



W A T E R T O N
ACADEMY TRUST®



Attendance Policy

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1. The importance of school attendance

Improving attendance is everyone's business. The foundation of securing good attendance is that school is a calm, orderly, safe and supportive environment where all pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn. (Working together to improve school attendance DFE 2022)

Central to raising standards in education and ensuring all pupils can fulfil their potential is an assumption so widely understood that it is insufficiently stated - pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less well and make slower progress in both primary and secondary school. (DFE 2022)

Waterton Academy Trust is committed to providing an excellent education for its pupils. We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our children and expect all staff and volunteers to share in this commitment including promoting full time school attendance. We know that pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Irregular attendance undermines learning and progress and can lead to educational and social disadvantage. Pupils who regularly attend school progress both socially and academically ahead of those who don't attend regularly. Regular attendance enables pupils to adapt better to routines, school work and friendship groups. As a consequence, pupils who attend regularly have a positive experience of learning and are far more likely to be well prepared for the next stage of their education.

2. The law on school attendance and a right to a full-time education

The law entitles every child 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 school or by education otherwise than at school. Where a parent decides to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends regularly (DFE 2022).

Attending regularly 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 in advance by the headteacher for an absence (DFE 2022).

The government expects schools and academies to:

- promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence; □ ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled; and □ act early to address patterns of absence.

The government expects parents to: perform their legal duty by ensuring children of compulsory school age who are registered at a school or academy attend regularly.

The government expects all pupils to be punctual to their lessons.

For the purposes of this policy, a parent means:

- all natural parents, whether they are married or not;
- any person who has parental responsibility for a child or young person; and,
- any person who has care of a child or young person (i.e. lives with and looks after the child).

Legislation

The legal powers and duties that govern school attendance are contained in:

- The Education Act 1996 - sections 434(1)(3)(4) &(6) and 458(4)&(5)
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016

Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act states that if a child of **compulsory school age** fails to attend regularly, the parent is guilty of an offence. Parents, therefore have a legal responsibility to ensure their child's attendance. Failure can lead to legal action being taken by the Local Authority in the Magistrates Court, or the need to issue Penalty Notices.

Since March 2001 there has been a further offence, Section 444 (1A) where a parent knowingly allows their child to be absent from school. This offence can carry a custodial sentence.

The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 also allow the Local Authority to issue Penalty Notices on behalf of schools and academies for unauthorised pupil absence for children of **compulsory school age**.

Compulsory school age

Compulsory school age is set out in section 8 of the Education Act 1996 and The Education (Start of Compulsory School Age) Order 1998. A child reaches compulsory school age on the prescribed day following their fifth birthday (or on their fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day). The prescribed days are 31 December, 31 March and 31 August. The term 'summer born' is used to refer to children born from 1 April to 31 August. These children are not required to start school until a full school year after the point at which they could first have been admitted.

Admission authorities are required to provide for the admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday, but flexibilities exist for children whose parents do not feel they are ready to begin school before they reach compulsory academy age.

Irregular attendance of non-compulsory school aged children in EYFS

Waterton Academy Trust holds firm the belief that good attendance and punctuality will be promoted and expected from the point of entry to the early years foundation stage. We will be proactive in working with families of pupils in the early years if we deem attendance to be irregular and/or punctuality to be poor.

Pupils with medical conditions or special educational needs and disabilities

Some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include pupils with long term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities. Their right to an education is the same as any other pupil and therefore our attendance ambition for these pupils is the same as for any other pupil. That said, in working with parents to improve attendance, we will be mindful of the barriers pupils face and ensure additional support where necessary to help them access their full-time education. This will include:

- having sensitive conversations and developing good support mechanisms for pupils with physical and mental health conditions;
- working with parents to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities;
- establishing strategies to remove any in-school barriers pupils face;
- ensuring data is regularly monitored; and,
- seeking and signpost additional support from partner agencies.

Further information

This policy should be read alongside the school's policies on SEND, safeguarding, supporting pupils with medical conditions in school and suspension and exclusions as well as statutory guidance documents on Keeping Children Safe in Education, Working Together to Improve School Attendance, Parental Responsibility measures, and Children Missing Education.

Flexi-schooling requests

Flexi-schooling requests will NOT be approved by Waterton Academy Trust.

School information

The agreed attendance target is 96.5% for the academic year 2023-2024.

Courtenay Walls is the designated attendance champion for the senior leadership team. Mandy Sherrard is the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) for Waterton Academy Trust (WAT). The terms 'school' and 'academy' are interchangeable.

Abbreviations

EWS – Education Welfare Service

EWO – Education Welfare Officer

CME – Child Missing Education

WAT – Waterton Academy Trust

LA – Local Authority

PN – Penalty Notice

PA – Persistent Absence - when a pupil’s overall absence equates to 10 per cent or more of their possible sessions.

3. Introduction

Every school day counts at Waterton Academy Trust. The Board of Trustees holds firm the belief that children who miss school miss out. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind.

The 1996 Education Act states, ‘If a child is registered at a school, or at a place where alternative provision is provided for them, parents have the legal responsibility for ensuring that their child attends regularly’. We require parents to work with us to ensure regular attendance and good punctuality.

While some absences are inevitable, we are committed to early intervention to address patterns of absence and reduce absence down to the lowest possible levels. This can be achieved through a balance of making our expectations clear, rewarding good attendance and supporting families where absence and punctuality are problematic.

The Trust Education Welfare Officer will work collaboratively with Normanton Common Primary Academy and will sanction families where support systems have failed to make significant improvements.

4. Aims

We aim to achieve full-time attendance and good punctuality by:

- promoting the importance of attendance and its impact on attainment and wellbeing;
- celebrating good attendance periodically throughout the school year;
- applying rewards and sanctions consistently;
- celebrating and rewarding sustained improvement; and
- ensuring attendance information shared regularly with all stakeholders.

We aim to reduce absence (including persistent absence) and lateness by:

- closely monitoring attendance rates that fall below the school’s attendance target;
- closely monitoring lateness;
- following up on unexplained absence;
- ensuring appropriate safeguarding action is taken;
- not authorising term time holidays unless approved as *exceptional circumstances*; and supporting parents to prevent absence and poor punctuality becoming a serious problem.

Where absence and poor punctuality have become a serious problem, the Education Welfare Officer will work with the school to:

- monitor cases of persistent absence (where attendance falls below 90%). Working with families to bring about improvement and establish positive attendance routines;
- monitor cases of persistent lateness. Working with families to bring about improved punctuality;
- identify tailored interventions to meet the needs of the pupils;
- develop and implement persistent absence plans to address barriers to improvement; and

- initiate robust escalation procedures and issue written warnings or legal sanctions should this be required.

We will follow the DFE's Guiding Principles -

Expect

Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance.

Monitor

Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve issues before they become entrenched.

Listen and Understand

When a pattern is spotted, we will discuss with pupils and parents to listen to understand barriers and will agree how partners can work together to resolve these.

Support

We will remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome barriers outside of school.

Formalise

Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, we will work together to explain the consequences clearly so that families are clear on the need to respond.

Enforce

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working and not being engaged with, we will enforce attendance through statutory intervention and prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

5. The School Day

The law states that children should arrive at school on time, every day. Every school day comprises of two sessions, morning and afternoon. Pupils attend school for 380 sessions or 190 days during a school year. It is a legal requirement that the attendance register be taken at the start of each morning and afternoon session.

The expectations for Normanton Common Primary Academy are as follows:

08:50 - The start of the school day. Doors open to pupils and the registration period begins.

09:00 - Registration period closes. All external classroom and cloakroom doors are secured and lessons begin.

Late Arrivals

Late arrivals can impact on learning and progress and can disrupt classroom routines for the class as well as the late pupil.

Arrivals after 9:00 enter the school through the main door and report to the school office. Parents are required to record the time of arrival and reason for lateness. Arrivals after 09:00 but before 09:10 will be recorded as late (L). Parents of unaccompanied late pupils will be contacted via a telephone call to ascertain the reason for lateness. Arrivals after 09:10 will be recorded as unauthorised absence (U). At the point of 5

U coded sessions (within a half term) a warning letter will be issued. This is notification that a Penalty Notice may be issued if persistent lateness after close of registration continues. Persistence lateness is defined as 10 U coded sessions within a 12 week period.

