



Torquay Girls' Grammar School Attendance Policy

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1. Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#), through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils.
- Promoting a whole school culture of good attendance and the benefits of good attendance with all stakeholders.
- We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence.
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled.
- Acting early to address patterns of absence.
- Building strong relationships with families to make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school.
- Working with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance and to action support as appropriate.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) and [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of the [Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of the [Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments\)](#)
- <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2006/1751/contents>[The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2013/757/regulation/2/made> It also refers to:
- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The trustee board

The trustee board 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 support to pupils' 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 attendance data.
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

3.2 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.
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils.
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies.
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

- Ensuring that the SEND team supports the 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. Ensuring that the safeguarding team work with the wider agencies if there are safeguarding concerns in relation to attendance, including expectations of home visits and referrals.
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs.
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels.

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader also known as the 'senior attendance champion' is responsible for:

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

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Emma Browne and can be contacted via ebrowne@tggsacademy.org

3.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7).
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement.
- Working with the pastoral team and the senior designated attendance lead to discuss regular attendance reports for 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 or the designated senior leader for attendance (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices.

The attendance officer is Lindsey Lloyd Jacob and can be contacted via the following email address: attendance@tggsacademy.org or the absence line: 01803 653750

3.5 Class teachers/form tutors

- Class teachers and/or form tutors are responsible for recording attendance for all sessions and lessons on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1), and submitting this information to the school MIS (or the school admin team if necessary).
- Tutors will receive a weekly summary of attendance and have conversations over early concerns. They will monitor punctuality and assign sanctions as appropriate.

3.6 School admin/office staff

School admin/office staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system.
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the attendance team or a member of the pastoral team where appropriate, to provide them with more detailed support on attendance.

3.7 Parents

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

- All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person.
- Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them).

Parents are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day and timetabled lessons (including tutor time) on time.
- Use Studybugs to inform the school of absence: [Studybugs – Parents](#)
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 8.30am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return.
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child.
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day.
- Adhere to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or local authority.
- Support the school if behavioural sanctions are applied for poor punctuality and/or internal truancy.
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting the attendance officer via the dedicated email address: attendance@tggsacademy.org or the absence line: 01803 653750

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend every timetabled session, including tutor time on time.
- Sixth form students or parents/carers should call the school to report their absence before 8.30am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence. For 6th Form students, they may also use the absence line: 01803 653761

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an electronic attendance register and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, whether every pupil is:

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

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry.
- The amended entry.
- The reason for the amendment.
- The date on which the amendment was made.
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment.

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

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

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

The school day starts at 8.45am and ends at 3.30pm.

Pupils must arrive ready in their tutor rooms by 8.45am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.45am and will be kept open until 9.10am. Students who are late due to transport issues with buses and/or trains will not receive a late mark on classcharts if they inform student services. The register for the second session will be taken at 1.30pm and will be kept open until 1.40pm.

Students in Year 7-11 arriving before 8.15 must register using the iPads at the main reception and will be supervised in the hub.

Sixth Form students arriving before 8.15 must register using the iPads at the main reception and will go to the 6th form Café or sixth form study area.

The register for the first session will be taken between 8.45am and 9.05am. Students arriving after 8.45am must sign in via the iPads at student reception.

The register for the afternoon session will be taken during the first ten minutes of period 4.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The student's parent/carer must notify the school every day of any unplanned absence by 8.30am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 7). Parents should use Studybugs to inform the school of absence.

For students in Y7-11, they may also use the absence line: 01803 653750. For 6th Form students, they may also use the absence line: 01803 653761.

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 the 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.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent notifies the school 48 hours in advance of the appointment. However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

For all planned absence, parents/carers should complete an absence request form ([Absence Request Form editable current.pdf \(tggsacademy.org\)](#)) and send to the dedicated email address: attendance@tggsacademy.org. The pupil's parent must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.
- Will receive a late warning on ClassCharts which will alert the Head of Year to persistent lateness.
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.

Tutors receive a weekly update on session punctuality via studybugs and will review ClassCharts regularly to discuss support needed if a pattern is emerging or students are persistently late. Tutors will discuss this with Heads of Year who will review appropriate support and whether sanctions are needed.

Parents will be informed of any lateness via ClassCharts and where there is persistent lateness, or a pattern of lateness, the Head of Year will contact parents/carers and strategies to discuss next steps. This may be via a phone meeting or a face-to-face pastoral support meeting.

Each case will be looked at individually and actions could include after school detentions or being placed on a report monitored by the Head of Year.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

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

- For unexplained absence, parents will receive an email by 10.00am to ask them to contact us with a reason.
- If there is no response the school will contact the parent on the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may need to call 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(s) 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, report the unexplained absence to the pupil's youth offending team officer.
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance. This could include an attendance contract.
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, for example health or social care, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals.
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with: issue a notice to improve, penalty notice or other formal or legal intervention (see section 5.2 below).

4.6 Reporting to parents

The school will regularly inform parents (see definition of 'parent', as used in this policy, in section 3.7 above) about their child's attendance and absence levels and this is officially reported upon twice a year as part of a student's grade sheet.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 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.
- Study leave.
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable.
- Exceptional circumstances.

A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for. We define 'exceptional circumstances' as a leave of absence which is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for. 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.

Leave of absence will not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

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 in accordance with the leave of absence request form, accessible via the school's website. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence. If a pupil is over compulsory school age (e.g. sixth form), leave can be requested or agreed by the pupil or a parent they normally live with.

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

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail).
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.
- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision.
- 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 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.
- Attending work experience.
- 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.

5.2 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 and punctuality. 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 a copy of any penalty notice issued to the local authority (Torbay Council).

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). Please be aware that this threshold can be met with any combination of unauthorised absence and can include sessions whereby a student is late for morning tutor period. The period of 10 weeks can also span different terms or school years.

- 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 (Torbay) 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.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

As a whole school community, we reiterate the importance of attendance through assemblies and working with student voice to promote the impact of high attendance. After taking the views of student voice into account attendance will be regularly monitored by the Attendance Officer: For every week a student achieves 100% attendance, they will receive 1 housepoint. Students who achieve attendance above 96% over a term will be entered into a raffle to win prizes as part of the end of term celebration assembly. Each term, HoY will congratulate students who have the most improved attendance. The housepoints will feed into the reward system as described in the behaviour policy.

We also work with student council to ensure that that all students can embrace the personal development opportunities on offer at TGGs as this supports their characters skills and high self-esteem which in turn supports their attendance at school. House culture provides students with a strong sense of belonging and our school ethos of equality, diversity and inclusion allows all students to feel valued within the school community. Furthermore, all teaching staff deliver high quality teaching and learning in an inclusive environment, meeting the needs of all students.

As a school we will always work in partnership with pupils, parents/carers and other wider agencies to support attendance in school. This will include targeted support meetings and providing support to overcoming barriers to attendance including pupils who may be facing mental health challenges. If the targeted support meetings are not having an impact and/or the parent/carer is not engaging with the school, then we will then work action an attendance contract with parents/carers. If the attendance contract is not having an impact upon the attendance, and/or the parents/carer is not engaging, then we will work with the Local Authority who may pursue legal routes.

7. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

7.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

The SLT Lead for attendance at our school monitors attendance on a weekly basis. Each week, this information feeds into a student panel meeting where concerns over individual students are discussed and actions decided upon. Heads of Year are regularly invited to these meetings and concerns raised are discussed with them weekly.

The SLT Lead for attendance monitors whole school attendance and reports this to the Headteacher every half-term or more frequently if there is a concern. These reports are taken to whole board trustee meetings as they occur. Every week attendance is discussed as part of our student panel meetings and appropriate support recommended. Every fortnight, issues around attendance of individuals are discussed with form tutors as part of the Hod of Year briefing. A student's parent/carer is expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health with an expected date of return (see section 4.2). Parents/carers are expected to contact school on every subsequent day of the illness.

If a student's absence goes above 3 days, the school will contact the parent/carer of the student to discuss the reasons for this.

If a vulnerable student's absence goes above 2 days, the school will contact the parent/carer of the student to discuss the reasons for this. If a child on a child protection plan is absent the attendance office or safeguarding team will inform their designated social worker.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a student's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the student will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Student-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average and share this with the board of trustees.

Attendance data is collected and stored via our MIS. Regularly generated reports are used for the following purposes:

- Track the attendance of individual students.
- Identify whether there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern or cause for celebration.
- Monitor and evaluate those children identified as needing intervention, support or celebration.
- The attendance of students to alternative provision will also be monitored with partners.

7.2 Pupils absent due to mental or physical ill health or SEND

We are following the guidance from the DfE - support for pupils where a mental health issue is affecting their attendance. Any reasonable adjustments or support will ensure that the time that the child spends in school is prioritised as much as possible. We will work with individual pupils, families and wider partners to create a plan which may include reasonable adjustments to address special barriers to attendance. Please note that reasonable adjustment is cited here as a general term rather than a reference to school's duty to make RA for pupils with a disability under the Equality Act. The reasonable adjustments outlined in the plan will be agreed by and regularly reviewed with all parties. The plan will also consider any safeguarding responsibilities as set out in KCSIE and this may include working with other agencies, for example voluntary early help. Support within school may include pastoral support, quiet spaces, additional academic support and access to support from the SEND department. Wider partners within school could include counselling, MHST and external partners for example, the school nursing services, who can provide health advice/information.

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. This will include a sickness return to the Local Authority if a child misses more than 15 days of school, either consecutively or cumulative days.

Where support is not engaged with and all other options have been pursued, the school will contact the LA to consider a formal attendance contract and or enforcement of attendance through legal intervention. Legal intervention could include a parenting contract, education supervision order or punitive action, for example fixed penalty notices. If a pupil has a disability, we will always take this into account before considering legal intervention.

7.3 Pupils returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence

We would ensure that the student who is returning has a check in meeting with the pastoral supervisor to identify any further support that we can offer for that individual student. We will also ask the subject staff if they can discuss any concerns with the student who is returning to school.

8. Attendance monitoring

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the SLT member overseeing Attendance. At every annual review, the policy will be approved by the full board of trustees.

8.1 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.

The 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.

8.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance.
- 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.

8.3 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 facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the trustees 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.

8.4 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 (see section 5.2, above).

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full trustee board.

10. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- SEND policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

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

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment

S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a ‘mobile child’ who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency

Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered

#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays
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