



# Transform Trust Attendance Policy at Abbey Hill

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## 1. Mission Statement

Regular and punctual attendance is an essential prerequisite to effective learning. At *Abbey Hill Primary and Nursery School* we aim to develop an ethos which demonstrates to children, parents/carers and the wider community how much we value good attendance and punctuality. We expect all children to attend school every day.

## 2. Aims and Expectations

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance, through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

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

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

### Transform Trust schools will:

- Achieve 96+% total school attendance, apart for those children with chronic health issues as identified by a specialist (0.6% unauthorised and 3.4% authorised). Schools over 96% to agree a specific target.
- Create an ethos in which good attendance and punctuality are recognised as the norm and valued by the whole school community.
- Work in partnership so that all children realise their potential unhindered by unnecessary absence.
- Implement the Transform procedures for identifying, reporting and reviewing attendance and persistent lateness.
- Implement the Transform protocols for following up on non-attendance.
- Report half termly, termly and annual attendance data.
- Set quantifiable next steps to improve attendance and to review the impact of these regularly with the Headteacher and the Trust's Attendance Lead - CEO.
- Appoint a designated Senior Leader for Attendance

## 3. Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) [Working Together to Improve School Attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). This guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)



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

This policy also refers to:

- [School Census Guidance.](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education.](#)
- [Mental Health Issues Affecting a Pupil's Attendance: Guidance for Schools.](#)

#### 4. Roles and responsibilities

All members of school have a responsibility for attendance. The following includes a more specific list of responsibilities, which role specific (attendance) individuals have:

##### a. Transform Trust via its Local Governing Bodies

The Local Governing Body is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents.
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties including:
  - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority.
  - Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate.
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos.
- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources.
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils but adapts processes and supports to pupil's individual needs.
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most.
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge.
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils needs.
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance.
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
  - The importance of good attendance;
  - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues;
  - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers;
- The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate.

- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing data.
- Sharing effective practice on attendance management and improvement across schools.
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

Schools may have a separate named Link Governor for attendance, or it may be part of the Safeguarding Governor's role. Our named Link Governor is Karl Simpson.

#### **b. The Headteacher**

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school.
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors including authorised and unauthorised attendance.
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual children.
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies.
- Making referral to EWO and issue fixed-penalty notices, where necessary (final sign off).
- Working with parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health, care plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupils needs
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels.

#### **c. The designated Senior Leader responsible for attendance**

The designated Senior Leader is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school.
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance.
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes.
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of data analysis.
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance.
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence and making sure they are followed by all staff.
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed.
- Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues.
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers.
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families.

The designated Senior Leader responsible for attendance is Stephanie Karlonas and can be contacted via: [admin@abbeyhillnotts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@abbeyhillnotts.sch.uk) marked FAO Attendance Lead.

#### d. The Attendance Officer

The School Attendance Officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 9).
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement.
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the Headteacher.
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence.
- Advising the headteacher when to issue fixed penalty notices.

The Attendance Officer is Sam Jeffs and can be contacted via [pupilabsence@abbeyhill.notts.sch.uk](mailto:pupilabsence@abbeyhill.notts.sch.uk).

#### e. Class Teacher

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance, on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 3), and submitting this information to the school office. They will:

- Maintain a daily register as per the law.
- Keep an overview of class and individual attendance looking particularly for poor overall attendance, anomalies in patterns of attendance and/or unusual explanations for attendance offered.
- Pass on all relevant information shared by parents/carers ensuring logged according to policy
- Report on attendance at half termly Pupil Progress meetings.
- Provide background information for referrals.
- Emphasise with the children the importance of good attendance.
- To role model good attendance and punctuality.
- Follow up absences and lates with immediate requests for explanation where none is recorded.
- Discuss attendance at parent's evenings/consultations.
- Establish good relationships with parents so that early support can be offered to ensure children have good attendance and punctuality at school.

#### f. School Attendance Administration staff

School administrative staff will:

- Collate and record attendance information using Scholarpack by completion of daily registers using appropriate codes.
- Take and record messages from parents related to absence.
- Make first point of contact by phone by **9.30am** to parents/carers of absent children, recording as per policy.
- Follow-up text by **10.30am** for absent children, as per policy.
- Record details of children who arrive late or leave the premises.
- Ensure all registers are complete and no missing marks or unexplained absence remain.
- To ensure records prior to census are complete so that attendance is accurately reported.
- To collate, maintain and update attendance data on relevant information management system.
- To provide regular updates to staff on attendance.

- Complete a report on attendance of any children below 95% and 50% for action by Head/Attendance Lead.
- Any child below 95% and 50% to send weekly report to either the Attendance Officer or the designated Senior Leader for attendance.
- Prepare and submit online referral form to EWO regarding families identified for legal action, assisted by either the Attendance Officer; the designated Senior Leader for attendance or the Headteacher.
- Order and prepare relevant certificates/rewards etc.
- Contact Attendance Officer or designated Senior Leader for attendance with details of home visits as a result of no reason for absence from parents/carers or if named on the monitoring list.
- Notify the Attendance Officer or designated Senior Leader of other safeguarding reasons which may be applicable and may result in a home visit.

#### g. Parents/Carers

Full attendance is essential to the all-round development of a child and they should be allowed to take full advantage of educational opportunities available to them by law. Poor attendance undermines their education and, sometimes, puts children at risk. The school will share the attendance Information with parents at each parent consultation meeting and more frequently where there are concerns.

Parents are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends school regularly and arrives on time.
- It is the **parents' responsibility** to contact the school before **8:45am** on the **first day** their child is absent. This is a **safeguarding matter** so that all parties know that your child is safe.
- Provide the school with at least two emergency contact numbers for their child.
- Ensure that where possible appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Children are expected to arrive by **8:50am**. All children who **arrive late must report to the school office** where they are registered, their meal requirements noted and the reason for lateness is recorded.
- Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or local authority.
- Seek support where necessary for maintaining good attendance by contacting **Sam Jeffs via [pupilabsence@abbeyhill.notts.sch.uk](mailto:pupilabsence@abbeyhill.notts.sch.uk) or 0782655232.**

#### h. Children

Children are expected to attend school every day on time.

## 5. Recording Attendance

### a. Attendance register

We are required by law to call attendance registers twice daily - once at the start of the morning session and again during the afternoon session.

In considering attendance levels, the register is of paramount importance. Registers are legal documents. Should the parents/carers of a persistent non-attender be prosecuted by the Local Authority, then the information which the register contains will be the main source of evidence presented to the court. The regulatory requirements placed on schools with regard to the keeping

of registers are to be found in [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#) [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#).

We will place all children onto this register. It will mark whether every child is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment  
(See Appendix 3 for the Department of Education's attendance codes).

We will also record:

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

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Children must arrive in school on time on each school day.

#### **b. Unplanned absence**

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by (time) or as soon as practically possible, by calling the school (admin/office) staff, who can be contacted via (telephone number and/or email address).

**To notify school of an unplanned absence, parents/carers must inform school, daily, either by email: [pupilabsence@abbeyhill.notts.sch.uk](mailto:pupilabsence@abbeyhill.notts.sch.uk) or 01623484512. The School office opens 8am.**

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised, unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where absence is longer than 5 days, or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

#### c. **Planned absence**

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupils parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

**School should be notified of a planned absence, as soon as possible, by requesting and completing a form. This can be requested either by email: [pupilabsence@abbeyhill.notts.sch.uk](mailto:pupilabsence@abbeyhill.notts.sch.uk) or 01623484512 on in person via the School office, which opens 8am**

However, we encourage parents to make medical appointments out of school hours when possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent must also apply for other types of term time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence.

#### d. **Lateness and punctuality**

A pupil who arrives late:

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

School tracks punctuality and lateness as part of an electronic monitoring system. School uses the language 'Was not brought on time' where a pupil is not punctual. Where school has concerns about punctuality issues, class teachers will make contact with families to flag initial concerns and a follow-up discussion may be requested with the CFSW/Attendance Lead and/or Headteacher to address this. Where a child is persistently late and has accrued sufficient 'U codes' in the register a referral may be made to the Education Welfare Service, who may in turn issue a Penalty Notice.

#### e. **Following up unexplained absence**

Adapt the following to match your school's day to day processes for following up on absence.

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

- Call the pupil's parents on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach an of the pupil's emergency contacts the school may contact the Police.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not.
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session for which the pupil was absent.
- Call the parent on each day that the absence continues without explanation to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer.
- Where relevant, offer support to the pupil and/or parents to improve attendance.
- Identify whether the pupils' needs support from wider partners and make the necessary

referrals.

