

Byfleet Primary School

Attendance Policy



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Signed	Richard Bowman Headteacher
Signed	Joy Considine Chair of Governors

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Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the statutory guidance on Working Together to Improve School Attendance from the Department for Education (DfE). We aim to achieve this through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, which includes:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every 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
- We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

We expect that all pupils will attend school:

- 100% of the time.
- Punctually.
- Prepared for the day.

We expect that all parents/carers who have day to day responsibility for the children and young people will:

- encourage regular school attendance and to be aware of their legal responsibilities.
- ensure that the child/ren arrive at school punctually, prepared for the school day.
- ensure that they contact the school whenever the child/ren are unable to attend school
- contact the school on the first day of the child's absence, before 9am, and on each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- contact the school promptly whenever any problem that may keep the child away from school occurs.
- provide the school with more than one emergency contact number for their child
- ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

For the school's Attendance Policy to be successful, every member of our school community must make attendance a high priority. Parents/carers need to support these views in the home to ensure that children are receiving corresponding messages about the value of education.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the DfE's statutory guidance on Working Together to Improve School Attendance 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
- Maintained schools: Part 3 of the Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024

- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Equality Act 2010

It also refers to:

- School census guidance
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools
- Ofsted's 2025 framework toolkit

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing body

The governing body is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents/carers
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations, statutory duties and comply with the law on school attendance, including:
 - I. Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
 - II. 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:
 - I. The importance of good attendance
 - II. That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
 - III. The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
 - IV. 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

The current member of the governing body with the responsibility for attendance is >>>>>>>>>>.

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 penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising the assistant headteacher to be able to do so
- Working with the parents/carers of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health 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/carers through all available channels
- Sharing information from the school register with the local authority, including:
- Notifying the local authority when a pupil's name is added to or deleted from the school admission register outside of standard transition times
- Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who fail to attend school regularly, or who have been marked with an unauthorised absence for a continuous period of 10 school days

- Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who the school believes will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness

3.3 The Designated Attendance Leads

The Senior Leadership Team and Attendance Officer are known as DALs (Designated Attendance Leads) and are 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
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The key designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Richard Bowman and can be contacted via 01392 403116 or via the school office at info@byfleet.surrey.sch.uk

3.4 The Attendance Officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

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

The Attendance Officer is Hannah Munroe and can be contacted via 01392 403116 or via the school office at info@byfleet.surrey.sch.uk

3.5 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1), and submitting this information to the school office on the same day

3.6 School admin staff

School admin staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system

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 natural parents, whether they are married or not
- 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 on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child. If the child is in the Early Years Foundation Stage, provide more than 2 emergency contact numbers where possible.
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or local authority
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting Designated Attendance Lead who can be contacted via info@byfleet.surrey.sch.uk.

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to, and be supported to

- Attend school regularly
- Attend school punctually at 8.45am
- Attend appropriately prepared for the day.

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

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

We will take our attendance register at the start of each morning session of each school day and once during each afternoon 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:

- I. Present
- II. Attending a place other than school
- III. Absent
- IV. Absent – unable to attend due to unavoidable causes

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- I. The original entry
- II. The amended entry
- III. The reason for the amendment
- IV. The date on which the amendment was made
- V. 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 3:15pm.

Pupils must arrive in school 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 9:00am. Parents arriving after 8:45am should sign the child in via the school office giving an explanation. They will be marked as late. Any parent arriving with their child after 9:00am should sign in via the school office and will have an unauthorised absence (Code U).

The register for the second session will be taken at 1:00pm and close at 1:15pm

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9:00am, or as soon as practically possible, by notifying the school admin team/school office, who can be contacted via 01932 403116 or absences@byfleet.surrey.sch.uk.

If the school has not heard by 9.15am from a parent, someone in the office will attempt to contact parents/carers to establish a reason for the absence. Where the school is unable to make contact with the parent who holds parental responsibility for the child, the school may carry out a welfare check visit to the home or liaise with the police.

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 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. Follow up all unexplained absences to obtain explanations from parents. Although parents may offer a reason, only the school can authorise the absence. In the case of long term or frequent absence due to medical conditions, verifications from a GP or other relevant body may be requested. Where absence falls to 90% or below (persistent absence), medical evidence will be expected for absences to be authorised. Without evidence (medical or otherwise), absences will be unauthorised. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

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 in advance of the appointment.

To request a planned absence from the school for a medical appointment, the parent/carer must complete an 'Absence Request' form including evidence of the pre-booked appointment. This will then be looked at by the headteacher who will make the decision to either authorise, or unauthorise the request.

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.

Leave of absence in term time will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances.

- Where absence in term time is unavoidable, a Leave of Absence Application Form (Appendix 1a) must be requested from the school office and submitted for consideration by the Head Teacher on behalf of the school governors, no less than two weeks prior to the requested date.
- Consideration will then be given only in the event of exceptional circumstances and if the application is sent by the parent with whom the pupil normally resides.
- If leave is taken in term time without prior authorisation by the school, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and Surrey Inclusion Service (SAS) may be notified.

The pupil's parent must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. See 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
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

Persistent lateness will be dealt with by the Designated Attendance Team.

All late collected children will be recorded on our electronic register and this information may be passed onto the Local Authority's School Attendance team for further investigation. Where a child has a late collection, a letter will be sent home to the parents and the applicable fee will be charged. Where there is no improvement in late collection, a referral may be made to the Local Authority's Children's Services. Children who are uncollected will remain on the school site with a member of staff. If there has been no contact made with the parent/carer after 30 minutes, the DSL or deputy DSL will call C-SPA (Surrey safeguarding advice line) to discuss further arrangements. If it is not possible to locate an appropriate adult to come for the child, they will notify Children's Services via the emergency duty team, who will arrange for the child to be cared for.

4.4 Late Collection Charge

Under Section 457 of the Education Act 1996 and relevant Regulations, the school's Local Advisory Committee has the power to impose a charge on parents or carers who fail to collect their child from school within a reasonable time after the close of the school day.

- It is the parents/carers responsibility to inform the school if they will be late to collect their child/ren or to advise of alternative collection arrangements that have been made.
- For children collected after 15:30pm (after the end of school day), a charge of £10 will be payable by the parent/carer to the school.
- The parent will be expected to pay this fine onto our Scopay (Tucasi) system within 48 hours.
- One-off exceptional circumstances for late collection will be considered on an individual basis.
- Charging arrangements are in place to avoid the need for members of staff to provide out of hours childcare.

All late collected children will be recorded on our MIS system (Scholarpack) and this information may be passed onto the Local Authority's School Attendance team for further investigation.

- Where a child has a late collection, a letter will be sent home to the parents and the applicable fee will be charged.

- Where there is no improvement in late collection, a referral may be made to the Local Authority's Children's Services.
- Non-Collected Children Under no circumstances, are staff to look for the parent, nor do they take the children home with them.
- If there has been no contact made with the parent/carers after 30 minutes, the DSL or deputy DSL will call C-SPA (Surrey safeguarding advice line) to discuss further arrangements. It is highly likely that the advice would be to call the police.
- If the police cannot locate an appropriate adult to come for the child, they will notify Children's Services via the emergency duty team, who will arrange for the child to be cared for.

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:

- (If the school has not heard by 9:15am on the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason, the Attendance Officer will) attempt to contact the parents to establish the reason for the absence. Where the school is unable to make contact with the parent who holds parental responsibility for the child, the school may well carry out a welfare check visit to the home address. If the reason for the absence is still unclear, the school may contact the police.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session(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
- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the pupil's social worker and/or youth offending team officer
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, 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 legal intervention (see section 7 below), as appropriate.

4.6 Reporting to parents

The school will regularly inform parents (see the definition of 'parent', as used in this policy, in section 3.7 above) about their child's attendance and absence levels. This will be done via the school

newsletter, or if there is concern around a child's attendance, then this will be communicated at the Informal Support stage (see process for supporting attendance) on a more individual basis.

5. Authorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

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 for employment or for admission to another educational institution
- 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.

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

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

Where absence in term time is unavoidable, a Leave of Absence Application Form must be requested from the school office and submitted to the headteacher on behalf of the school governors. Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least two weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school website. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

If leave is taken in term time without prior authorisation by the school, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and Surrey Inclusion Service may be notified.

5.2 Other reasons for authorised absence

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) Where the child has experienced vomiting and /or diarrhoea, they should stay home from school for 48 hours, following the last episode.
- 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 for religious observance
- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – a pupil is a mobile child if their parent is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with them. In

these circumstances a pupil will be considered as a mobile child, provided they are of compulsory school age and have no fixed abode and whose parent is in a trade or business that requires them to travel from place to place

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

5.3 Absences from the school site (which are not classified as absences)

The headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings. These are not classified as absences. Reasons 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

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

We want our pupils to succeed and develop their skills. To do this, pupils need to avoid missing lessons and days of school as much as possible. As a school, we want to reward high attendance and not just penalise pupils for poor attendance. We celebrate attendance by awarding the attendance certificate in Celebration Assembly each week to the class with the highest attendance. This class will also have the privilege of sitting on the benches for the assemblies in the following week.

7. Supporting pupils with poor attendance

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

7.1 Attendance contract

We use attendance contracts as a form of attendance support, these are implemented as stage 2 of the Formal Support Plan (7.5)

An attendance contract is a formal written agreement between a parent and the school to address irregular attendance at school. An attendance contract is not legally binding, but it provides a more formal route where previous support has not worked or would not have been appropriate.

Parents cannot be compelled to enter an attendance contract, and the school cannot agree an attendance contract in a parent's absence.

Where an attendance contract would be an appropriate form of support, the school will arrange a meeting with the parent (and pupil if they are old enough to understand) to discuss how we can work in partnership to improve the pupil's attendance.

Where parents fail to comply with an agreed attendance contract, the school may seek an alternative course of action. In the first instance, this will include discussions with the parents to seek explanations and determine whether the attendance contract remains useful. Where there is further non-compliance following these discussions, the school may take further action.

7.2 Education supervision order

In cases where voluntary early help plans and attendance contracts have been unsuccessful, we may work with the local authority to issue an education supervision order. If an education supervision order is considered, the local authority will inform the parent(s) in writing and will set up a meeting.

An education supervision order is a formal intervention but **not** criminal prosecution.

An education supervision order initially lasts for 1 year, but it can be extended within the last 3 months for a period of up to 3 years at a time.

In cases where parents persistently fail to meet the directions given under the education supervision order, they may be liable to a fine of up to £1,000 upon conviction.

This will form part of stage 5 of the Formal Support Plan

7.3 Notice to improve

7.5 School Support Process for Improving Attendance

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.

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

It will include:

- o Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences

- o The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under [section 7 of the Education Act 1996](#)
- o Details of the support provided so far
- o Opportunities for further support or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- o A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued, or prosecution considered, 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
- o A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- o The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

7.4 Penalty notices

The headteacher (or assistant headteacher, authorised by the headteacher), 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, we will check with the local authority before doing so, and send the local authority a copy of any penalty notice issued.

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

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

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.

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). These penalty notices are not included in the National Framework, not subject to the same considerations about support being provided, and do not count towards the limit as part of the escalation process.

In these cases, the parent must pay £60 within 21 days, or £120.

Universal
BPS will regularly monitor attendance of all pupils and have robust daily processes to follow up absence. • Phone calls home to discuss reasons for absence • Informal conversation with the pupil when they return to school after an absence • Raise attendance concerns with key staff (Headteacher/DSL) and any external professionals (Surrey Inclusion Services/School Nurse/SENDCo/Pastoral Care) working with the pupil
Informal Support
Phone call with parent to discuss any issues and explore why absences are ongoing If absences are due to illness. Liaise with health professionals, including the school nurse. Consider implementing an Individual Health Care Plan.
Formal Support (Attendance Contract Agreement)
Stage 1 Letter 1 (Attendance Concern) Meet with the family and complete an <i>Attendance Assessment</i> document. Ensuring barriers to attendance are explored. It is expected that at this stage schools would: • Consider alternatives i.e., reduced timetables, ELSA etc. • Implement rewards and recognition for any improvements, regular catch ups with the child • Raise concerns with appropriate staff i.e., SENCO, Senior Leadership, Attendance Officer, SAS (Surrey Attendance Service) can be contacted for guidance if needed. • Signpost parents and/or make referrals for support to other agencies as appropriate. • Issue a letter of expectations regarding attendance to parents. Stage 2 Letter 2 (Invite to meeting to complete an attendance assessment) + actioning an Attendance Contract Agreement Byfleet Primary School Will:

- Invite key professionals (health, social care, SEND etc) to the meeting in order to ensure any out of school barriers can be addressed.
- Consider alternatives i.e., reduced timetables, change to classes, ELSA, etc.
- Where parents do not attend initial meeting, they should be given at least 1 further opportunity to meet before issuing a Notice to Improve letter
- Raise for discussion at Targeted Support Meeting or seek advice from Surrey Attendance Service (SAS).

Attendance Contract Agreement:

- To address irregular attendance, BPS will implement an *Attendance Contract* under section 19(2) of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003. These are formal written agreements between the BPS and the parent.
- Surrey Attendance Service will expect to see that an Attendance Contract has been offered prior to any request for legal intervention.
- Attendance contracts do not have a minimum or maximum duration. Each individual attendance contract sets out the duration it will be in place, and most are for between 3 and 12 months but can be longer if needed.

Stage 3

Letter 3 (No improvement, request for medical evidence letter) + Notice to Improve Letter.

Monitoring Period - Stage 4

Letter 4 (Invite to School attendance meeting) + External Professionals

If appropriate, call a review meeting to review attendance contract/parenting agreement.

Stage 5

Letter 5 (advising family of referral to Surrey Attendance Service)

If there is no improvement in attendance schools should consider requesting either a Penalty Notice be issued, or Surrey Attendance Service consider prosecution. This may result in an Education Supervising Order.

8. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

8.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

If the school becomes aware of barriers that relate to the pupil's needs, we will inform the local authority.

- Having sensitive conversations and developing good support for pupils with physical or mental health conditions by working in partnership with the parents. For example, making reasonable adjustments where a pupil has a disability or putting in place an individual healthcare plan where needed. Considering whether additional support from external partners (including the council or health services) would be appropriate, making referrals in a timely manner and working together with those other services to deliver any subsequent support.
- Establish strategies for removing the in-school barriers these pupils face, including considering support or reasonable adjustments for uniform, transport, routines, access to support in school and lunchtime arrangements. Ensure joined up pastoral care is in place where needed and consider whether a time-limited phased return to school would be appropriate, for example for those affected by anxiety about school attendance.
- Ensure data is regularly monitored for these groups including at board and governing body meetings and in Targeting Support Meetings with the council so that additional support from other partners is accessed where necessary.

Pupils with long term illnesses or other health needs may need additional support to continue their education, such as alternative provision provided by the council. The council is responsible for arranging suitable education for children of compulsory school age who, because of health reasons, would otherwise not receive suitable education.

Part of Ofsted's criteria for 'expected standard' for attendance and behaviour says that any reasonable adjustments and/or interventions should be timely and appropriate, well-chosen and targeted.

Where a pupil has an education health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, the school will inform the local authority.

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

In cases of prolonged absence, or when a child is absent without notification, we will attempt To contact the child's parents and alternative emergency contacts.

When deciding whether a child's absence should be considered prolonged, we will consider the:

- Patterns and trends in the child's absences and their personal circumstances
- Vulnerability of the child and their parents, as well as the circumstances of their home life

We will also implement our safeguarding procedures (see our child protection/safeguarding policy and refer any concerns to local children's social care and/or request a police welfare check.

9. Attendance monitoring

9.1 Monitoring attendance

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

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

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.

9.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

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

9.3 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 we have identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence, and their families (see section 9.4 below)
- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinator, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium lead)
- 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

9.4 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 7, above)

10. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by Richard Bowman, Headteacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

11. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions
- Pupil mental health and wellbeing
- EYFS policy

Appendices

Appendix 1 Attendance and Register Coding

The following DfE guidance is used:

- School attendance Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities, DfE (May 2022)
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance, DfE, (August 2024)

Schools must take the attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. On each occasion they must record whether every pupil is:

- present
- attending an approved educational activity
- absent
- unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
- not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)

The school should follow up any absences to:

- ascertain the reason;
- ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken
- identify whether the absence is approved or not
- identify the correct code to use before entering it on to the school's electronic register, or management information system which is used to download data to the School Census

Attendance codes for when pupils are present at approved off-site educational activity	
Code B: off-site educational activity	Code D: dual registered - at another educational establishment
Code J: at an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment	Code P: participating in a supervised sporting activity
Code V: educational visit or trip	Code W: work experience
Authorised Absence	

Code C: leave of absence authorised by the school	Code E: excluded but no alternative provision made
Code H: holiday authorised by the school	Code I: illness (not medical or dental appointments)
Code M: medical or dental appointments Code S: study leave	Code R: religious observance Code T: Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence
Unauthorised absence from school	
Code G: holiday not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the head teacher.	Code N: reason for absence not yet provided
Code O: absent from school without authorisation	Code U: arrived in school after registration closed
Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)* Below statutory school-age (below 5)	
*Code I: not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)	Code X: pupil not of compulsory school age is not expected to attend

Appendix 2

