BATH & WELLS
Multi Academy Trust

'That they may have life, life in all its fullness' John 10:10






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Attendance policy

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Aim of this policy

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 (Updated July 2026) 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.

Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the DfE's statutory guidance on Working together to improve school attendance (date) 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 2026 framework toolkit

Key principles

Our attendance policy and strategy has been developed with the following principles at its heart:

- Every day counts… All day, every day, on time.
- Attendance is everyone's responsibility.

- We focus on understanding the barriers, taking preventative, supportive action and swift intervention
- We build strong relationships with parents/carers and children

Roles and responsibilities

Subject to the terms of this policy, any day-to-day attendance issues that parents or children have should be discussed with the class teacher. Where more detailed support around attendance is required, parents and children should contact the Headteacher.

The School will:

- develop and maintain a whole-school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance and punctuality for all pupils
- work with children and their families, building strong relationships to support high levels of attendance, listening to and understanding barriers to attendance, and working collaboratively to remove them
- identify attendance concerns at the earliest opportunity and take a support-first approach, recognising that absence is often a symptom of wider needs or vulnerabilities
- investigate unexplained or unjustified absence promptly, applying appropriate support and intervention and, where necessary, considering sanctions or legal intervention in line with statutory guidance
- be aware that sudden or gradual changes in attendance may indicate safeguarding concerns and respond in accordance with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, available at: Bath and Wells Diocesan Academies Trust - Policies (bwmat.org)
- be particularly mindful of pupils whose attendance may be affected by SEND, mental or physical ill health, disadvantage, social care involvement, caring responsibilities or other vulnerabilities, ensuring reasonable adjustments and targeted support are put in place where appropriate
- take into account individual needs when implementing this policy, including our duties under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- share information and work collaboratively with the local authority, other schools and relevant agencies, adopting a multi-agency approach where attendance concerns require coordinated support
- regularly monitor, review and analyse attendance and absence data to identify pupils and cohorts requiring support, evaluate the impact of interventions and inform future improvement priorities
- ensure that all children can access their full-time educational entitlement, putting appropriate strategies in place where there is evidence to suggest this is not the case.
- ensure that the Trust Local Committee and school leadership team work together to monitor attendance levels and the effectiveness of this policy
- ensure that all legislation and guidance are complied with and reflected in school policies and procedures, including the Department for Education's statutory guidance *Working Together to Improve School Attendance* (July 2026).
- have appropriate safeguarding responses in place for children who are at risk of missing education, having regard to *Keeping Children Safe in Education* and the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

- provide information requested by the Secretary of State, including attendance data collected by the Department for Education.
- regularly inform parents/carers about their child's attendance and absence levels.
- support children who are returning to education following long-term absence through planned reintegration and appropriate adjustments.
- ensure effective systems are in place to record and report attendance data, including the accurate completion of admission and attendance registers using the school's management information system.
- assign overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance to a designated senior leader.
- ensure that staff receive appropriate training and support to understand their role in promoting attendance, identifying emerging attendance concerns and responding effectively to attendance-related safeguarding risks.
- observe and fulfil the responsibilities set out in the Department for Education's *Summary Table of Responsibilities for School Attendance*.

Staff Roles and Responsibilities

Admin Responsibilities

- If children are absent, make a daily call to families/carers if they have not already contacted school
- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Alert Attendance Lead to children who are regularly late
- Support Attendance Lead with tracking attendance by using Arbor or other system
- Support Attendance Lead with home visits, if needed

Teacher Responsibilities

- Where necessary, communicate with parents reminding them about the benefits and importance of good attendance; praise positive good attendance
- Alert Attendance Lead to dips in attendance or lateness for children in their care
- Promote positive attendance to the children in the classroom.
- Support the Attendance Lead in meeting with parents, if requested

Attendance Lead Responsibilities (where applicable – this may be the Headteacher)

- 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
- Support admin with calling families daily who have not contacted school
- Carry out daily attendance checks by using Arbor other system and alert parents to concerns around their child's attendance.
- Support families with attendance if needed
- Liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL around Early Help/Social Care referrals if needed

- Refer children to nurture or other support if needed around attendance where appropriate
- Visit absent children at home where deemed appropriate
- Escalate urgent attendance issues to the appropriate service (e.g. Children Missing Education / Local Authority Inclusion Team)
- Take statutory action legally with families around non-attendance in line with Local Authority procedures
- Lead on attendance incentives across the school
- Communicate clear guidance about the impact of absence and lateness
- Publish the following year's academic calendar by the previous Spring Term. Share bank holidays and inset days where possible.

