ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY POLICY

Approved by:	Trustees	**Date:** April 2021
Last reviewed:	September 2026	
Next review due by:	September 2027	

STATEMENT OF INTENT

Enhance Academy Trust believes that in order to facilitate high achievement, good attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school. Our aim is for all pupils to have 96% attendance or above.

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 this attendance policy is clear and easily understood by staff, pupils and parents.
- Regularly monitoring and analysing attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require more support.
- 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 the Local Authority and other agencies.
- 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.

Our approach aligns with the Department for Education's six principles:

- **Expect**: Set high standards and build a culture that values attendance
- **Monitor**: Use data to spot issues early at individual and group level
- **Listen and Understand**: Explore barriers with families and agree next steps
- **Support**: Remove in-school barriers and help access wider support
- **Formalise**: Be clear about expectations and consequences if support isn't working
- **Enforce**: Use legal powers when all other avenues have been exhausted

The school's **Attendance Strategic Lead** is **Joe Mitchell**

The school's **Attendance Officer** is **Lynne Swallow** and can be contacted for all attendance and absence concerns via **enquiries@horburybridge.enhanceacad.org.uk** or by calling the school office on **01924 302800**

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
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)
- The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Children and Young Persons Act 1963
- DfE (2024) 'Working together to improve school attendance'

- DfE (2026) 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE (2016) 'Children missing education'

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The **Local Academy Board** has overall responsibility for:

- Monitoring the implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Regularly reviewing attendance data.
- 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 the implementation of this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.
- Having regard to 'Keeping children safe in education' when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

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 Senior Leadership Team to the Attendance Strategic Lead role.
- Appointing a member of staff to the Attendance Officer role.
- Arranging attendance training for all relevant staff that is appropriate to their role.
- Ensuring all parents are aware of the school's attendance expectations and procedures.
- Make weekly phone calls to parents to recognise and celebrate good attendance or improved attendance.
- Ensuring that every pupil has access to full-time education and will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence.
- Ensuring that attendance is high priority across the school and its importance is regularly shared with pupils and parents.
- Sharing effective practice on attendance management and improvement across schools within the Trust.

All Staff are responsible for:

- Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Promoting attendance in the classroom and through their interactions with all pupils
- Speaking to parents at the beginning and/or end of the school day to recognise and celebrate good or improved attendance
- 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 Strategic Lead** 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 reports and identifying areas of intervention and improvement.
- Reporting on attendance trends, strategies, and the impact of interventions to Senior Leaders and the Local Academy Board.
- Meeting with parents where attendance is a concern.

The **Attendance Officer** is responsible for:

- Undertaking first day absence processes: phone calls and home visits.

- Following up on incidents of persistent poor attendance, including meeting with parents.
- Communicating with pupils and parents about poor attendance.
- Informing the Local Authority of any pupil being deleted from the admission and attendance registers.
- Involving and working with other agencies, including the Trust Attendance Improvement Officer, to support children and families with poor attendance to improve.
- Providing reports and analysis of attendance and absence to the Attendance Strategic Lead.

The **Trust Attendance Improvement Officer** is responsible for:

- Proactively promoting good attendance across Enhance Academy Trust and acting where there are issues, carrying out the statutory duty of legal action where required.
- Becoming involved with any case where a pupil's attendance drops below 92%.
- Ensuring that schools effectively implement statutory procedures in relation to attendance, liaising with the Education Welfare Service as required.
- Liaising with the Local Authority to issue Penalty Notices to parents/ carers for their child's non- attendance at the Academy and to implement and take the lead on Fast-Track to Prosecution.
- Implementing legal proceedings and acting as the lead officer in relation to Education Supervision Orders or Academy Attendance Orders to ensure that appropriate action is taken in response to any court direction.
- Ensuring accurate collection and collation of data to enable the production of comprehensive statistics on prosecutions, outcomes, and attendance rates.

The **Local Authority Education Welfare Service** is responsible for:

- Working in partnership to promote and facilitate improved attendance, at an individual level, by supporting the Fast-Track to Attendance Programme; and at a whole school level using proactive strategies and action plans.
- Working with children and families to ensure their school attendance and safeguarding is maintained.
- Providing guidance with regards to Children Missing Education.
- Working in partnership with other agencies and will offer advice and signposting for referrals to appropriate organisations.
- Undertaking legal action on behalf of the school.

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.
- Promoting good attendance with their children.
- Contact school before **8.45am**, on **each day** of their child's absence and stating the reason for absence.
- Ensuring their child arrives punctually and contact school if their child will be arriving late and provide a reason for lateness

DEFINITIONS

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

Absence:

- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Not attending 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 observances
- An absence due to a family emergency (for example, a bereavement) for which the school has granted leave
- Authorised educational sporting events
- Temporary, time limited part-time timetables

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
- Pupils who have been permitted to stay up late the previous night
- Absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Absence due to day trips
- Holidays in term-time
- Leaving school for no reason during the day

Persistent absence (PA) and Severe Absence (SA):

- Persistent Absence is missing 10% or more of schooling across the year for any reason (equivalent to 1 day or more a fortnight across the school year)
- Severe Absence is missing 50% or more of schooling across the year

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 day starts at **8:50am**, and pupils will be in their classroom, ready to begin lessons at this time; therefore, pupils will be expected to be on the school site by **8:45am**.

Registers will be taken as follows throughout the school day:

- The morning register will be taken by **9:00am**. Pupils attending after this time will be coded as L to show that they were on site, but this will count as late
- The morning register will close 30 minutes later at **9:30am**. Pupils will receive a U code of absence if they arrive at school after **9.30am**
- The afternoon register will be marked by **1:00pm**. Pupils will receive a L code if they are not in their classroom by this time
- The afternoon register will close 30 minutes later at **1:30pm**. Pupils will receive a U code of absence if they arrive to afternoon registration after **1.30pm**.

Pupils will be encouraged to communicate any concerns related to attendance and absence as soon as possible to the relevant member of staff.

ABSENCE PROCEDURES

Parents will be required to contact the school office via telephone or email before **8:45am** on the first day and each day of their child's absence and will be expected to provide an explanation for the absence.

Where a pupil is absent, and their parent has not contacted the school by **9.30am** (the time the register closes) to report the absence, the Attendance Officer (or a member of the office staff) will contact the parent by **telephone** to ascertain the reason for absence. If there is no response from the pupil's primary contact, other contacts will be called until a response is received (*See Appendix 2 for template scripts)*

If no contact has been established by **10am**, the absence will be reported to the Head of School.

Home Visits
If a child is receiving multi-agency support, absence must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and/or the allocated Social Worker. In these cases, school staff are required to carry out a home visit within the timescales outlined below.

- **Barnsley:** A home visit must take place within **3 days** of any unexplained absence.
- **Kirklees:** A welfare check must be completed by **Day 2**.
- **Wakefield:** A welfare check must be completed by **Day 3**.

The Attendance Officer is responsible for ensuring that the correct Local Authority procedures are followed for each pupil, based on their home address. This includes pupils who are known to Social Care or who are subject to a Child in Need (CIN) or Child Protection (CP) Plan.

For **pupils who do not meet the above safeguarding criteria** but are absent for **3 consecutive school days**, the Attendance Officer will normally carry out a home visit on **Day 3**. This visit is intended to check the pupil's wellbeing and offer support to ensure the pupil returns to school quickly. If a home visit is required before Day 3, the Headteacher will have the discretion to approve this.

For pupils who are at risk of, or identified as **PA**, a home visit may be undertaken on the pupil's **second** and subsequent days of absence.

PUNCTUALITY AND LATENESS

Poor punctuality and lateness are not acceptable, and all pupils must arrive on time. If a child misses the start of the day, they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. The late arrival of pupils also disrupts lessons, which can be embarrassing for the pupil and can also encourage absence.

If a pupil is late on **three** occasions in a half term, the school will **write** to parents. If lateness continues, the school will arrange to meet parents to discuss what measures may be required to ensure that the pupil arrives at school by the appropriate time.

ATTENDANCE REGISTER

The school uses Arbor to keep attendance registers to ensure they are as accurate as possible and can be easily analysed and shared with the appropriate authorities.

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 (see Appendix 1)

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.

Leave of Absence: Leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. The Headteacher will consider each application individually considering the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. To have a request for a leave of absence considered, the school expects parents to contact the Headteacher in writing 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.

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

If a leave of absence (including holiday) is not granted, taking a pupil out of school will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and will result in a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued to each parent liable for the attendance offence or offences.

- The first time a Penalty Notice issued for a Term Time Holiday, the Penalty Notice (fine) will be £160 per parent, per child if paid within 28 days of issue, reducing to £80 if paid within 21 days.
- Where it is deemed appropriate to issue a second Penalty Notice to the same parent/s for the same pupil/s within 3 years of the first notice, the second Penalty Notice (fine) will be £160 per parent, per child (no reduced fee for paying early)
- Fines will continue to be issued per parent per child, for example: 3 siblings in one family absent for term time leave would result in each parent receiving 3 separate fines.
- On the third time that an offence is committed for a Term Time Holiday, a Penalty Notice will not be issued but the case may proceed straight to Parental Prosecution under the Single Justice Procedure. If found guilty of the offence of 'Failure to send a child to school', the Magistrates can impose a fine up to £1000.

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 and will incur a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued.

Illness and medical 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 and providing a copy of the appointment details for school records.

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 Local Authority which authorises the school's absence(s) and ensures safeguarding checks have been completed.

Where a licence has been granted by the Local Authority 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 Local Authority, 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 97%. Where a licence has not been obtained, the Headteacher will not authorise any absence for a performance or activity.

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.

Religious observance: If a religious body sets apart a single day for a religious observance, the school will record this day as an authorised absence. The school will grant one additional day across the school year for religious observance if a parent applies for leave of absence.

Temporary, time-limited part-time timetables: Where the pupil is of compulsory school age, and both the parent who the pupil normally lives with and the school agree, the pupil should temporarily be educated on a part-time basis for exceptional reasons and have agreed the times and dates when the pupil will be expected to attend school as part of that 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.

The school will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for disabled pupils to reduce barriers to attendance, in line with any medical or specialist advice or EHC Plans 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.

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

- Inform the Local Authority if a pupil is likely to be away from the school for more than 15 school days.
- Provide the Local Authority with information about the pupil's needs, capabilities and liaise regarding a 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 the Team Around the Family (TAF) process.
- Using an internal or external specialist.

- Enabling a pupil to have a time-limited reduced timetable.
- Ensuring a pupil can have somewhere quiet to spend lunch and breaktimes.
- Implementing a system whereby pupils can request to leave a classroom if they feel they need time out.
- Temporary late starts or early finishes.
- Phased returns to school where there has been a long absence.
- Small group work or on-to-one lessons.
- Tailored support to meet their individual needs.

Medical or dental appointments including specialist allergy testing and immunology reviews (evidence may be requested, such as an appointment card or letter).

Allergy and Anaphylaxis Related Absence: In accordance with the school's commitment to Benedict's Law, the school will not penalise the attendance record of any pupil whose absence is a direct result of:

- An emergency admission or recovery period following an anaphylactic reaction.
- Attendance at specialist allergy or immunology clinics.

These absences will be recorded as **'Authorised Medical' (Code M)**. The school recognises that these appointments are essential for the ongoing safety and Individual Healthcare Plan (IHP) management of the pupil.