Statutory Safeguarding Response - thirty minutes (09:30) after close of Registration

A pupil's non-attendance at school where no reason has been reported, is a safeguarding matter. All unexplained absences will be followed up via a telephone call between 09:10 and 09:40. If we cannot reach parents in this way a home visit by the Education Welfare Officer, or the school's pastoral team may be necessary. If concerns arise the Headteacher or other designated safeguarding may refer matters to the Education Welfare Officer, make a referral to Social Care Direct, or request the Community Policing Team carry out a 'safe and well' check.

The academy register is a legal document and as such is checked regularly by the Headteacher and Trust Education Welfare Officer. Checks ensure registers are being maintained accurately and assess the reasons and frequency of any absence.

6. Promoting Good Attendance and Punctuality

Pupils at Normanton Common Primary Academy are taught about the importance of good attendance and punctuality through the curriculum and celebrations. The following systems are in place to reward and celebrate good and improving attendance.

- The class in each phase with the highest attendance each week being recognised.
- Classes that meet or exceed the school's attendance target being recognised weekly
- Children with 100% attendance over a term being recognised.
- A special treat in the summer term for the class with the best yearly attendance.
- A special treat in the summer term for all children achieving 100% attendance for the whole school year

Weekly attendance figures are reported to parents and carers via the school twitter (X) page. Information on the class attendance as well as the whole school attendance is shared.

School promotes the National Guidance on the Attendance Campaign through twitter (X) and the school Facebook pages to raise the profile of the Moments Matter Attendance Counts campaign and through the hashtag #NCPAAttendanceMatters



7. Absence

Where a parent decides to have their child registered at school they have a legal duty to ensure their child attends school regularly. This means attending every day that school is open, except in the small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or exceptional circumstances approved in advance by the headteacher. Any absence can be detrimental and should be avoided wherever possible.

First day of absence

When a child is too ill to attend, we require parents to:

- we ask that you inform school before 9:00am stating the reason for the absence and when your child is expected to return (call 01924 890576 option 1 or email NCPAttendance@wateretonacademytrust.org)
- we request that you repeat this each day your child is absent from school

Unexplained Absence Protocol:

The school will follow up all unexplained absences by contacting parents via telephone on the first day of absence between 09:10 and 09:40. Where parents fail to notify school on the first day of absence, school will endeavour to make all reasonable enquiries to ascertain the whereabouts of the pupil and the reason for absence. Where no contact has been established by the parent and the absence remains unexplained, we will make a home visit on day 2 and 4 of any prolonged period.

Where we have a safeguarding concern and contact cannot be established, the Trust EWO or member of the school pastoral team/DSL will make a home visit on the first day of absence.

Where we have a safeguarding concern and contact has not been established following a home visit, we may deem it necessary to make a referral to Social Care Direct or request the community policing team carry out a 'safe and well' check.

After 20 days' absence without contact, we will escalate the pupils' absence as a serious safeguarding concern and will refer this to the Local Authority CME Officer.

Children Missing Education (CME)

Children Missing Education (CME) are children of compulsory school age who are not on a school roll and/or not receiving a suitable alternative education (for example at home). These children may be at a greater risk of harm. The Education Welfare Service is responsible for monitoring and tracking young people who are not in the education system, and for supporting their entry into school.

A child going missing from education, which includes within the school day, is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation. Unauthorised absences will be monitored in accordance with attendance procedures, particularly where children go missing on repeated occasions. All staff are aware of the signs of risk and individual triggers including travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage. All pupils will be placed and removed from admission and attendance registers as required by law. We will collect, where possible, more than one emergency contact number for each pupil.

We will inform the local authority of any child removed from our admission register. We will inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend for a continuous period in line with local Wakefield procedures. <http://www.wakefield.gov.uk/schools-and-children/supporting-families/education-welfare-service/children-missing-education>

Authorised absence

Some absences are unavoidable, usually due to illness, bereavement or exceptional family circumstances, and these can be classed as an Authorised Absence. The decision as to whether an absence is deemed authorised or not lies with the Headteacher.

Illness

Children who are reported by a parent as absent through illness are marked with an 'I' code. If the authenticity of illness is in doubt or the pupil is absent regularly with the same illness, the school can request medical evidence to support the absence.

Medical appointments

We request that dental and medical appointments be made out of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, parents are required to verify the appointment at the school office. Pupils should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment. Pupils who are reported absent because they are attending a medical appointment are marked with an 'M' code. If a pupil returns to school during the sessional time following a medical appointment this will be recorded as present. Evidence of the medical appointment MUST be provided at the school office once the pupil returns to school.

Religious observance

Absence due to religious observance is authorised absence. The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong. Children who are reported as absent due to religious observance are marked with an 'R' code.

Unauthorised absence

Unauthorised absence is that which is not permissible in law, e.g. birthdays, shopping trips, days out, term time holidays, visiting relatives, medical appointments that can't be verified, and absences where no explanation has been given. The school will closely monitor all unauthorised absence with the Trust Education Welfare Officer and act when thresholds are reached.

Term time holidays or extended leave of absence

In line with the government's amendments to the Education Regulations 2006, **the Headteacher will not grant leave of absence for family holidays in term time or extended leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances.** This applies to all children of compulsory school age. In order to enforce this decision, the Board of Trustees has agreed to the issuing of Penalty Notices for parents taking their children out of school during term time for holiday or extended leave.

Parents who intend to take pupils out of school for a term time holiday or extended leave are required to write to the Headteacher requesting a leave of absence for their child stating the purpose, no later than 4 weeks before the holiday or leave is due to commence. A Leave of Absence Request Form is available from the school office or email NCPAttendance@watertonacademytrust.org.

Parents will be notified in writing within two weeks of the Headteacher's decision and the intention to issue a Penalty Notice should the unauthorised term time holiday or extended leave go ahead. Pupils who are

absent from school during term time because of a holiday will be marked with a 'G' code (family holiday not authorised) on the school registration system.

Exceptional Circumstances

Only exceptional circumstances warrant a leave of absence. The headteacher will consider each application individually considering specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. In situations where exceptional circumstances arise, parents are asked to arrange a confidential meeting as soon as is practicable with the headteacher to discuss these.

If a leave of absence is granted, the headteacher will determine the length of time the pupil can be away from school.

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

The Board of Trustees recognises exceptional circumstances as those relating to:
Families in crisis; such as a terminal illness within the immediate family
Pre and post operational leave for armed forces families.

Persistent Absence

Persistent absence is when a pupil misses 10% or more of school for any reason and where attendance falls below 90%. The school works with the trust Education Welfare Officer to ensure all pupil attendance data is monitored regularly and action taken to reduce persistent absence.

Where a pupil's absence is due to a known illness or exceptional circumstances, it will be monitored closely and sensitively in a supportive capacity at Stage 1.

Monitoring pupils who are at risk of persistent absence.

The school will take a proactive and supporting approach to working with parents to ensure pupils who are at risk of being persistent absentees do not become so. The next section of the policy describes the approach we will take to safeguard pupils from persistence absence.

- Letter issued at 92% warning of nearing PA category
- Headteacher and EWO made aware of children whose attendance is raising concern
- Weekly meeting with Trust EWO to discuss children whose attendance causes concern
- A meeting with the Attendance officer and parents to discuss ways to improve attendance

Stage 1 Persistent Absence Review Meeting

Where a pupil's absence falls below 90%, a written warning will be issued and parents will be required to attend a *Stage 1 Persistent Absence Review Meeting* with the Trust Education Welfare Officer and the school Attendance Officer. At this meeting, an absence review will be carried out, the reasons for absence discussed, and strategies for improvement agreed. Parents will receive a letter detailing the outcomes of the meeting. Parents will be required to show improvement within the next four school weeks.

Stage 2 Serious Concern Persistent Absence Review Meeting

At the end of the four-week period, if there is no evidence of improvement, parents will be required to attend a *Stage 2 Serious Concern Persistent Absence Review Meeting* with the Trust Education Welfare Officer and Headteacher or deputising senior leader. This is an escalation to serious concern. A further review of continued absence will be carried out and a formalised Attendance Improvement Plan agreed. Parents will be required to meet the actions of the Attendance Improvement Plan within the next four school weeks.

Stage 3 Statutory intervention

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working and not being engaged with, we will enforce attendance through statutory intervention and prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

Where there is no improvement within the agreed timescale of four weeks following the introduction of the Attendance Improvement Plan, parents will be notified that the matter has been referred to the Local Authority Education Welfare Service. This stage leaves parents at risk of a Penalty Notice and/or legal action. Persistent absence not resulting from a known illness or exceptional circumstances also meets the threshold for a social care referral.

8. Penalty Notice

Penalty Notices can be issued to address unauthorised absence, which may include term time holidays, irregular attendance, and poor punctuality. A Penalty Notice will be issued by the Local Authority at the point which 10 sessions are recorded as unauthorised absence ("O" code, U code or "G" code) within a 12-week period. This may include unexplained absence, a term time holiday and/or poor punctuality. The cost of the penalty notice is £60 per child, per parent, if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice. This rises to £120 per child, per parent if paid between 22 and 28 days. Failure to pay the penalty within 28 days will result in the matter being brought before the Magistrates court and could result in a criminal conviction and court costs.

9. Keeping Track of Attendance

To ensure parents can keep track of attendance, we will issue a termly attendance summary for each pupil. The summary is colour coded to indicate the following:

Great attendance Blue: 98% - 100%	The best chance of success! Getting pupils off to a flying start!
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<p>Good attendance Green: 96.5% to 97.9%</p>	
<p>Cause for Concern Amber: 90% - 96.4%</p>	<p>Less chance of success because of periods of lost learning time. Makes it harder for pupils to progress well.</p>
<p>Serious Concerns Red: below 90%</p>	<p>Significant loss of learning time. Categorised as persistently absent and monitored by the EWO. Could result in a Penalty Notice.</p>

10. Roles and Responsibilities

The tables summarise the attendance responsibilities for parents, schools, academy trusts and governing bodies, and local authorities which are outlined in the *Working together to improve school attendance* guidance DFE (May 2022).

These should be read alongside the statutory guidance documents on parental responsibility measures, children missing education, supporting pupils at school with medical conditions, suspensions and exclusions, alternative provision, and safeguarding.

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
All Pupils			

Ensure their child attends every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies.	Have a clear school attendance policy on the school website which all staff, pupils and parents understand.	Take an active role in attendance improvement, support their school(s) to prioritise attendance, and work together with leaders to set whole school cultures.	Have a strategic approach to improving attendance for the whole area and make it a key focus of all frontline council services.
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Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
Notify the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent (e.g. sickness).	Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance.	Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.	Have a School Attendance Support Team that works with all schools in their area to remove area-wide barriers to attendance.
Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance.	Accurately complete admission and attendance registers.	Ensure school staff receive training on attendance.	Provide each school with a named point of contact in the School Attendance Support Team who can support with queries and advice.
Book any medical appointments around the school day where possible.	Have robust daily processes to follow up absence.		Offer opportunities for all schools in the area to share effective practice.
	Have a dedicated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance.		

Pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent

Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.	Proactively use data to identify pupils at risk of poor attendance.	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	Hold a termly conversation with every school to identify, discuss and signpost or provide access to services for pupils who are persistently or severely absent or at risk of becoming so.
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<p>Proactively engage with the support offered to prevent the need for more formal support.</p>	<p>Work with each identified pupil and their parents to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-school barriers to attendance.</p>		<p>Where there are out of school barriers, provide each identified pupil and their family with access to services they need in the first instance.</p>
	<p>Where out of school barriers are identified, signpost and support access to any required services in the first instance.</p>		<p>If the issue persists, facilitate a voluntary early help assessment where appropriate. Take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the school and other partners. Provide the lead practitioner where all partners agree that a local</p>

<p>Parents are expected to:</p>	<p>Schools are expected to:</p>	<p>Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:</p>	<p>Local authorities are expected to:</p>
	<p>If the issue persists, take an active part in the multiagency effort with the local authority and other partners. Act as the lead practitioner where all partners agree that the school is the best placed lead service. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the school, continue to work with the local authority and partners.</p>		<p>authority service is best placed to lead. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the local authority, continue to work with the school and partners.</p>