Headteacher Responsibilities (including attendance lead responsibilities if this is the same person)

- Ensure the Attendance Policy is adhered to and staff receive adequate training
- Support the Attendance Lead to carry out their duties.
- Report to Trust Local Committee, Regional Hub Director, Trust Team and OFSTED around attendance.
- Liaise with the Attendance Lead on the daily attendance check.
- Ensure the school website is up to date, including dedicated information about attendance
- Develop effective parental relationships, including parents of new starters, to educate and support with good attendance

SLT Responsibilities

- Promote positive attendance across the school, including adding attendance onto meeting agendas where appropriate
- Support the Attendance Lead in meetings with parents
- Make contact with families for children under their remit who are falling behind with learning due to poor attendance.
- Complete home visits to children who are significantly poor attenders alongside the Attendance Lead or School Admin.
- Feedback to Local Authority (where required), Trust Team and OFSTED around attendance
- Engage with the daily attendance check where possible
- Ensure that teachers are promoting good attendance

Trust Local Committee Responsibilities

- To take an active role in monitoring and challenging attendance at a local level to improve it where necessary.

Trust Team Responsibilities

- The Regional Hub Director, as line manager of the Headteacher, will hold the Headteacher to account for attendance
- The Regional Hub Director will report, collaborate and challenge to improve attendance at a regional level
- The Regional Hub Director will act as trust-wide designated staff member, sharing national updates and collaboration

- Attendance to remain a regular agenda item on half-termly Head Teacher Briefings
- Ensure up to date resource storage on SharePoint for Headteachers
- Share effective practice on attendance and improvement

The Board of Trustee Responsibilities

- Take an active role in attendance improvement, recognise the importance of school attendance and promote it across the Trust
- Ensure the Trust fulfils expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly review attendance data, discuss and challenge trends and help the Trust's leaders focus improvement efforts

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 all day, every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child. If the child is in the Early Years Foundation Stage, parents/carers must 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

  The Headteacher/Attendance Team via the school office enquiries@stjames.bwmat.org

Pupils are expected to:

Attend school all day, every day, on time

3. Registration

a. Each school maintains an attendance register and uses this to record each child's attendance at the start of the school day and again in the afternoon.

Registration session	Start time	End time
Morning	8:40am	8.55am
Afternoon	1:00pm	1:10pm

b. Registers will close 15 minutes after the morning session starts. Children who arrive after the start of a registration session, but before the end of a registration session will be marked as late. Where children arrive after the end of a registration session, the process set out at section 5 applies. The registration session in our school is 15 minutes.

c. The register is marked using the national attendance and absence codes which can be found in the Department for Education's guidance on attendance - Working together to improve school attendance (publishing.service.gov.uk).

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:

- Present
- Attending a place other than school
- Absent
- Absent – unable to attend due to unavoidable causes

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

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

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

[For pupils of compulsory school age]

Whether the absence is authorised or not
The nature of the activity, where a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
The nature of circumstances, where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.
The school day starts at 8.40 and ends at 3.15
Pupils must arrive in school by 8.45 on each school day.
The register for the first session will be taken at 8.40 and will be kept open until 8.55
The register for the second session will be taken at 1.00 and will be kept open until 1.15

For children below compulsory school age, the school will maintain attendance records in line with statutory requirements and will promote regular attendance through clear communication and partnership with parents/carers. While attendance is not compulsory until the start of the term following a child's fifth birthday, the school has high expectations for attendance and punctuality for all pupils, recognising the importance of regular participation in supporting children's learning, development, wellbeing and readiness for school.

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 9.30 or as soon as practically possible, by calling, dojo message or emailing the school office.

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. 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.

Absence_Request_Form.pdf

Where possible, the pupil should:

- Be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary, and attend school before/after their appointment
- Wear school uniform to their appointment, to make it easier to return to school afterwards

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible.

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

To monitor lateness and punctuality we:

- monitor and analyse weekly attendance patterns, proactively using data to identify pupils at risk of poor attendance
- provide regular attendance reports to class teachers and relevant leaders
- identify children who need support from wider partners as soon as possible and deliver this support in a targeted manner
- conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly and full year data to identify patterns and trends

- benchmark school attendance data at each level against Trust, regional and national level
- monitor the impact of academy strategies and actions to improve attendance on particular pupils and particular groups
- work with the local authority and other local partners to identify groups
- hold regular meetings with the parents or carers of children who the Trust and/or local authority consider to be vulnerable

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:

- Call the pupil's parent on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may [
- 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

Reluctant school attenders:

- Sometimes pupils can be reluctant to attend school. We encourage parents and pupils to be open and honest with us about the reason for the pupil's absence. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or for a parent to give in to pressure to let the child stay at home. This can give the impression to the child that attendance does not matter and can make things worse. As a school, we need to understand the reasons why a pupil is reluctant to attend in order to be able to support pupils and parents in the best way.

Low attendance (below 97%)

- When we have concerns about the attendance of a pupil, we will do our best to make the parent/s aware of the concerns about their child's attendance and give them the opportunity to address this. However, if parents do not make use of the support offered and improve their child's attendance to an acceptable level, this may result in legal sanctions. Where there are no genuine reasons for the absences, parents may be asked to meet with a member of the Leadership Team to discuss the matter. In some cases, this may result in a formal action plan being produced in the form of an

Attendance Improvement Plan.

- If our school refers a case of poor school attendance to the Local Authority for legal sanctions, we will show that we have warned the parent/s that they are at risk of receiving a Penalty Notice or other legal sanction.

- We will not usually request legal sanctions from the Local Authority in cases where poor attendance is symptomatic of complex family circumstances. In such circumstances our school will take a holistic approach to the issue and involve other agencies as necessary. The exception to this will be where parents fail to accept or engage with support offered by the school and/or other agencies or fail to implement the suggested changes. Again, when referring for legal sanctions in such cases, we will show that we have warned the parent/s that they are at risk of receiving a Penalty Notice or other legal sanction.

- If our school has safeguarding concerns about a pupil who is absent, we will share information with other agencies as we deem necessary.

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 via half-termly written reports.

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.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as

- Rare and unexpected circumstances which are unlikely to reoccur. Examples include:
- Medical emergencies
- Family emergencies (e.g. death of a relative)

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

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

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

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via Absence_Request_Form.pdf

The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

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)
- 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. Pupils should attend school on the days surrounding those 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 recognise good attendance in the following ways:

- A weekly leader board of classes within the school recognising the 3 classes with the highest attendance and this is recognised in the school newsletter.
- A certificate for children with 100% attendance in a term given by the Class Teacher in a class based collective worship.
- A certificate for children with 100% attendance in the year given out as part of the end of year Celebration Assembly.
- We use target cards for short term attendance targets over 10 days discreetly to reward individual children where good attendance is a challenge.



What can every child expect to help them attend well?

1. A sense of belonging to their school, with strong relationships with key trusted adults and peers
2. A whole school no blame culture, moving forward together to promote the benefits of good school attendance
3. A teacher who listens, understands, empathises and nurtures
4. A curriculum and unmissable learning that inspires and engages
5. A safe space to share worries and feelings
6. Routines and support that is consistent and reliable for the child
7. Personalised, reasonable adjustments to remove barriers to help with coming into school



What can every parent/carer expect to help their child attend well?

1. Leaders and staff who take time to listen and understand the barriers to good school attendance
2. Leaders and staff who seek first to understand and support families to help their child attend well
3. Trust policies and practice that are fair, consistent, and transparent
4. Clear communication with regular reviews about what is working and what is not working
5. Partnership working with external agencies, office staff, support staff, teachers and leaders

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 Support Plans

We use attendance support plans as a form of attendance support.

An attendance support plan is a formal written plan between a parent and the school to address irregular attendance at school. An attendance support plan 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 support plan, and the school cannot agree an attendance support plan in a parent's absence.

Where an attendance support plan 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 support plan, 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 support plan 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 support plans 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.

7.3 Notice to improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

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:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under section 7 of the Education Act 1996
- Details of the support provided so far
- Opportunities for further support or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued, 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
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period.

7.4 Penalty notices

The Headteacher, or a deputy or assistant headteacher authorised by the Headteacher, may decide to refer a case to the Local Authority for consideration of a penalty notice where a child is of compulsory school age. Before making a referral, the school will consider the individual circumstances of the case and whether the conditions set out in the National Framework for Penalty Notices have been met. The Local Authority will determine whether a penalty notice should be issued.

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 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, increasing to £120 if paid within 28 days.

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.

Where attendance falls below 90%, the school will use the ATTEND Framework to identify, understand and address the barriers affecting a pupil's attendance. This graduated, child-centred approach enables schools to work in partnership with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies to explore the underlying reasons for absence, which may include safeguarding concerns, special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), health needs, emotional wellbeing, family circumstances or other vulnerabilities. Through regular attendance reviews, early intervention and targeted support, the school will develop an agreed action plan with families, implementing reasonable adjustments and strategies to remove both in-school and out-of-school barriers to attendance. Where appropriate, the school will seek advice and support from the local authority and other relevant services to ensure pupils receive the help they need to attend regularly, feel safe, achieve well and remain connected to education.

8.2 Pupils absent due to mental or physical ill health

Parents should consult the NHS guidance Is my child too ill for school? when deciding whether to keep their child home due to illness. We will share this guidance with parents, and provide support in understanding it, in order to promote school attendance wherever appropriate.

Where a pupil's attendance is affected by mental or physical ill health, the school will work proactively with the pupil, parents/carers and relevant professionals to understand the impact of their needs and support their return to regular attendance. Through the Trust's ATTEND

Framework, the school will adopt a graduated and personalised approach, identifying barriers to attendance and implementing appropriate support and reasonable adjustments. This may include flexible reintegration arrangements, pastoral support, adaptations to the school day, support for SEND needs, and strategies to reduce anxiety and increase engagement with learning. The school will take a multi-agency approach, working collaboratively with health professionals, mental health services, the local authority, Early Help, social care and other relevant agencies to ensure a coordinated response that meets the needs of the child. Regular reviews will be held with families to monitor progress, evaluate the effectiveness of support and ensure that plans remain focused on improving attendance, promoting wellbeing and enabling pupils to access their full educational entitlement.

8.3 Pupils absent due to other barriers to attendance

The school recognises that pupils with SEND, those who are disadvantaged, known to children's social care, young carers, and other vulnerable pupils may face additional barriers to attendance. Using the Trust's ATTEND Framework, we will work with pupils, families and relevant professionals to identify and address these barriers at the earliest opportunity. Support and reasonable adjustments will be timely, appropriate and tailored to individual needs, with a multi-agency approach adopted where necessary to coordinate support, improve engagement and secure sustained attendance.

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

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

Where a pupil returns to school following a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence, the school will work closely with the pupil, parents/carers and relevant professionals to plan a successful reintegration. Using the Trust's ATTEND Framework, we will identify any barriers to attendance, provide appropriate support and reasonable adjustments, and implement a phased return where appropriate. Progress will be reviewed regularly to ensure the pupil feels safe, supported and able to re-engage fully with learning and school life.

8.5 Prolonged absence for children in the EYFS

The school recognises the importance of regular attendance in the Early Years Foundation Stage to support children's learning, development and wellbeing. Where an EYFS child experiences prolonged absence, the school will work proactively with parents/carers to understand the reasons for absence, offer support through the Trust's ATTEND Framework, and take a multi-agency approach where appropriate. Any safeguarding concerns arising from prolonged absence will be followed up in line with the school's safeguarding procedures.
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. Bath and Wells Diocesan Academies Trust - Policies

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.

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 Trust Local Committee.

9.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data weekly 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 severed 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 lead 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 escalation, where necessary following the Trust attendance strategy flow chart

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 the Director of System Leadership. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Trust Board.

11. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- Exclusions and Suspension policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities policy
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions
- EYFS policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration

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

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

Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: In police detention Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		

Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays