupil is absent from school without the permission of the school. Whilst parents can provide explanations for absences, it is the school's decision whether to authorise the absence or not.

Unauthorised absence includes:

- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Pupils who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- Shopping

- Birthdays
- Waiting at home for a washing machine to be mended, or a parcel to be delivered
- Day trips
- Long weekends and holidays in term time (unless very exceptional circumstances are agreed in writing, in advance by the school)
- In the case of term time leave - if a pupil is kept away from school longer than was agreed, the additional absence is unauthorised

Unauthorised absences may result in Legal Sanctions, usually Penalty Notices or Prosecutions. The unauthorised absence codes include:

- Code G – Holiday not granted by the school
- Code N – Reason for absence not yet established
- Code O – Absent in other or unknown circumstances
- Code U – Arrived in school after registration closed

The school has a duty to report to the local authority cases of 10+ days of unauthorised absence, failure to attend regularly or where a child's next school is unknown.

In the event that a UKVI (Tier 4) sponsored student is absent without authorisation, the absence will be followed up with their guardian immediately and the Registrar informed. Prolonged absence of a UKVI (Tier 4) student without authorisation (ten consecutive contact points within 12 months) must be reported to the UKBA/UKVI via the Registrar or, in their absence, the Deputy Head (Pastoral).

10. Administrative codes

Where necessary and applicable, our school will use the defined administrative codes. These codes are not collected for statistical purposes and are:

- Code Z: Prospective pupil not on admissions register
- Code #: Planned whole school closure

11. First Day of Absence Response

If a child is absent and the school has not been notified, on the first day of absence the school will contact both parents listed as emergency contacts for the child.

If the school is unable to contact any of the emergency numbers provided, and is concerned for the welfare of the pupil, we may undertake our own home visit and/or request a Welfare Check from the police.

12. Rewarding Good and Improved Attendance

Those who have 100% attendance will be celebrated at the Head and Prep Heads discretion. Authorised absence will not be counted in your child's attendance data.

13. Support for Poor School Attendance (other than unauthorised term time leave)

Sometimes pupils can be reluctant to attend school. We encourage parents and pupils to be open and honest with us about the reason for the pupil's absence. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or for a parent to give in to pressure to let the child stay at home. This can give the impression to the child that attendance does not matter and can make things worse. As a school, we need to understand the reasons why a pupil is reluctant to attend to be able to support pupils and parents in the best way.

When we have concerns about the attendance of a pupil, we will do our best to make the parent/s aware of the concerns about their child's attendance and give them the opportunity to address this. However, if parents do not make use of the support offered and improve their child's attendance to an acceptable level, this will result in a report being submitted to the Local Authority. Where there are no genuine reasons for the absences, parents may be asked to meet with the Head of Year and DSL to discuss the matter. In some cases, this may result in a formal action plan being produced in the form of an Attendance Contract.

We will not usually request intervention from the Local Authority in cases where poor attendance is symptomatic of complex family circumstances. In such circumstances our school will take a holistic approach to the issue and involve other agencies as necessary. The exception to this will be where parents fail to accept or engage with support offered by the school and/or other agencies or fail to implement the suggested changes.

If our school has safeguarding concerns about a pupil who is absent, we will share information with other agencies as we deem necessary.

14. Children Missing Education (CME)

Our school will add and delete pupils from roll in line with the law. A pupil's name can only lawfully be deleted from the admission register if a reason set out in regulation 9 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. The school will make CME and Pupil Tracking referrals as appropriate. The school will seek advice from the local authority representative responsible for children missing education if unsure about any individual cases:

15. Following up Unexplained Absences

Where no contact has been made with the school, the school will contact parents by text, email, or telephone to try and establish the reason for a child's absence. When we establish the reason for the absence, we will mark it as authorised or unauthorised depending on the reason provided. If we are unable to establish the reason for absence within [5] school days, we will make the absence as unauthorised, using the **O** code. If we are concerned about a pupil's absence and are unable to contact the parent/s, we may contact the pupil's emergency contacts and/or other professionals or contacts of the family who we reasonably expect may be able to advise us of the pupil's whereabouts.

16. Reporting to Parents

Attendance can be seen by the parent on the parent portal app daily and will be added to school reports each time they are formally published.

Where a child's attendance drops below 90%, for whatever reason, our school will write to the parents to highlight this where appropriate, as this is deemed as the persistent absence rate.

17. Recording Information on Attendance and Reasons for Absence

Any reasons for absence out of the norm will be recorded on CPOMS.

18. Policy Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Deputy Head Pastoral and Head of Prep or more frequently if there are changes to legislation and guidance. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing body.

19. Sixth Form

Sixth Form students are expected to be in school all day, unless permission has been given by Head of Year /Head of Sixth Form.

20. Links with other policies

Guidance Documents (include but are not limited to):

Working Together to Improve School Attendance (DfE 2024)

Working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) (publishing.service.gov.uk)

Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (DfE December 2015)

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions--3

Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school (DfE January 2013)

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-for-children-with-health-needs-who-cannot-attend-school

Mental Health issues affecting a pupil's attendance (DfE February 2023)

Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Arranging education for children with who cannot attend school because of health needs (DfE December 2023)

Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs (publishing.service.gov.uk)

Keeping children safe in education (DfE September 2024)

Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK

School attendance parental responsibility measures (DfE January 2015)

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/parental-responsibility-measures-for-behaviour-and-attendance

School census guidance and regulation

https://www.gov.uk/education/school-censuses-and-slasc

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion

Home to school travel and transport guidance (DfE July 2014)

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/home-to-school-travel-and-transport-guidance

Updated	7th July 2026
Reason for changes	Annual review and updates
Name of the owner	Allan McKeown – Senior Deputy Head/Phil Hayden – Deputy Head (Pastoral)/Amanda Ilhan – Head of Nursery and Prep School
Audience	Staff/School community
Location	Whole School Team School website
Review date	July 2027
Reference	• Working together to improve school attendance (2024) (publishing.service.gov.uk)'

Appendix A – 5 Foundations of Effective Practice

- **Foundation 1**: *The school has a fully embedded ethos in which excellent school attendance is expected, developed and nurtured. The escalated approach to supporting attendance is built on foundations of belonging and connectedness.*
- **Foundation 2:** *The approach to improving attendance is built on clear policies, systems and processes. This ensures continuous and sustainable improvement drives attendance practice. The attendance policy is understood by all stakeholders and allows the school to set, and maintain, high expectations to improve the culture of attendance.*
- **Foundation 3:** *The school prioritises developing a team of attendance experts, with a shared vision and core purpose. The Attendance Leader delivers bespoke training to support all staff to fully understand their role in improving attendance. External partnerships support attendance improvements through a multi-disciplinary approach for identified children and families.*
- **Foundation 4:** *Data information and analysis direct resources proactively towards key demographic groups and identified individuals. The expert use of data analysis informs decision making at all levels. The attendance process ensures the Attendance Leader understands the reason for attendance concerns, these barriers can then be successfully supported and removed.*
- **Foundation 5:** *Connecting and belonging drives the school approach to supporting attendance. All staff are supported to understand 'deeper roots' regarding poor attendance concerns. The school has developed, and embedded, an effective rewards system to further drive attendance improvements and celebrate success*

Appendix B – Department for Education (DfE) Attendance & Absence Codes

Attending	
/ \	Present at the school / = morning session \ = afternoon session
L	Late arrival before the register is closed
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip
P	Participating in a sporting activity
W	Attending work experience
B	Attending any other approved educational activity
D	Dual registered at another school
Absent – Leave of absence	
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.
M	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance
Absent – other authorised reasons	
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)
E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable causes	
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law

Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause
Absent – unauthorised absence	
G	Holiday not granted by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances
U	Arrived in school after registration closed
Administrative Codes	
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register
#	Planned whole school closure

LCC Specific Supporting Materials:

Details of Lancashire County Council procedures can be found below.

Absence from school - Lancashire County Council

Appendix C – Roles
Senior School

Every member of staff has a responsibility to improve the attendance of individual learners, groups of learners they work with, and attendance across the whole school.

These following lists of responsibilities are not exhaustive, staff may be asked to support improving attendance in other ways, in line with their job role.

TUTORS

- Take your register accurately and in full. Never over-ride an attendance mark already on the register. If you have a query about the attendance register, contact the office.
- Regularly discuss the importance of good attendance during form time and with individuals.
- Monitor the attendance of children in your form group and consistently strive to improve the attendance of individuals and the group as a whole.
- Discuss individual absences with any child upon their return from absence. Advocate for any additional support the child says they need upon return, by working with the Head of Year.
- During meetings or direct communication with parents or children, highlight attendance (with positive praise if good, or concern if not) and its impact on education.

HEAD OF YEAR

- Monitor the attendance of their year group and consistently strive to improve attendance.
- Working alongside the Deputy Head - Pastoral to actively support improving the attendance of individuals, groups and across the whole year group.
- Champion, praise and reward good attendance throughout the year group.
- Monitor and hold tutors to account for their role in raising attendance

TEACHERS

- Take your class register accurately and in full within the first 5 minutes of all lessons. Never over-ride an attendance mark already on the register. If you have a query about the attendance register, contact the office.
- Monitor the attendance of children to your lessons and raise a concern if you notice a pattern.
- Ensure that children who have been absent are provided with notes for the learning that was missed.
- Absent students will still be expected to complete homework set.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

- Decide a departmental approach to providing work to students who have been absent. Monitor and hold teachers to account for their role in raising attendance.

MIS MANAGER AND ADMIN ASSISTANT

- Ensure we keep legally compliant and accurate attendance registers.
- Ensure reasons for absence provided by parents/carers are recorded accurately.
- Contact the parents/carers of absent learners each day they are absent.
- Monitor for and send attendance letters and communications to parents.
- Complete all legal paperwork and follow all required processes regarding attendance, including, but not limited to, Child Missing Education, Elective Home Education, Reduced Timetables, Penalty Notices, Legal Prosecution

DEPUTY HEAD (PASTORAL)

- Proactively monitor and use data to identify learners and groups of learners with, or at risk of, low attendance and develop strategies to support them.
- Support with Attendance Support Meetings for children with attendance concerns.
- Support with Attendance Support Plans
- Liaise with other professionals and with outside agencies, as required, to support improving the attendance of individuals.

ATTENDANCE CHAMPION

- Improve attendance across the school.
- Strategic planning and review of attendance policy and process.
- Ensure all staff complete their attendance responsibilities.

Roles in the Prep School

Every member of staff has a responsibility to improve the attendance of individual learners, groups of learners they work with, and attendance across the whole school.

The following lists of responsibilities are not exhaustive, staff may be asked to support improving attendance in other ways, in line with their job role.

HEADTEACHER

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies

Proactively monitor and use data to identify learners and groups of learners with, or at risk of, low attendance and develop strategies to support them. This will match with CP Concerns.

CLASS TEACHERS

- Take your register accurately and in full. Never over-ride an attendance mark already on the register. If you have a query about the attendance register email the office team.
- Regularly discuss the importance of good attendance during form time and with individuals.
- Monitor the attendance of children in your form group and consistently strive to improve the attendance of individuals and the group as a whole.
- Discuss individual absences with any child or their parents upon their return from absence. Advocate for any additional support they need upon return, by working with WSLT and SENDCo.
- During meetings or direct communication with parents or children, highlight attendance (with positive praise if good, or concern if not) and its impact on education.

MIS MANAGER, ADMIN ASSISTANTS & REGISTRAR

- Ensure we keep legally compliant and accurate attendance registers.
- Ensure reasons for absence provided by parents/carers are recorded accurately.
- Contact the parents/carers of absent learners each day they are absent, if they have not informed school of the reason for absence.
- Monitor attendance and send attendance letters and communications to parents.
- Complete all legal paperwork and follow all required processes regarding attendance, including, but not limited to, Child Missing Education, Elective Home Education, Reduced Timetables, Penalty Notices, Legal Prosecution, provide regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher

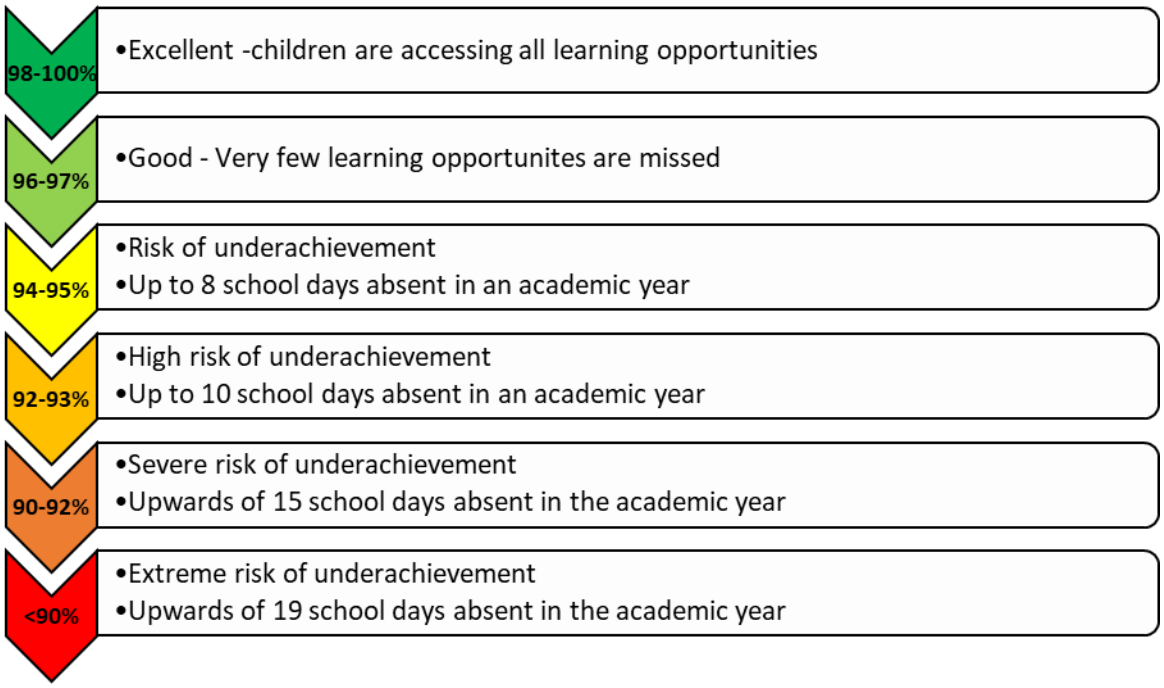
ATTENDANCE CHAMPIONS AND WSLT

- Improve attendance across the school.
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Strategic planning and review of attendance policy and process.
- Ensure all staff complete their attendance responsibilities.
- 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 pupils and families

PARENTS / CARERS

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Contact school to report their child's absence before 8:45am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child

- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

PUPILS

- Attend school every day on time