**f. Reporting to parents**

Adapt the following to explain when and how your school reports to parents on their child's attendance record.

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels.

**6. Authorised and unauthorised absence**

**a. Approval for term-time absence**

The Headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities or to attend other schools or settings.

The Headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the 2024 school attendance regulations. These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad.
- Attending an interview.
- A temporary, time limited part time timetable.
- Exceptional circumstances.

A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

We define exceptional circumstances as unexpected, unavoidable out outside our control.

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

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

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 4 weeks before the absence and in accordance with any leave of absence request form. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

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

- Illness (including mental health illness) and medical/dental appointments.
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong.
- Parents travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupils is attending educational provision.

- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made).

Other reasons the school may allow a pupil's to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences include but are not limited to:

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school.
- Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration).
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority.
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements or because the school premises are closed.

#### **b. Sanctions**

Our school will make use of the full range of potential sanctions, including, but not limited to, those listed below to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual case by case basis

#### **Penalty Notices**

The Headteacher (or someone authorised by them), local authority or the Police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

If the school issues a penalty notice, it will check with the local authority before doing so, and send it a copy of any penalty notice issued.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks).
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil.
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution.
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate.

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day).

Each parent who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

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

A **third** penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

#### **Notices to improve**

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

Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

They will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences.
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under [section 7 of the Education Act 1996](#).
- Details of the support provided so far.
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis.
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period.
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period.

## **7. Strategies for promoting attendance**

**Attendance is a high-profile matter at Abbey Hill. It is promoted and celebrated in a number of ways** using a mixture of individual, class and whole school incentives. These incentives might include:

- Sharing weekly attendance percentages for each class, along with weekly winners with parents and children via assemblies, newsletters, dojo, attendance boards etc.
- Our Hillopoly Game which is played weekly in assembly and celebrates the top 2 classes and our most-improved.
- Our Attendance Star doorcharts which allow classes to collect stickers for prizes based on their individual class attendance either meeting/exceeding target or improving their own from the week prior.
- Golden Gate which takes place one each half-term. Each pupil who arrives before 8:50am is given a raffle ticket which is then drawn in assembly the same Friday of that week.
- 100% badges awarded termly to individual pupils of statutory school age.
- Award initiatives below statutory school age, in our Early Years building.
- Opportunities for the best attendance the previous week to be celebrated.

- Classes who achieve 100% in a week will have a non-uniform day
- If whole-school attendance exceeds our 96% target, the whole school will have non-uniform day.

#### **In addition**

- Classes may develop their own systems for celebrating and rewarding school attendance.
- At least 3 competitions/prizes will be awarded for specific attendance related targets throughout the year.
- Specific attendance targets may be met through the use of adult friendly incentives and/or individual prizes.

## **8. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school**

### **a. Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance.**

Communication will be made from either the CFSW, the SENCO or the Attendance Lead to arrange an initial meeting. A conversation will take place to explore the barriers identified and any further support which can be agreed. An action plan will be produced in agreement with the family and reviews will be held.

### **b. Pupils absent due to mental or physical illness health or SEND**

Communication will be made from either the CFSW, the SENCO or the Attendance Lead to arrange an initial meeting. A conversation will take place to review how the pupils' needs may be impacting on their capacity to maintain regular attendance. Strategies and steps to support the pupil and/or family will be agreed with an action plan implemented and a review period agreed. A review will take place. This is likely to include the involvement of external agencies. The Health Related Education Team at Nottinghamshire County Council may be referred to.

Where a pupil has an education health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that related to the pupil's needs, the school will inform the local authority.

### **c. Pupils returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence**

Where a pupil has had a lengthy period of absence, school will seek to maintain contact with the family including through a possible home visit and/or video-calls on agreed devices and upholding its safeguarding duties. The pupil and/or family will be invited to have a visit back to school, possibly after hours, to reduce any anxieties. Support will be offered, in conjunction with the family and taking pupil voice, to ensure pupils feel safe and settled as they return. The Inclusion Team at Transform Trust may be contacted to explore additional support.

## **9. Attendance Monitoring**

Explain how your school monitors attendance and absence data (including punctuality data), and systematically and regularly analyses it.

### **a. Monitoring attendance**

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

Specific pupil information will be shared with the DfE on request.

Our school has granted the DfE access to its management information system so the data can be accessed regularly and securely.

Data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics.

The school will benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement, and share this with the governing board.

