Berkswich CE Primary School			
Reference Number G10	**Shared with Staff** September 2026	**Ratified by Governing Board** October 2026	**Review Date** October 2027
Policy Title	**Pupil Attendance Policy**		

Statement of intent

At Berkswich CE Primary School, we believe that good school attendance is essential in enabling every child to flourish academically, socially, emotionally and spiritually, fulfilling their God-given potential. Our vision is rooted in the words of Jesus in John 10:10: "I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."

Good attendance allows children to make the most of the educational opportunities available to them, develops confidence and resilience, allowing pupils to reach their full potential and to become positive contributors to their community.

We understand that barriers to attendance are complex, and that some pupils find it harder than others to attend school; therefore, we will continue to prioritise cultivating a safe and supportive environment at school, as well as strong and trusting relationships with pupils and parents.

We take a whole-school approach to securing good attendance, and recognise the impact that our efforts in other areas – such as the curriculum, behaviour standards, bullying, SEND support, pastoral support, and the effective use of resources such as pupil premium – can have on improving pupil attendance.

We are committed to:

- Promoting and modelling high attendance and its benefits.
- Ensuring equality and fairness for all.
- Ensuring this attendance policy is clear and easily understood by staff, pupils and parents.
- Intervening early and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.
- Building strong relationships with families to overcome barriers to attendance.
- Working collaboratively with other schools in the area, as well as other agencies including Staffordshire Local Authority
- Ensuring parents follow the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and

aptitude, and to any SEND they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- Ensuring our attendance policy is clear and easily understood by all staff, parents and pupils.
- Regularly monitoring and analysing attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require more support.

The school's attendance officer is Ms Jackson who can be contacted via headteacher@berkswich.staffs.sch.uk or attendance@berkswich.staffs.sch.uk

Staff and parents will be expected to contact the attendance officer for queries or concerns about attendance.

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Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended).
- The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Children and Young Persons Act 1963
- DfE (2026) 'Working together to improve school attendance'
- DfE 'Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE) 2026

- DfE (2024) 'Children missing education'
- DfE (2024) 'Providing remote education'
  DfE (2024) 'Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance'
- DFE School Census Attendance Codes

- This policy follows guidelines from Staffordshire Local Authority 'Guidance for all Schools and Academies Statutory Action for unauthorised absences
- Staffordshire Code of Conduct
  https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Education/Education-welfare/Documents/Penalty-Notice-Code-of-Conduct-July-24-FINAL.pdf
  https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/education-welfare/education-welfare-frequently-asked-questions

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Safeguarding Policy
- School Complaints Procedures Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy

Roles and responsibilities

The governing board has overall responsibility for:

- Monitoring the implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Promoting the importance of good attendance through the school's ethos and policies.
- Arranging attendance training for all relevant staff that is appropriate to their role.
- Working with the SLT to set goals for attendance and providing support and challenge around delivery against those goals.
- Regularly reviewing attendance data, including trends by pupil group, and considering whether to appoint an attendance governor.
- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.
- Having regard to KCSIE when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Ensuring there is a Children Missing Education Policy in place and that this is regularly reviewed and updated.

- Ensuring school staff receive adequate training on attendance

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Appointing a member of the SLT to the attendance officer role.
- Ensuring all parents are aware of the school's attendance expectations and procedures.
- Ensuring that every pupil has access to full-time education and will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence.

Staff are responsible for:

- Following this policy and ensuring pupils do so too.
- Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.
- Where designated, taking the attendance register at the relevant times during the school day.

The attendance officer is responsible for:

- The overall strategic approach to attendance in school.
- Developing a clear vision for improving attendance.
- Monitoring attendance and the impact of interventions.
- Analysing attendance data and identifying areas of intervention and improvement.
- Communicating with pupils and parents with regard to attendance.
- Leading a compassionate approach when listening to parents and pupils regarding barriers to attendance.
- Following up on incidents of persistent poor attendance.
- Enforcing attendance through statutory interventions in cases of persistent poor attendance where other supports have not succeeded.
- Informing the LA of any pupil being deleted from the admission and attendance registers.

Pupils are responsible for:

- Attending their lessons and any agreed activities when at school.
- Following any support provided by the school to improve attendance.

Parents are responsible for:

- Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.
- Providing the school with more than one emergency contact number.
- Updating the school if their details change.
- The attendance and punctuality of their children at school.
- Promoting good attendance with their children.

- Proactively engaging with any attendance support offered by the school and the LA.
- Notifying the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent.
- Requesting leave of absence only in exceptional circumstances, and in advance.
- Booking any medical appointments around school where possible.
- Following any family-based support implemented by the school to improve attendance.

Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

Absence:

- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Not attending the registered school for any reason

Authorised absence:

- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave
- An absence due to a family emergency
- A circumstance deemed exceptional by the headteacher

Unauthorised absence:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed
- Leaving school for no reason during the day

Persistent absence (PA):

- Missing 10 percent or more of schooling across the year for any reason
- Severe absence: Missing 50 percent or more of schooling

Missing education

- Not registered at a school and not receiving suitable education in a setting other than a school

Attendance expectations

The school has high expectations for pupils' attendance and punctuality, and ensures that these expectations are communicated regularly to parents and pupils. The school has an overall attendance target of 96.5%

Pupils will be expected to attend school punctually every day they are required to be at school, for the full day.
The school opens at 8:30am with lessons commencing each day at 8:40am (except Nursery). The school ends at 3:10pm for EYFS and KS1 and at 3:20pm for Nursery and KS2. Registers will be taken in the morning and afternoon, at the same time for all pupils in each session. The registration period will be no longer than 30 minutes.

- The morning register will be completed by 8:50am.
- Any child arriving between 8:50am and 9:00am will receive a late mark.
- Arrivals after 9am are marked 'U' (unauthorised).
- The afternoon registers close ten minutes after pupils have returned to class from lunch.

Absence procedures

- Parents must notify school that a child is absent and for what reason on the morning of the absence. Please ring the school on 01785 337360 or bring in a letter before the close of register at 8:50am. When evidence of appointments or medical visits is appropriate, then a copy of this will be held on your child's file. Parents can also email attendance@berkswich.staffs.sch.uk to notify any absence
- Where a pupil is absent, and their parent has not contacted the school by the close of the morning register to report the absence, office staff will contact the parent by telephone call as soon as is practicable on the first day that they do not attend school.
- The school will always follow up any absences in order to:
  - Ascertain the reason for the absence.
  - Ensure the proper safeguarding action is being taken.
  - Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
  - Identify the correct code to use to enter the data onto the school MIS system, which will be done within five working days.
- The official start time of school for pupils is **8:40am** (Nursery is 8:45am)
- School opens for pupils at **8:30am** and the gate closes at **8:45am** prompt (to allow Nursery parents to enter/exit)
- Any child arriving **between 8:50am and 9:00am** will be deemed as **'late'** on the attendance register
- Children who arrive **after 9:00am** will be coded as **'U'** on the attendance register; this means 'late after the close of registration'. **The U code is included when calculating penalty notices**
- We are required to take an attendance register during the afternoon in addition to the morning. The morning and afternoon count as two attendance sessions
- The school reserves the right to request supporting evidence where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness leading to the child's absence.
- Where possible, medical or dental appointments should be made out of school hours. Medical evidence will only be requested in a minority of cases, for example where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about an illness, or where a pupil has complex, long-term or frequently recurring health needs. The school does not operate a blanket requirement for evidence of illness or medical appointments.

- Teachers and office staff monitor attendance on a daily basis; informing the attendance officer of any concerns
- The headteacher / attendance officer monitors pupil attendance and compares this to National Data and that of similar schools on a monthly basis.
- Parents of pupils with or approaching persistent and severe absence rates are contacted and appropriate actions / support are put in place, including referral to the Educational welfare team and Early Help (EHA)
- The Headteacher reports attendance data to governors on a termly basis
- Leave of absence during term time is not permitted unless under exceptional circumstances – in line with DfE (2026) 'Working together to improve school attendance'
- The school follows Staffordshire Code of Conduct for Issuing Penalty Notices (2024), this includes a range of letters advising parents/carers of their legal responsibility in relation to their child's attendance.
- Where a pupil has not returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence, or is absent from school without authorisation for 20 consecutive school days, the school will remove the pupil from the admissions register if the school and the Local Authority have failed to establish the whereabouts of the pupil after making reasonable enquiries.

Attendance register

The school uses Arbor as the attendance register.

Designated staff members will take the attendance register at the start of each school day and at the start of the afternoon session.

This register will record whether pupils are:

- Present.
- Absent.
- Attending an approved educational visit.
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

The school will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:

Code	Summary	Classification of code
/	Present AM	Attending
\	Present PM	Attending
L	Late in registration time	Attending

K	Local Authority alternative provision	Attending an approved educational activity
V	Educational Visit	Attending an approved educational activity
P	Approved sporting activity	Attending an approved educational activity
W	Work Experience	Attending an approved educational activity
B	School alternative provision	Attending an approved educational activity
M	Medical Appointment	Authorised absence
J1	Interview	Authorised absence
S	Study Leave	Authorised absence
X	Not required to attend	Not a possible attendance
D	Dual Registered	Not a possible attendance
C	Exceptional circumstances	Authorised absence
C1	Regulated performance	Authorised absence
C2	Part-time timetable	Authorised absence
T	Mobile Child (pupil whose parent is travelling for occupational purposes.)	Authorised absence
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
I	Sickness	Authorised absence

Q	Local Authority failed to make access arrangements, or arrangements not yet complete	Not a possible attendance
Y1	Normal Transport failed	Not a possible attendance
Y2	Travel disruption due to emergency	Not a possible attendance
Y3	Partial school closure	Not a possible attendance
Y4	Whole school closure	Not a possible attendance
Y5	Child in custody	Not a possible attendance
Y6	Public health guidance	Not a possible attendance
Y7	Other unavoidable cause	Not a possible attendance
E	Excluded or suspended	Authorised absence
G	Family Holiday	Unauthorised absence
N	Not yet known	Unauthorised absence
O	No reason or unsatisfactory reason	Unauthorised absence
U	Late after registration close	Unauthorised absence
Z	Not on admission register	Administration Code, not collected
#	Planned school closure	Administration Code, not collected

When the school has planned in advance to be fully or partially closed, the code '#' will be used for the relevant pupils who are absent.

Pupils who are absent from school but are receiving remote education for any reason will

be marked as absent in the register. Remote education will only be used as a last resort, once reasonable adjustments have been considered, and as part of a reintegration plan to support the pupil's return to school.

All amendments made to the attendance register will include the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date of amendment and the name and role of the person who made the amendment.

Every entry received into the attendance register will be preserved for six years.

The school will provide attendance data to the LA at least monthly, including for pupils with unauthorised absence (codes G, N, O or U) or ten or more consecutive days of absence, and will notify the LA where a pupil is expected to miss 15 or more school days due to sickness. The school will provide daily attendance data to the DfE.

Authorising parental absence requests

Parents will be required to request certain types of absence in advance. All requests for absence will be handled by the headteacher – the decision to grant or refuse the request will be at the sole discretion of the headteacher, taking the best interests of the pupil and the impact on the pupil's education into account. The headteacher's decision is not subject to appeal; however, the school will be sympathetic to requests for absence by parents, and will not deny any request without good reason.

Leave of absence

The school will only grant a pupil a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. In order to have requests for a leave of absence considered, the school will expect parents to complete the Leave Request form Forms and Letters | Berkswich CE Primary School, at least two weeks prior to the proposed start date of the leave of absence, providing the reason for the proposed absence and the dates during which the absence would be expected to occur.

Any requests for leave during term time will be considered on an individual basis and on their own merits (the school does not operate blanket policies under which leave is granted automatically) and the pupil's previous attendance record will be taken into account. Where the absence is granted, the headteacher will determine the length of time that the pupil can be away from school. A family holiday will not normally be considered an exceptional circumstance, and the school will not grant leave of absence for this purpose.

If term-time leave is not granted, taking a pupil out of school will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and may result in a penalty notice. The school cannot grant leaves of absence retrospectively; therefore, any absences that were not approved by the school in advance will be marked as unauthorised.

Illness and healthcare appointments

Parents will be expected to make medical or dental appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, parents will be expected to obtain approval for their child's absence to attend such appointments as far in advance as is practicable. Parents will be responsible for ensuring their child misses only the amount of time necessary to attend the appointment.

Performances and activities, including paid work

The school will ensure that all pupils engaging in performances or activities, whether they receive payment or not, which require them to be absent from school, understand that they will be required to obtain a licence from the LA which authorises the school's absence(s).

Additional arrangements will be made by the school for pupils engaging in performances or activities that require them to be absent from school to ensure they do not fall behind in their education – this may involve private teaching. These arrangements will be approved by the LA who will ensure that the arrangements are suitable for the pupil.

The pupil will receive education that, when taken together over the term of the licence, amounts to a minimum of three hours per day that the pupil would be required to attend a school maintained by the LA issuing the licence. This requirement will be met by ensuring a pupil receives an education:

- For not less than six hours a week; and
- During each complete period of four weeks (or if there is a period of less than four weeks, then during that period), for periods of time not less than three hours a day; and
- On days where the pupil would be required to attend school if they were attending a school maintained by the LA; and
- For not more than five hours on any such day.

Where a licence has been granted by the LA and it specifies dates of absence, no further authorisation will be needed from the school. Where an application does not specify dates, and it has been approved by the LA, it is at the discretion of the headteacher to authorise the leave of absence for each day. The headteacher will not authorise any absences which would mean that a pupil's attendance would fall below 96%. Where a licence has not been obtained, the headteacher will not authorise any absence for a performance or activity.

Religious observance

Parents will be expected to request absence for religious observance at least two weeks in advance.

The school will only accept requests from parents for absence on grounds of religious observance for days that are exclusively set apart for religious observance by the relevant religious body. The school will define this as a day where the pupil's parents would be expected by an established religious body to stay away from their employment to mark the occasion.

The school may seek advice from the religious body in question where there is doubt over the request.

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence

Where a pupil's parent belongs to a community covered by this code and is travelling for occupational purposes, the parent will be expected to request a leave of absence for their child at least two weeks in advance. Absences will not be granted for pupils from these communities under this code for reasons other than travel for occupational purposes.

The school is under no obligation to agree to flexi-schooling arrangements. Flexi-schooling is distinct from a part-time timetable.

SEND- and health-related absences

The school recognises that pupils with SEND and/or health conditions, including mental health issues, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers, and will incorporate robust procedures to support pupils who find attending school difficult.

In line with the SEND Policy and Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy, the school will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for disabled pupils to reduce barriers to attendance, in line with any EHC plans or IHPs that have been implemented. The school will secure additional support from external partners to help bolster attendance where appropriate.

Where the school has concerns that a pupil's non-attendance may be related to mental health issues, parents will be contacted to discuss the issue and whether there are any contributory factors to their child's lack of attendance. Where staff have a mental health concern about a pupil that is also a safeguarding concern, they will inform the DSL and the Safeguarding Policy will be followed. All pupils will be supported with their mental health in accordance with the school's Social, Emotional and Mental Health procedures.

If a pupil is unable to attend school for long periods of time due to their health, the school will:

- Inform the LA if a pupil is likely to be away from the school for more than 15 school days.
- Provide the LA with information about the pupil's needs, capabilities and programme of work.
- Help the pupil reintegrate at school when they return.
- Make sure the pupil is kept informed about school events and clubs.
- Encourage the pupil to stay in contact with other pupils during their absence.

The school will incorporate an action plan to help any pupils with SEND and/or health issues cope with the stress and anxiety that attending school may cause them. Such plans will be regularly monitored and reviewed until the pupil is attending school as normal and there has been signs of significant improvement.
To support the attendance of pupils with SEND and/or health issues, the school will consider:

- Holding termly meetings to evaluate any implemented reasonable adjustments.
- Incorporating a pastoral support plan.
- Identifying pupils' unmet needs through EHA
- Using an external specialist.
- Enabling a pupil to have a reduced timetable.
- Ensuring a pupil can have additional support and provisions, such as ELSA support
- Temporary late starts or early finishes.

- Phased returns to school where there has been a long absence.
- Small group work or one-to-one lessons.
- Tailored support to meet their individual needs.

Truancy

Truancy will be considered as any absence of part, or all, of one or more days from school, during which the school has not been notified of the cause behind such absence.

All staff will be actively engaged in supporting the regular attendance of pupils, and understand the importance of continuity in each pupil's learning.

Immediate action will be taken when there are any concerns that a pupil might be truanting. If truancy is suspected, the headteacher will contact the parent in order to assess the reasons behind the pupil not attending school.

If any further truancy occurs, then the school will consider issuing a penalty notice.

A penalty notice will be issued in line with Staffordshire Local Authority guidance, where there is overt truancy, inappropriate parentally-condoned absence, excessive holidays in term-time and persistent late arrival at school.

The DSL will be involved where an instance of truancy may be linked to a safeguarding concern. Any safeguarding concerns will be dealt with in line with the Safeguarding Policy.

Absent pupils

Pupils will not be permitted to leave the school premises during the school day unless parents have permission from the headteacher. The following procedures will be taken in the event of a pupil going missing whilst at school:

- The member of staff who has noticed the absent pupil will inform the headteacher immediately
- The office staff will also be informed as they will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search
- A member of staff will stay with the rest of the class, and all other available members of staff will conduct a thorough search of the school premises as directed by the headteacher
- The following areas will be systematically searched:
    - All classrooms
    - All toilets
    - The library
    - The playground and sheds
    - The school grounds
- Available staff will begin a search of the area immediately outside of the school premises, and will take a mobile phone with them so they can be contacted.

- Parents of the pupil will be contacted using the emergency contact numbers provided
- If the parents have had no contact from the pupil, and the emergency contacts list has been exhausted, the police will be contacted.
- The absent pupil's teacher will fill in an incident form, describing all circumstances leading up to the pupil going missing
- If the absent pupil has an allocated social worker, is a looked-after child, or has any SEND, then the appropriate personnel will be informed
- When the pupil has been located, members of staff will care for and talk to the pupil to ensure they are safe and well
- Parents and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the pupil has been located

The headteacher will take the appropriate action to ensure that pupils understand they must not leave the premises, and sanctions will be issued if deemed necessary. Appropriate disciplinary procedures will be followed in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

The headteacher will carry out a full investigation and will draw a conclusion as to how the incident occurred. A written report will be produced, and policies and procedures will be reviewed in accordance with the outcome where necessary.

Attendance intervention

In order to ensure the school has effective procedures for managing absence, the attendance officer, supported by the SLT, will:

- Establish a range of evidence-based interventions to address barriers to attendance.
- Monitor the implementation and quality of escalation procedures and seek robust evidence of the escalation procedures that work.
- Attend or lead attendance reviews in line with escalation procedures.
- Establish robust escalation procedures which will be initiated before absence becomes a problem by:
    - Sending letters to parents.
    - Engaging with LA attendance teams.
    - Using fixed penalty notices.
    - Carrying out EHA

The school will use attendance data, to develop specific strategies to improve attendance where patterns of absence are emerging. These strategies will be developed on a case-by-case basis, and will consider the particular needs of the pupils whom the intervention is designed to target.

Working with parents to improve attendance

The school will work to cultivate strong, respectful relationships with parents and families

to ensure their trust and engagement. Open and honest communication will be maintained with pupils and their families about the expectations of school life, attendance and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them. The school will liaise with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, e.g. social services, Staffordshire Educational Welfare Service

.
The school will ensure that there are two emergency contact details for each pupil wherever possible to ensure the school has additional options for getting in touch with adults responsible for a pupil where the pupil is absent without notification or authorisation.
Where a pupil is a young carer, the school will work with the pupil and their parents to address any caring-related barriers to attendance, and will refer to early help or request a LA needs assessment where support is needed beyond school.

The school will ensure that parents are aware of their legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and to facilitate their child's legal right to a full-time education – parents will be made aware that this means their child must attend school every day that it is open, except in certain circumstances, such as sickness or absences that have been authorised by the headteacher in advance.

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's levels of attendance, absence and punctuality, and will ensure that parents are aware of the benefits that regular attendance at school can have for their child educationally, socially and developmentally.

If a pattern of absence becomes problematic, the attendance officer will work collaboratively with the pupil and their parents to improve attendance by addressing the specific barriers that prevent the pupil from being able to attend school regularly. The school will always take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for pupil absence and will approach families to offer support rather than immediately reach for punitive approaches.

Where these barriers are related to the pupil's experience in school, support will be sought, including the Little Heroes programme run by Staffordshire Local Authority.

Persistent absence (PA)

There are various groups of pupils who may be vulnerable to high absence and PA, such as:

- Children in need
- LAC
- Young carers
- Pupils who are eligible for FSM
- Pupils with EAL
- Pupils with SEND
- Pupils who have faced bullying and/or discrimination

The school will use a number of methods to help support pupils at risk of PA to attend

school. This may include:

- Offering catch-up support to build confidence and bridge gaps.
- Meeting with pupils to discuss patterns of absence, barriers to attendance, and any other problems they may be having.
- Establishing plans to remove barriers and provide additional support.
- ELSA support sessions
- Making regular contact with families to discuss progress.
- Assessing whether an EHC plan or IHP may be appropriate.
- Considering what support for re-engagement might be needed, including for vulnerable groups.

Where a pupil at risk of PA is also at increased risk of harm, the school will work in conjunction with all relevant authorities, e.g. social services, to support the pupil in line with the school's duty of care. The school will also bear in mind that the continuation of severe PA following intervention may, in itself, constitute neglect, and will escalate any concerns in this regard in line with the Safeguarding Policy.

Penalty notices and legal intervention

The school will follow the national guidance regarding issuing penalty fines for unauthorised leave in term time. Department for Education '*Working together to improve School Attendance' 2026. Chapter 6*

The national framework is set out in the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024, which came into effect on 19 August 2024. Any unauthorised leave taken since this date is dealt with under these Regulations.

Two penalty notice limit in a three-year period

The three-year rolling period starts for parents when the first penalty notice is issued to them.

The first Penalty Notices for leave in term time are £160 per parent per child but can be reduced to £80 per parent per child if paid within 21 days.

If a second penalty notice is issued within three years of the first penalty notice, then this will be at a fixed rate of £160 per parent per child, with no reduction for early payment. A third penalty notice cannot be issued within the three-year period; therefore, the county council will deal with any further unauthorised leave through prosecution in the Magistrates Court. If the parent is found guilty, the potential fine is up to £1000.

National threshold for issuing penalty notices.

The national threshold for issuing penalty notices has been set at 10 sessions (5 school days) of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks.

However, if in an individual case the local authority believes a penalty notice would be appropriate, they retain the discretion to issue one before the threshold is met.

For example - where parents are deliberately avoiding the national threshold by taking several term time holidays below threshold, or for repeated absence for birthdays or other family events.

When the school becomes aware that the threshold has been met, they are expected in every case to consider whether to request the county council issue a penalty notice. Therefore, the council will continue to ask schools to notify them of all unauthorised leave in term time that meets the threshold of 5 school days, and any below this threshold that you want us to consider if it falls within our discretionary powers to issue one.

Refer to Staffordshire County Council code of conduct for issuing penalty notices.
https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Education/Education-welfare/Documents/Penalty-Notice-Code-of-Conduct-July-24-FINAL.pdf

Monitoring and analysing absence

The attendance officer will monitor and analyse attendance data regularly to ensure that intervention is delivered quickly to address habitual absence at the first signs.
The school will collect data regarding punctuality, truancy, and authorised and unauthorised absence, for:

- The school as a whole.
- Individual year groups.
- Individual pupils.
- Demographic groups, e.g. pupils from different ethnic groups or economic backgrounds.
- Other groups of pupils, e.g. pupils with SEND, LAC, pupils eligible for FSM and young carers (who are recorded in the school census).
- Pupils at risk of PA.

The attendance officer will conduct a thorough analysis of the above data on a half-termly basis to identify patterns and trends. This will include identifying, for each group:

- Patterns in uses of certain codes.
- Particular days of poor attendance.
- Historic trends of attendance and absence.
- Barriers to attendance.

The attendance officer will provide regular reports to staff across the school to enable them to track the attendance of pupils and to implement attendance procedures. The attendance officer will also be responsible for monitoring how attendance data changes in response to any interventions implemented to increase attendance in future.

The governing board will regularly review attendance data, including examinations of recent and historic trends, and will support the SLT in setting goals and prioritising areas of focus for attendance support based on this data.

The school will also benchmark its attendance data against local, regional and national-level data, including through the DfE's 'View your education data' service, to identify areas of success and areas for improvement.

Training of staff

The school will recognise that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, staff will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk pupils as part of their induction and refresher training.

The governing board will ensure that teachers and support staff receive training in line with this policy as part of their induction. Following this initial training, staff will receive regular and ongoing training as part of their development.
Training will cover at least the following:

- The importance of good attendance
- That absence is almost invariably a result of wider circumstances
- The legal requirements on schools, e.g. the keeping of registers
- The school's strategies and procedures for monitoring and improving attendance
- The school's procedures for multi-agency working to provide intensive support for pupils who need it

The governing board will provide attendance training to the attendance officer and other staff with specific attendance functions in their role – this will include training regarding interpreting and analysing attendance data and supporting pupils to overcome barriers to attendance.

Deletions of names from the admission register

The school will ensure that it only deletes names from the admission register for a reason set out in regulation 9 of the School Attendance Regulations. A pupil's name will never be removed for any other reason and the school is aware that doing so could constitute off-rolling.

The school will make returns to the LA when pupils' names are deleted from the admission register. This will be with the exception of pupils whose name has been deleted from the register at or after the end of the last term of the school year when they are in the most senior year group, unless the LA has requested this information.

When the school is notifying the LA that a pupil's name is being deleted from the admission register, the following information about the pupil will be provided:

- Full name

- Address
- The full name and address of any parent the pupil normally lives with
- At least one telephone number by which any parent the pupil normally lives with can be contacted in an emergency
- If applicable, the pupil's future address, the full name and address of the parent who the pupil is going to live with and the date the pupil will start living there
- If applicable, the name of the pupil's other school and when the pupil began or will begin to attend the school
- The reason under which the pupil's name has been deleted from the admission register

Names will never be retrospectively deleted from the admission or attendance register – these registers will remain an accurate record of who is a registered pupil and their attendance at any given time. Pupils' attendance will be recorded up until the date that their name is deleted from the admission register.

Monitoring and review

Attendance and punctuality will be monitored throughout the year. The school's attendance target is 96.5%

The next scheduled review date for this policy is October 2027.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.