Medical Mitigations: Before initiating formal attendance interventions or issuing penalty notices, the school will review whether the absences are linked to a managed chronic medical condition or severe allergy identified in an Individual Healthcare Plan (IHP). Absences directly related to the management of life-threatening allergies may be mitigated during the review process to ensure the pupil is not unfairly disadvantaged by their medical needs.

LEAVE DURING LUNCHTIMES

Parents may be permitted to take their child away from the school premises during lunchtimes with permission from the Headteacher; it is at the Headteacher's discretion as to whether a pupil will be allowed to leave the premises. Parents will submit a written request, outlining the reasons for their child to leave the premises during lunch time. The Headteacher will consider the request and will invite the parent into the school for a discussion regarding any concerns, as well as the timely return of their child at the end of lunch time and their child's behaviour when not on the school premises. The Headteacher reserves the right to grant or refuse a request. The Headteacher also reserves the right to rescind permission, if necessary.

CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION (CME)

When a child goes missing from education, unauthorised absences will be monitored and followed up in line with procedures, particularly where children go missing on repeated occasions. In the case of a child in care, the Social Worker must be informed in line with safeguarding expectations.

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.

Pupils will be removed from attendance registers as required by law, after confirmation from Wakefield or Kirklees Council. For Barnsley pupils, removal from the admission register will be confirmed with Barnsley MBC's Education Welfare Service in line with their CME procedures. Each academy will ensure contact details for the relevant LA are updated annually in September.

FLEXIBLE SCHOOLING

Enhance Academy Trust does not grant flexible schooling timetables as we do not believe that they are compatible with our schooling ethos, as they do not allow for full integration into school life.

ATTENDANCE INTERVENTION

The school will use attendance data, in line with the 'Monitoring and analysing absence' section of this policy, 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 needs of the pupils whom the intervention is designed to target. The time of the school year will also be considered. (Template letters can be found in Appendix 2)

- **As soon as** a pupil's attendance falls **below 96%,** the school will write to the pupil's parents to alert them of their concerns and falling level of attendance. The pupil's attendance will be closely monitored. (*See Appendix 4)*
- If a pupil's attendance falls **below 94%,** parents will be expected to **meet** with the Attendance Officer and Attendance Strategic Leader/Headteacher to discuss the pupil's attendance and agree strategies to improve attendance. (*See Appendix 4)*. An **Early Intervention Plan** will be completed as part of this meeting. *(See Appendix 5)*
- If further absence occurs and the pupil's attendance falls **below 92%,** a referral to the Trust Attendance Improvement Officer will be made. Medical evidence may be required for all illness related absences.
- Where pupils meet the threshold for **Persistent Absence** (90%), the school will ensure referral to the Local Authority Attendance/EWS team and, where necessary, Children's Social Care, in line with Barnsley, Wakefield, and Kirklees safeguarding pathways. This may result in legal action being taken.

If absence is a result of a holiday, the child's parents will be made aware that their child's absence will be closely monitored and should their attendance not improve, the interventions above will be put into place.

PROMOTING GOOD ATTENDANCE

The school will acknowledge improved and sustained attendance and punctuality in the following ways:

- Rewards such as acknowledgments and certificates
- Contacting parents to acknowledge improvements via phone calls, letters, or other communication pathways including Arbor
- Promoting good attendance around school, through text messages, on the website or via social media. *(See Appendix 3)*
- Employ a range of reward systems to improve school attendance
- Sharing half termly attendance with parents (INSIGHT reports)

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 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. 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 involve the Trust's Attendance Improvement Officer and 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 approach families to offer support rather than immediately reach for punitive approaches.

Where these barriers are related to the pupil's experience in school, for example bullying, the Attendance Officer will work with the Headteacher and any relevant school staff, for example the DSL and SENCO, to address this. Where the barriers are outside of the school's control, for example they are related to issues within the pupil's family, the attendance officer will liaise with any relevant external agencies or authorities, for example, Children's Social Care or the Local Authority, and will encourage parents to access support that they may need.