#### **b. Analysing attendance**

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and
- Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

#### **c. Using data to improve attendance**

The school will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis.
- Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence, and their families (see section 8.4 below).
- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinators, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads).
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies.
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate.

#### d. Reducing persistent and severe absence

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

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence.
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education.
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
  - Discuss attendance and engagement at school
  - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
  - Explain the help that is available
  - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
  - Review any existing actions or interventions.
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant.
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence.
- Implement sanctions, where necessary.

## Attendance at Abbey Hill

### Every School Day Matters!

The academic and social benefits of good school attendance gives children the best start in life and beyond. Being on time matters too, as being late for school can be disruptive to children. We want children to be in school every day, on time and ready to learn. Following a change in statutory guidance on attendance in August 2024, we would like parents and carers to be aware of the following:



School will ask for all proof of all medical appointments taken during school time – please try to make these after school where possible.



The school gates open at 8:40am. School starts at 8:50am. Arrivals after this time are late. Children who arrive after 9:30am are marked as unauthorised absences.



If we have reason to doubt an absence, we may record it as unauthorised and may ask parents to provide proof of the absence. A member of school staff may also carry out a home visit.



Letters will be sent to families when attendance becomes a concern. School will work with families to ensure attendance concerns are addressed swiftly.



School will not authorise any holidays during term time unless under 'exceptional circumstances'. Please see school website for attendance policy.



There is a National Threshold for when a Penalty Notice must be considered by schools. This is 10 sessions (1 session = ½ day) of unauthorised absence within a 10 week rolling period.

#### First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence the fine will be £80 per parent, per child if paid within 28 days increasing to £160 if paid between days 22-28.

#### Second Offence (within 3 years)

The second time a Penalty Notice is issued, the amount will be £160 per parent, per child, payable within 28 days.

#### Third and Any Further Offences (within 3 years)

A Penalty notice will not be issued. The case may be presented before a Magistrates Court.

Prosecution may result in criminal records and fines of up to £2500.



Additional information about our approach to challenging poor attendance is available [here](#).

**e. The Trust also monitors individual school attendance through:**

- Half Termly collection of attendance data.
- Termly Standards Meetings – this is where the individual Headteacher’s Report is presented and discussed. The Trust Partnership Link and/or Partnership Director/CEO; along with Governors are present at these meetings.
- Termly Guardians meeting to consider individual and overall Trust attendance and any safeguarding concerns.
- The Trust’s Attendance Panel.
- The Trust’s annual Partnership Review on individual schools.
- The CEO’s Report to the Trust Board.
- The CEO’s ‘Indicator of Concern’ for Governors and Trustees.

The principles of this Policy will also be applied to all Nursery and Foundation 2 children. However, schools may add an addendum to reflect their own expectations for Nursery and Foundation children’s attendance.

## **10. Monitoring and Review of this Policy**

This policy may be amended at any time to take account of changes in legislation. The normal cycle of review for this policy will be annual.

### **Appendices**

1. Unexplained Absence Guidelines
2. Fixed-Term Penalty Notices for Holidays – Guidance for schools
3. DfE Attendance Codes

## Appendix 1: Unexplained Absence Guidelines

**At any point if anyone is concerned about the child's well-being, the Police should be contacted and asked to conduct a safe and well check.**

### **1<sup>st</sup> Day of Unexplained Absence**

- Phone call made and text message sent to parents/carers.
- Headteacher and SLT to be notified of absence for children with safeguarding concerns.
- In addition to this a home visit by the Attendance Officer may be requested. Priority factors to consider:
  - Any children for whom there are safeguarding concerns.
  - Any absence for children with Safeguarding concerns should be logged onto MyConcern
  - Any children on the Low Attendance list.
  - Any instance where the absence seems suspect – i.e. it seems possible/likely that the absence is not illness related (e.g. birthdays, possible holiday etc).
  - Any instance where the absence may have an additional impact on the child, (e.g. child has an exam/is on a trip in the afternoon etc).
  - Any child where there is a history of unexplained absences.
  - Any child whose parent is known to have a life-limiting condition.
- If AO is unavailable, it should be considered whether a visit from other school staff may be necessary.

### **2nd Day of Unexplained Absence**

- Repeat Day 1 procedures.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Day of Unexplained Absence**

- Ensure that all contact numbers have been tried. If a number is incorrect or does not connect, new numbers MUST be chased. Each child should have at least 3 numbers to try.
- Ensure that somebody has visited the property (visit card left if no one is present). Every effort MUST be made to gain access- ask neighbours if they have seen the child.
- Email sent to all appropriate staff including Headteacher, reporting absence (although this should be done on 1<sup>st</sup> day of absence for children with safeguarding concerns).
- Memo given to Class Teacher asking that they report any relevant information to the office.
- If no contact is made with parents/reason provided for absence this should be logged onto MyConcern as this is now a safeguarding matter, even if there are no other safeguarding concerns. (for children with safeguarding concerns this should be an update to previous logged concern from day 1).
- Transform Trust to be notified using the [cmie@transformtrust.co.uk](mailto:cmie@transformtrust.co.uk) email account.

### **Days 4-7, 8-10, 11-20 of Unexplained Absence**

- Continue to try to make contact, including home visits.

### **7<sup>th</sup> Day of Unexplained Absence**

- Re-check that all contact numbers have been tried.
- Another visit to the property to be made (visit card left if no one is present).
- Email sent to all appropriate staff and Headteacher reporting that child remains absent.
- A letter to be sent (copy to be retained), requesting contact from the parents/carers and informing

them of imminent referral to Education Welfare and the potential impact.

- Concerns to be updated on MyConcern.
- Transform Trust to be updated using the [cmie@transformtrust.co.uk](mailto:cmie@transformtrust.co.uk) email account.

#### **10<sup>th</sup> Day of Unexplained Absence**

- Senior Management Team to be updated.
- Home visit to be made.
- Concerns updated on MyConcern.
- Transform Trust to be updated using the [cmie@transformtrust.co.uk](mailto:cmie@transformtrust.co.uk) email account.

#### **20<sup>th</sup> Day of Unexplained Absence**

- Senior Management Team to determine if a child is removed from roll following consultation and agreement with the Local Authority. If so:
  - Letter issued to parents/carers.
  - Transform Trust to be informed using the [cmie@transformtrust.co.uk](mailto:cmie@transformtrust.co.uk) email account.
  - CME form to be completed on the Schools Information Portal.
  - CTF to be uploaded.
  - Child to be removed from roll once agreed by Local Authority.



## Appendix 2

### **Transform Trust Fixed Term Penalty Notices for Holidays - guidance for schools**

It has been agreed, through discussions at Partnership meetings with Headteachers, that schools in Transform Trust will **not** authorise term time holidays. This is in accordance to the law which states that parents do not have the right to take their child out of school for holidays during term time and can only request leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances. If a child is taken on holiday during term time without the school's authorisation this will be recorded as unauthorised absence and will result in action being taken against parents or carers.

However, leave of absence for a term time holiday can be granted for '*exceptional circumstances*' and this will be at the discretion of the Headteacher.

The Headteacher will consider and respond to each term time holiday request.

A holiday request will only be authorised once the Headteacher has considered the following:

- There are exceptional circumstances that requires the holiday is taken during term time and this will only be for a maximum of 10 school days.
- The child's attendance to date is in line with or better than national.
- The child's attendance, historically, has been in line with or better than national.
- The child is consistently at school on time.
- The child's safeguarding file has been reviewed and there are no current concerns. Where applicable, external agencies have been consulted regarding the implications of a period of absence.
- The location of the holiday in relation to the age and gender of the child has been considered and does not meet threshold of concern for safeguarding e.g. FGM locations.
- The Headteacher may want to provide school work for the child dependent on the nature of the circumstances for the holiday.

### Appendix 3: DfE's Attendance Codes

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

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
<b>Attending a place other than the school</b>		
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
<b>Absent – leave of absence</b>		
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

<b>C2</b>	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
<b>C</b>	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
<b>Absent – other authorised reasons</b>		
<b>T</b>	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a ‘mobile child’ who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>I</b>	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
<b>E</b>	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
<b>Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause</b>		
<b>Q</b>	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
<b>Y1</b>	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
<b>Y2</b>	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
<b>Y3</b>	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
<b>Y4</b>	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
<b>Y5</b>	Criminal justice detention	<p>Pupil is unable to attend as they are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In police detention</li> <li>• Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or</li> <li>• Detained under a sentence of detention</li> </ul>

<b>Y6</b>	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
<b>Y7</b>	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
<b>Absent – unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
<b>O</b>	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
<b>U</b>	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
<b>Administrative codes</b>		
<b>Z</b>	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
<b>#</b>	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays