

Attendance policy

VICTORIA ACADEMIES TRUST

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Attendance Policy

The importance of good attendance

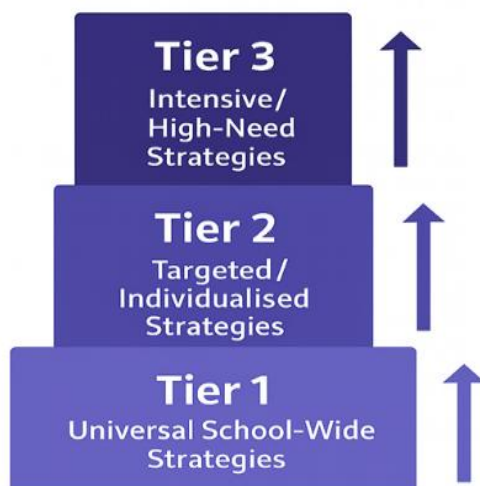
School Name seeks to ensure that all its pupils receive an education which enables them to maximise opportunities to reach their full potential. The barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates, and are often specific to individual pupils and families; improving attendance is everyone's business. Research shows there is evidence of a strong link between good attendance and increased attainment. Pupils who regularly attend school make much better progress both socially and academically. Regular attendance enables pupils to adapt better to routines, schoolwork, and friendship groups. Therefore, those pupils will have a positive experience of learning and a more successful transition from primary to secondary and beyond to further education and training. Fibbersley Park Academy is committed to support our families to achieve regular attendance at school through the Inclusive Attendance implementation programme.

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school. Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

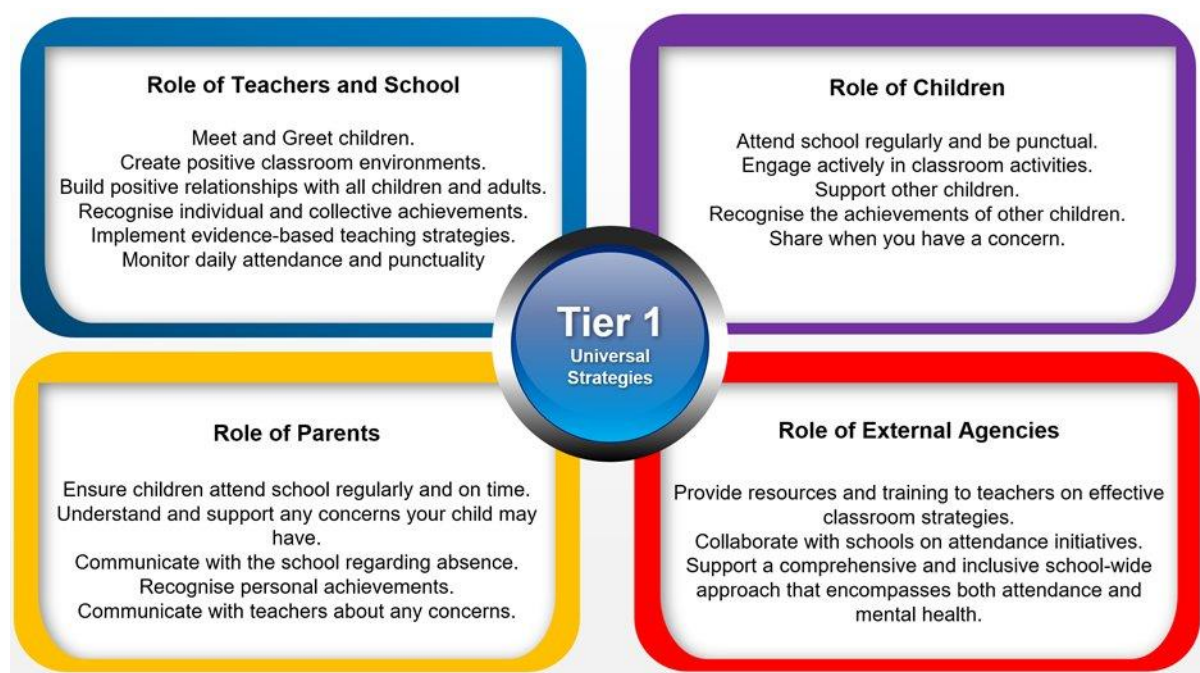
Promote and monitor attendance

Strategies to manage and promote regular attendance

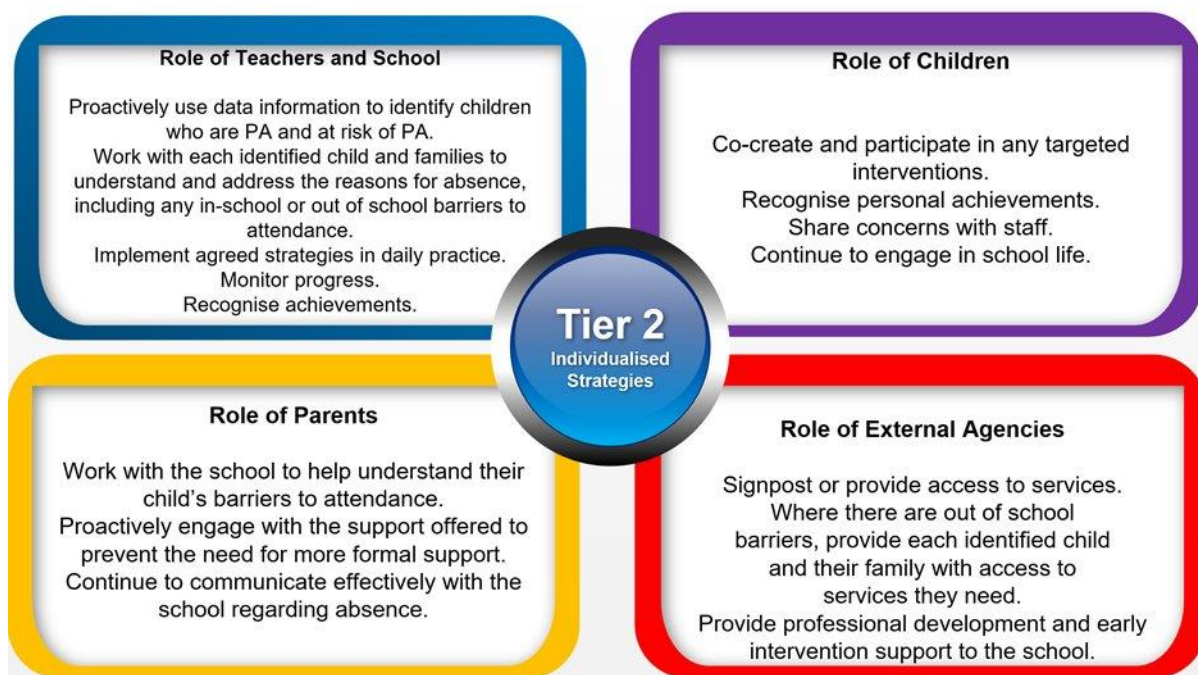
(school) Academy uses a multi-tiered system of support. This involves 3 tiers of intervention. This approach sets out clear expectations for the school, staff, pupils, parents/carers and external agencies including the Local Authority. This system aligns with the DfE Working Together to Improve School Attendance 2024 (see appendix 2).



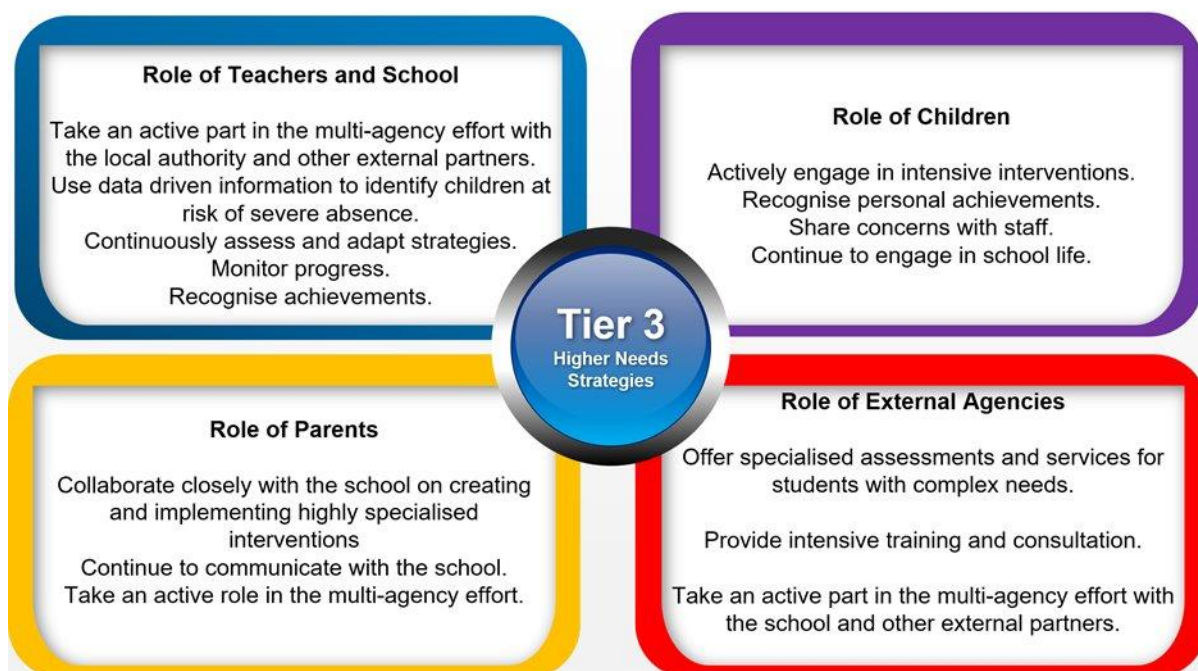
Tier 1 – Universal attendance promotion for all children



Tier 2 – Tailoring support and targeting strategies for emerging concerns.



Tier 3 – Intensive Multi-Agency support involving external agencies



(school) Academy will implement a range of strategies such as early intervention, support for vulnerable families, intervention programs and create a positive and inclusive school environment. Understanding specific factors affecting attendance for individual children and families is crucial to improve attendance outcomes.

Factors influencing attendance

- Health issues
- Family circumstances
- Bullying, safety concerns
- Transportation issues
- Families facing financial difficulties
- SEN
- Lack of engagement and motivation with school
- Academic challenges
- Cultural and language barriers
- Peer pressure and social factors

School Staff that Support Attendance in

The Attendance Champion is

The attendance officer is

Please contact the attendance officer on a day-to-day basis when your child is absent or for any queries regarding attendance.

School name

name/contact details

name/contact details

The parent support advisor/safeguarding & pastoral lead is

name/contact details

Roles & Responsibilities

The Academy Council

The Academy Council is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties and challenging low attendance performance.
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy and ensure the policy is reviewed annually.

The Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school and ensuring its publication on the school's website
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to Academy Councillors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing penalty notices, where necessary

The Designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues and barriers to improved attendance, adapting routines or timetables for vulnerable pupils

- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families, monitoring and analysing the results.

The Education Welfare Officer

The Trust EWO will:

- Support in fulfilling their responsibilities in relation to improving attendance.
- Attend meetings with the school to identify children with irregular school attendance and develop strategies to ensure that all children can attend school regularly. Looking at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and use this information to develop strategies to address these patterns
- Support the school in promoting attendance by providing advice, guidance and creation of action plans in relation to working together to improve attendance.
- Review referrals from school to address matters of poor school attendance when Early help and intervention has failed to improve attendance
- Carry out, in conjunction with the school, home visits and school meetings with parents to challenge barriers to poor attendance

The School Attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Daily monitoring and analysing attendance data
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement. Identifying vulnerable pupils or groups of pupils that need additional support with their attendance using this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families.
- 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 and designated senior leader (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- The attendance officer is **Name** and can be contacted via the school office.

The School office staff

School office staff will:

- Meet and greet families
- Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Advise parents/carers regarding school absences
- Record messages and communication sent **via ParentMail**

Implement our school's first day absence procedure (see below)

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason by 10am. All absence reasons are logged on SIMS (School Information Management System)
- If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may send follow up texts and **class charts** messages in order to make contact.
- Where there is a significant Safeguarding concerns, school staff or the Trust EWO/IEWO may attempt to visit the child and family at recorded home addresses.

Class teachers and support staff

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.

Communicate with parents via **Dojo/class charts**

Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time for every lesson timetabled
- Contact school by **9am** on the first day of absence to inform school of the reason and when the child is expected to return. Contact the school every day of absence.
- Provide school with contact details for every adult with parental responsibility
- Understand their responsibility to keep the school up to date with at least 2 emergency contact details as required by the Children Missing Education requirements and in line with the latest Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Impress on their children the importance of regular school attendance by keeping absences to a minimum and ensuring that children are only out of school when they are too sick to attend.
- Establish effective communication with the school and swiftly address any worries their children may have about coming to school so that we can work together to resolve this.
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Attend any meetings called by school and partner agencies to discuss attendance.

The Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time
- Make sure you have everything you need for the following day
- Go to bed and be well rested to be able to enjoy your day
- Get up in good time to attend school

Registration

Registration

The school day start time is **8.45am** when our doors open.

These will close at **8.55**

Any pupils arriving after these times should report to the school office so that they can be given a late mark; pupils arriving after **8:55am** should be accompanied by a parent to be signed in via **the online screen in the reception area** so that a reason for lateness can be given; the number of minutes late is recorded in order to measure the impact of lost education due to late arrival.

The class register will close at **9:25am**

School day end time is **3:15pm**.

Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

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

Persistent lateness will result in a targeted letter from the designated Attendance Lead or an invitation to meet with school leadership to discuss the appropriate support available and to review expectations for improving punctuality.

Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register twice a day, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. The attendance will be recorded using the DfE statutory attendance codes. (see Appendix 1)

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

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

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if 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.

Pupil Absence

Parents are expected to inform school of the reason for absence. However, it is school that makes the decision whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised. This decision will be based on information available at the time. Parents/carers are encouraged to provide as much information as possible. Supporting evidence, such as appointment letters or cards, prescribed medication, or a completed Leave of Absence Request Form, may assist the school in making this decision.

Re-occurring unauthorised absence will be referred to the School Attendance Support Service and this can lead to legal interventions and a formal assessment.

The school has a responsibility to notify the Local Authority with the name and address of sick pupils who they believe will miss 15 consecutive or cumulative days.

Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office on -

t: 0121 558 8701 and selecting option 2, or using the facility on ParentMail.

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

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a prescription, appointment card or letter, text or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

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

Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

YOU CAN CONTACT THE OFFICE ON INSERT TELEPHONE NUMBER/S AND EMAIL/S

However, we encourage parents/carers 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.

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

Following up unexplained absence

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

Implement our school's first day absence procedure

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason by **10am**. All absence reasons are logged on SIMS (School Information Management System)
- If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may send follow up texts and **ParentMail** messages in order to make contact.
- Where there is a significant Safeguarding concerns, school staff or the Trust EWO may attempt to visit the child and family at recorded home addresses.
- The school will identify the correct attendance code (see Appendix 1) and record it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session

Request for leave of absence in term time

The school has adopted the National and Local Authority code of conduct in respect of leave of absence in term time. Parents and carers wishing to take their child out of school for any reason, other than medical reasons or illness must complete a Leave of Absence Request form available from the school office and submit it **at least 2 weeks before departure**.

If parents or carers proceed with the leave of absence during term time without authorisation, the **school name** may refer the matter to the Local Authority for consideration of a penalty notice. A penalty notices may be issued where a parent or carer deliberately takes their child out of school during term time without the school's permission, and it can be demonstrated that they understood that permission had not been, or would not be. Granted.

See appendix 3

Identify whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised

The school will:

- Identify the appropriate attendance code (see Appendix 1) and record it as soon as the reason for the absence has been ascertained, and no later than five working days after the sessions.
- Contact the parent/carer on each day that an unexplained absence continues to establish the reason for the absence and ensure that appropriate safeguarding action is taken where necessary.

Children Missing in Education

The school has also adopted the Local Authority Policies on Children Missing Education, Elective Home Education. Click link to find DfE guidance regarding [Children Missing in Education](#).

If a child is absent (unexplained) for at least **3 consecutive days**, the Trust EWO will be notified. A home visit may be carried out. If the absence continues for a **total of 10 days**, the family will be referred as a Child Missing in Education case for the Local Authority.

The school also follows Local Authority guidance in relation to coding absence for families who travel as part of their culture.

We acknowledge and follow guidance from The National Strategies, Department for Children, Schools and families:

On days when a pupil from a Gypsy, Roma or Traveller family is known to be out of area, due to the family travelling for parents work purposes only, and is not in educational provision, then the school can use the letter code T to record the absence. Parents/ carers should make sure they let the school know in advance when they are going to be travelling, and when they expect to return, so that attendance and absence are recorded accurately.

On days when pupils, including those from Gypsy, Roma or Traveller families, are absent for other reasons (whether travelling or not), schools should use the appropriate code to record that absence. If the reason for a pupil's absence is not known, it must be recorded as unauthorised absence.

Absence for participation in a performance

At least 2 weeks notice should be given before the sporting event. In these instances, the school will follow Local Authority's guidance and by-laws, working in partnership with the Local Authority Attendance Service to ensure that any performance absence is within the parameters of the law.

Absence for participation in a sporting event

At least 2 weeks notice should be given before the sporting event. In these instances, the school will follow Local Authority's guidance and by-laws, working in partnership with the Local Authority Attendance Service to ensure that any sporting event absence is within the parameters of the law.

Reducing persistent and severe absence

The Department for Education defines **Persistent absence** as when a pupil misses **10% or more** of school sessions, and **Severe absence** as when a pupil misses **50% or more** of school sessions.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents or carers of pupils who the school and/or the Local Authority considers to be vulnerable, or who are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance, engagement, and any barriers to regular attendance.
- Provide access to appropriate support services to help remove barriers to attendance and improve engagement with education

Your child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility. This Attendance Policy has a closely link to the school's Safeguarding Policy; the Behaviour Policy; Anti-bullying Policy and the Health and Safety Policy.

IN SITUATIONS WHERE ALL OTHER STRATEGIES HAVE FAILED TO IMPROVE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE, THE TRUST EWO WILL REFER THE PUPIL TO THE LOCAL AUTHORITY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE SERVICE UNDER SECTION 444(1) AND 444(1A) OF THE EDUCATION ACT 1996 AND THE CHILDREN ACT 1989, WHICH MAY RESULT IN A FINE UP TO £2,500; A PARENTING ORDER; A COMMUNITY ORDER; OR A CUSTODIAL SENTENCE. CONSIDERATION WILL ALSO BE GIVEN TO THE ISSUING OF A PENALTY NOTICE IN CASE OF UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE WHERE APPROPRIATE AND/OR A PARENTING CONTRACT OR EDUCATION SUPERVISION ORDER.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Attendance Codes

Attending the school	
/ \	Present at the school / = morning session \ = afternoon session
B	Attending any other approved educational activity
D	Dual registered at another school
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
L	Late arrival before the register is closed
P	Participating in a sporting activity
V	Attending an educational visit or trip
W	Attending work experience
Absent – Leave of absence	
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
M	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment
S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
Absent – other authorised reasons	
E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)
R	Religious observance
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable causes	
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements
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 the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause
Absent – unauthorised absence	
G	Holiday not granted by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances
U	Arrived in school after registration closed
Administrative Codes	
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register
#	Planned whole school closure

Appendix 2: Legislation and Guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance> from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/parental-responsibility-measures-for-behaviour-and-attendance>. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

This policy follows the DfE's guidance on Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance, February 2023. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-issues-affecting-a-pupils-attendance-guidance-for-schools>

Guidance for parents on school attendance - Office of the Children's Commissioner:
<https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/back-into-school/resources-for-families/>

[The Education Act 2002](#)

[The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)

[The Education Regulations 2006](#)

[The Education Regulations 2013](#)

[The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2024](#)

[Children Missing Education Statutory Guidance](#) (September 2016)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold

Appendix 3: New national framework for unauthorised absence.

Under the new national framework, all schools will be required to consider a fine when a child has missed 10 or more sessions (5 days) for unauthorised reasons.

From August 2024, the fine for school absences across the country will be **£80 if paid within 21 days, or £160 if paid within 28 days.**

In the case of repeated fines, if a parent receives a second fine for the same child within any three-year period, this will be charged at the higher rate of £160.

Fines per parent will be capped to two fines within any three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action like a parenting order or prosecution will be considered.

If you're prosecuted and attend court because your child hasn't been attending school, you could get a fine of up to £2,500.