PERSISTENT ABSENCE (PA) & SEVERE ABSENCE (SA)

There are various groups of pupils who may be vulnerable to high absence and PA (equivalent to 1 day or more a fortnight across a full school year), such as:

- Children in need
- Looked After Children
- Young carers
- Pupils who are eligible for Free School Meals
- Pupils with English as an Additional Language
- Pupils with SEND
- Pupils who have faced bullying and/or discrimination

The school will use methods to help support pupils at risk of PA to attend school. These 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.
- Leading weekly check-ins to review progress and the impact of support.
- Making regular contact with families to discuss progress.
- Assessing whether an EHC Plan may be appropriate.
- Considering what support for re-engagement might be needed, including for vulnerable groups.

The school will focus particularly on pupils who have Severe Absence (rates of absence over 50%) and will work with the Local Authority and other partners to engage all relevant services needed to identify and address the wider barriers to attendance these pupils are facing.

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 constitute neglect and will escalate any concerns in this regard in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Where pupils meet the threshold for Persistent or Severe Absence, the school will ensure referral to the Local Authority Attendance/EWS team and, where necessary, Children's Social Care, in line with Barnsley, Wakefield, and Kirklees safeguarding pathways. This may result in legal action being taken.

IRREGULAR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

The threshold for Irregular School Attendance is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks. A school week means any week in which there is at least one school session. This can be met with any combination of unauthorised absence (e.g. 4 sessions of holiday taken in term time plus 6 sessions of arriving late

after the register closes all within 10 school weeks). These sessions can be consecutive (e.g. 10 sessions of holiday in one week) or not (e.g. 6 sessions of unauthorised absence taken in 1 week and 1 per week for the next 4 weeks). The period of 10 school weeks can also span different terms or school years (e.g. 2 sessions of unauthorised absence in the Summer Term and a further 8 within the Autumn Term).

All schools must consider whether a Penalty Notice is appropriate in each individual case where a pupil reaches the national threshold for considering a Penalty Notice. If a Penalty Notice is deemed to be appropriate as an alternative to prosecution:

- The first penalty notice issued to a parent in respect of a particular pupil will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.
- A second penalty notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil is charged at a flat rate of £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 issue of the first. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action should be taken instead. This will often include considering prosecution but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions.

Where pupils are at risk of persistent absence, the school will engage with the LA's escalation process (Fast Track, Attendance Panel, or Attendance Strategy Group, depending on the Local Authority). The Trust EWO will coordinate referrals to ensure consistency and compliance.

LEGAL INTERVENTION

The school will allow sufficient time for attendance interventions and engagement strategies to improve pupils' attendance; however, where engagement strategies to improve attendance have not had the desired effect the Attendance Officer and Trust Attendance Improvement Officer will consider:

- Working with the Local Authority to issue an Attendance Contract, Education Supervision Order or Parenting Order.
- Engaging Children's Social Care where there are safeguarding concerns.
- Requesting that the Local Authority issue a Penalty Notice or Parental Prosecution

Penalty Notices are issued via the Local Authority in line with their local code of conduct. While national thresholds apply (10 unauthorised sessions in 10 weeks, or persistent holiday absence), Wakefield, Kirklees, and Barnsley Councils may have specific administrative requirements (e.g. referral forms, parental warning letters, or fast-track panels). The school will ensure it follows the prescribed Local Authority procedures when requesting legal action.

MONITORING AND ANALYSING ABSENCE

The school 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 analyse attendance and absence data on a biweekly basis including punctuality and authorised and unauthorised absence, for:

- The school cohort 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 and pupils eligible for FSM.
- Pupils at risk of PA.

The school will conduct a thorough analysis of the above data on a half-termly, termly, and full-year 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 Strategic Lead will share analyses with teachers and support staff to enable them to track the attendance of pupils and to implement attendance procedures. The Attendance Strategic Lead will also be responsible for monitoring how attendance data changes in response to any interventions implemented to increase attendance in future.

The Local Academy Board will regularly review attendance data, including examinations of recent and historic trends, and will support the Headteacher 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 data to identify areas of success and areas for improvement and will share practice which has been shown to be effective with other schools.

The Board of Trustees will ensure staff from different schools within the Trust regularly share expertise and collaborate on interventions though regular networking opportunities.

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.

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 Trust will provide dedicated and enhanced attendance training to Attendance Officers and other staff with specific attendance functions in their role which will include training regarding interpreting and analysing attendance data and supporting pupils to overcome barriers to attendance.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

Attendance and punctuality will be monitored throughout the year. This policy will be reviewed annually by the Trust. The next scheduled review date for this policy is September 2027. Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

APPENDIX 1

Attendance Codes

The following attendance codes will be used:

- / = Present in the morning
- \ = Present in the afternoon
- L = Late arrival before the register has closed
- C = Leave of absence granted by the school
- C1 = Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance
- C2 = Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part time timetable
- E = Excluded but no alternative provision made
- I = Illness
- K = Attending education provision arranged by Local Authority
- M = Medical or dental appointments
- R = Religious observance
- B = Off-site education activity
- G = Unauthorised holiday
- O = Unauthorised absence
- Q = Unable to attend the school due to access arrangements
- U = Arrived after registration closed (unauthorised)
- N = Reason not yet provided
- X = Not required to be in school
- T = Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller absence
- V = Educational visit or trip
- P = Participating in a supervised sporting activity
- D = Dual registered (at another educational establishment)
- Y1 = Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
- Y2 = Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
- Y3 = Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
- Y4 = Unable to attend due to whole school closure
- Y5 = Unable to attend due as pupil is in criminal justice detention
- Y6 = Absent in accordance with public health and guidance or Law
- Y7 = Unable to attend because of other unavoidable cause.
- Z = Pupil not on admissions register.

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. This code will also be used to record year groups who are not due to attend because the school has set different term dates for different years, e.g. induction days.

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 three years.

APPENDIX 2

Template Phone Call Scripts

The following phone call scripts have been developed to help schools communicate with parents about attendance.

First day absence

Opening

- Good morning/afternoon, it's [name] from [school]. I noticed that [child's name] is absent today / has been absent recently, and I just wanted to check how they are. Is now a good time to talk?

Explore and listen

Let the parent explain. If unclear or vague, gently explore:

- "Is there something specific making them unwell or worried?"
- "Is there anything happening that might be making school difficult?"

Clarify and respond

- If clear why they are absent, explain if it will be authorised (be honest if not).
- Where support is appropriate, does the parent have ideas on how you can help
- "Is there anything we can do to support [child's name] or help them return to school?"

Agree next steps

- Confirm expected return: "When do you think [child's name] will be back with us?"
- Reinforce expectation positively: "We'd really like to see them back as soon as possible."
- Add a positive comment where appropriate: "They were really engaged in [lesson/area] last week."

Close

- "Thank you for your time. Please do get in touch if anything changes or if you need any help."

CONTINUED ABSENCE

Use when there is a pattern of absence or prior contact has already been made.

Opening

- Good morning/afternoon, it's [name] from [school]. I'm calling again about [child's name]'s attendance, as we've noticed continued absences and wanted to check in with you.

Explain concern (be specific and factual)

- "[Child's name] has missed [X days] over the past [X weeks], which is higher than expected.
- We know they've been unwell/worried/away recently and wanted to check in to see how we can work together to make sure (Child's first name) is in school as much as possible, enjoys their time and achieves their best.

Offer support and set expectations

- "Is there something specific we can put in place to help?"
- "If attendance doesn't improve, we may need to consider further steps, but we'd much rather work together to avoid that."

Listen to parent response and agree next steps if additional support is needed.

- "We want to work with you to improve attendance and make sure [child's name] feels able to come to school."

APPENDIX 3

Template Text Messages

Text messages can be an effective way to communicate quick 'nudges' to parents and carers about attendance, usually by text or school-parent apps. Below are some example messages that can be used in a range of circumstances, including different points in the school week or year and at different levels of attendance.

General attendance messaging

- Good morning, we're looking forward to seeing [Child] in school today. Being in on time helps them settle in with classmates and start the day well. Thank you for all your help.
- We hope [Child] has had a good break. We're looking forward to seeing them back at school on XXX at XXXam. Being in on time helps them settle in with classmates and start the new term well. Thank you for your help with this.
- At this stage of term, we want to thank you for your support in getting your child to school. As we get further into term, it's important we work together to keep this momentum and good routines. If there's anything making it difficult for them to come in, please contact [Name] on [number]—we're here to help.
- As we approach the end of term, there is still lots happening in school, including lessons and fun activities with friends [add specific activities for year groups here]. Being in every day helps your child feel part of our school community, builds their confidence and helps their learning.
- Fridays in school are important. Teachers use them to finish the week's learning, check understanding, and practise key skills so children start Monday ready.
- Children also enjoy [activities / events], which helps them build friendships and feel part of the class. [Child] has been absent from school on several Fridays this year. They've missed XX so far. If you need help getting them in, call [number] to speak to [Person].
- Sometimes it can be difficult to know whether your child is too ill to attend school. NHS guidance says it's fine to send them in with a minor cough or common cold, if they don't have a temperature – we will keep an eye on them. See NHS guidance 'Is my child too ill for school' or contact [Name] on [number].

After an absence

- We missed [Child] at school today. School isn't just about learning. It's important for building confidence, friendships and equipping your child with skills for life. Is there anything we can do to help to get them back in tomorrow?
- We missed [Child] at school today. One day off is X missed lessons, as well as time spent with friends and doing extracurricular activities. We're here to help — [named person] will be in contact tomorrow to see when they will be coming back in and if there is anything we can do to help.

Highlighting missed time

- [Child] missed X lessons / days last half term. Each day in school helps them build knowledge, confidence and friendships, and it's not always easy to catch up when school is missed. This next half term is a fresh start, and we're looking forward to welcoming [child] into school. If attendance carries on being a concern, we will be in touch for an informal chat about what might help. If you want to talk anything through in the meantime, please contact [Name] on [number].

Celebrating improvement / good attendance

- We have been really pleased to see [Child] at school today / this week. We can also see their attendance improving, which really helps their learning and social development. Thank you for your efforts in encouraging them to attend. Let's keep up the good work together and help [Child] to build the habits needed for future success.
- We are delighted to celebrate that [Child] attended every day last week [or other timescale] – this is brilliant progress and will help [Child] feel settled and more confident. Thank you for your support in this.
- Your child's attendance is excellent. Being in school every day means they don't miss key learning, routines or social experiences. This consistency really supports confidence, wellbeing and progress, and it shows in how settled and engaged they are in class. Keep up the good work!

APPENDIX 4

Letter Template: 96% Attendance

Dear **[Parent/carer name],**

We are contacting you because we have noticed that **[Child's first name]** has missed **X** days of school in the past **X** weeks. This means that **[his/her]** attendance **has now fallen below 96%.**

We would like to work with you to make sure **[Child's first name]** is with us as much as possible, enjoys school and achieves their very best.

Good attendance helps children learn and succeed. Here's how attendance can affect your child's progress:

ATTENDANCE		NUMBER OF DAYS	NUMBER OF DAYS MISSED	NUMBER OF HOURS LEARNING LOST
EXCELLENT	100%	190	0	0
	99%	188	2	10
GOOD	98%	186	4	20
	97%	184	6	30
	96%	182.5	7.5	37.5
CAUSING CONCERN	95%	180.5	9.5	47.5
	94%	179	11	55
	93%	177	13	65
AT RISK OF PERSISTENT ABSENCE	92%	175	15	75
	91%	173	17	85
PERSISTENT ABSENCE	90%	171	19	95

I wanted to remind you we are here to support in any way we can. If you need more support in getting them to school, please contact **[Name]** on **[Insert email or phone number].** We are here to help.

We will be in touch again if we have ongoing concerns about **[Child's first name]**'s attendance, but please remember you can speak to us at any time.

Yours sincerely,

[Name]
[Role]

Letter Template: 94% Attendance

Dear **[Parent/carer name],**

As you know, we are concerned about **[Child's first name]**'s attendance and would like to work together to make sure **[Child's first name]** is with us as much as possible, enjoys school and achieves their very best.

I wanted to remind you we are here to support in any way we can, and I would like to invite you into school for a meeting on: **[day and date]** at **[time]** to discuss how we can work together to improve **[Child's first name]**'s attendance.

[Child's first name]'s attendance record (including absences and any late arrivals) for this academic year is provided at the bottom of this letter. As you will see, **[Child's first name]'s** attendance has now fallen below 94% which is concerning and needs to improve.

Please contact me if you have any questions about this letter or if there is anything else you would like to discuss before the meeting.

Yours sincerely,

[Name]
[Role]

Attendance information for **[Child's first name]** from **[date]** to **[date]:**

- Overall attendance rate: XX.X%
- Total possible days: XXX
- Days attended: XXX
- Number of days missed: XXX [this is equivalent to X days per week/fortnight]
- Authorised absences: XXX days
- Unauthorised absences: XXX days

Letter Template: 92% Attendance

Dear **[Parent/carer name],**

School Attendance is hugely important. For **[Child's first name]** to gain the full benefit from their education, and to support their attainment, wellbeing and wider development they need to attend school on time, every day possible.

We have previously informed you of concerns with **[Child's first name]** attendance and have met with you to discuss ways in which we can support you to help improve their attendance. However, since the date of the meeting there have been further absences and **[Child's first name]**'s attendance has continued to fall and is now **below 92%**. This means that **[he/she]** has missed **X** days so far this schools year.

Because of this, we now need proof if your child is absent from school again due to illness. This could be a doctor's note, a prescription, an appointment text or medicine labels. If we do not receive this proof, we will have to mark the absence as unauthorised.

If **[Child's first name]'s** attendance falls **below 90%,** they will be classed as 'persistently absent' and you could risk receiving a fine. To give you an idea, 90% attendance means missing about **19** days of school in a year.

As a result, I would like to invite into school for a meeting on: **[day and date]** at **[time]** to discuss how we can work together to improve **[Child's first name]'s** attendance and avoid any legal action being taken.

Yours sincerely,

[Name]
[Role]

Attendance information for **[Child's first name]** from **[date]** to **[date]:**

- Overall attendance rate: XX.X%
- Total possible days: XXX
- Days attended: XXX
- Number of days missed: XXX [this is equivalent to X days per week/fortnight]
- Authorised absences: XXX days
- Unauthorised absences: XXX days

APPENDIX 5

Early Intervention Plan

EARLY INTERVENTION PLAN						
CHILD'S DETAILS						
NAME:			YEAR GROUP:			
DOB:			TEACHER:			
Is the child subject to any of the following? Highlight						
SEN Support	EHCP	Child Protection Plan	Child in Need Plan	Looked After	Young Carer	

Current Attendance (%):		Number of Days Missed:	

SUMMARY OF KEY BARRIERS TO ATTENDANCE

What can school do to support an increase in attendance?	
What can parent / carer do to support an increase in attendance?	
Any external support or referrals required at this stage?	
Agreed next steps	
Date and time of Review Meeting (in 4 weeks' time)	

	Signature	Date
Member of Staff		
Parent/Carer		
Pupil (if appropriate)		

Document to be photocopied and the copy handed to parents, original copy to be scanned and kept on school records.