Persistently absent pupils

Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.	Continued support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent and:	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	Continued support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent and:
Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.	Where absence becomes persistent, put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers. Where necessary this includes working with partners.		Work jointly with the school to provide formal support options including parenting contracts and education supervision orders.
	Where there is a lack of engagement, hold more formal conversations with parents and be clear about the potential need for legal intervention in future.		Where there are safeguarding concerns, ensure joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners.
	Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, work with the local authority on legal intervention.		Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, enforce attendance through legal intervention (including prosecution as a last resort).

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
	Where there are safeguarding concerns, intensify support through statutory children's social care.		
	Work with other schools in the local area, such as schools previously attended and the schools of any siblings.		
Severely absent pupils			

Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.	Continued support as for persistently absent pupils and:	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	Continued support as for persistently absent pupils and:
Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.	Agree a joint approach for all severely absent pupils with the local authority.		All services should make this group the top priority for support. This may include a whole family plan, consideration for an education, health and care plan, or alternative form of educational provision.
			Be especially conscious of any potential safeguarding issues, ensuring joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners. Where appropriate, this could include conducting a full children's social care assessment and building attendance into children in need and child protection plans.

Support for cohorts of pupils with lower attendance than their peers

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
Not applicable.	Proactively use data to identify cohorts with, or at risk of, low attendance and develop strategies to support them.	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	Track local attendance data to prioritise support and unblock area wide attendance barriers where they impact numerous schools.

	Work with other schools in the local area and the local authority to share effective practice where there are common barriers to attendance.		
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Support for pupils with medical conditions or SEND with poor attendance

Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.	Maintain the same ambition for attendance and work with pupils and parents to maximise attendance.	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	Work closely with relevant services and partners, for example special educational needs, educational psychologists, and mental health services, to ensure joined up support for families.
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Proactively engage with the support offered.	Ensure join up with pastoral support and where required, put in place additional support and adjustments, such as an individual healthcare plan and if applicable, ensuring the provision outlined in the pupil's EHCP is accessed.		Ensure suitable education, such as alternative provision, is arranged for children of compulsory school age who because of health reasons would not otherwise receive a suitable education.
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	Consider additional support from wider services and external partners, making timely referrals.		
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	Regularly monitor data for such groups, including at board and governing body meetings and with local authorities.		
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Support for pupils with a social worker

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
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Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.	Inform the pupil's social worker if there are any unexplained absences and if their name is to be deleted from the register.	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	Regularly monitor the attendance of children with a social worker in their area.
Proactively engage with the support offered.			Put in place personal education plans for looked after children.
			Secure regular attendance of looked-after children as their corporate parent and provide advice and guidance about the importance of attendance to those services supporting pupils previously looked after.

Monitoring

Schools regularly update parents on their child's attendance.	Ofsted considers schools' efforts to improve or sustain high attendance as part of inspections. Multi-academy trusts regularly review attendance data and support schools.	DfE Regions Group considers multi academy trusts' efforts on attendance as part of decision making. Ofsted considers governing bodies' efforts as part of inspections.	DfE Regions Group monitors local authority efforts as part of regular interaction.
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11. Evaluation and Review

The Trust will review this policy annually and update accordingly to include changes in the law and guidance on good practice. The policy will be promoted throughout our academy communities and shared with outside agencies and partners as required.

Document Detail	
Document Name	Attendance Policy
Version	4
Effective from:	November 2023

Chief Officer Signature:	M Bretherton, DCEO
Approved by:	ELT
Approval meeting reference:	November 2023
Next Review Date:	November 2024

Version Control

Version	Date	Author	Change /Reference
1	November 2018	G Bishop	
2	February 2020	D Dickinson	Changes to Governance structures
3	June 2022	L Cavell	Updated in line with DfE Guidance Working Together to Improve School Attendance. Policy to be personalised to each school. Table of roles and responsibilities added.
4	November 2023	M Bretherton	Reformatting and further clarification on timeframes.