Amblecote Primary School

Attendance Policy

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Signed	Headteacher
Signed	Chair of Governors

Attendance Policy

Regular attendance at school is crucial in raising standards of education and in ensuring every child can meet their full potential. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school.

The Head Teachers and Governing Bodies of local schools take very seriously their responsibilities for pupils' attendance. Together they have agreed the following Attendance Policy. The main body of the policy has been formally agreed by the Head Teachers and Governing Bodies of the following schools:

- Amblecote Primary School
- Oldswinford Primary School
- St. James's C of E Primary School
- The Ridge Primary School
- Wollescote Primary School

Introduction:

Attendance is the essential foundation to positive outcomes for all children. Working together to maintain and improve school attendance for all children is everyone's responsibility. At Amblecote Primary School, we expect all children to attend every day the school is open and to be on time.

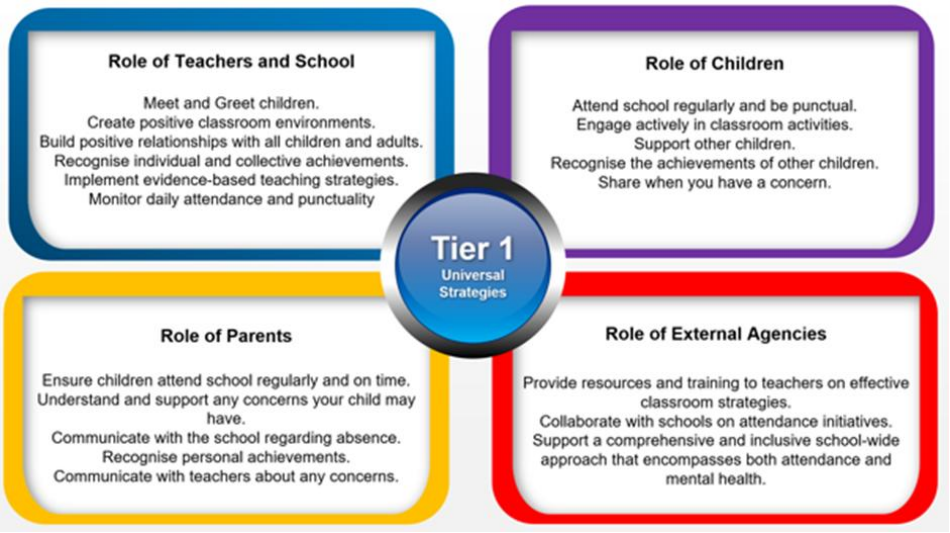
As a school we provide a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environment where children want to be and are keen and ready to learn. This policy sets out what is expected of everyone when working together to maintain and improve school attendance.

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

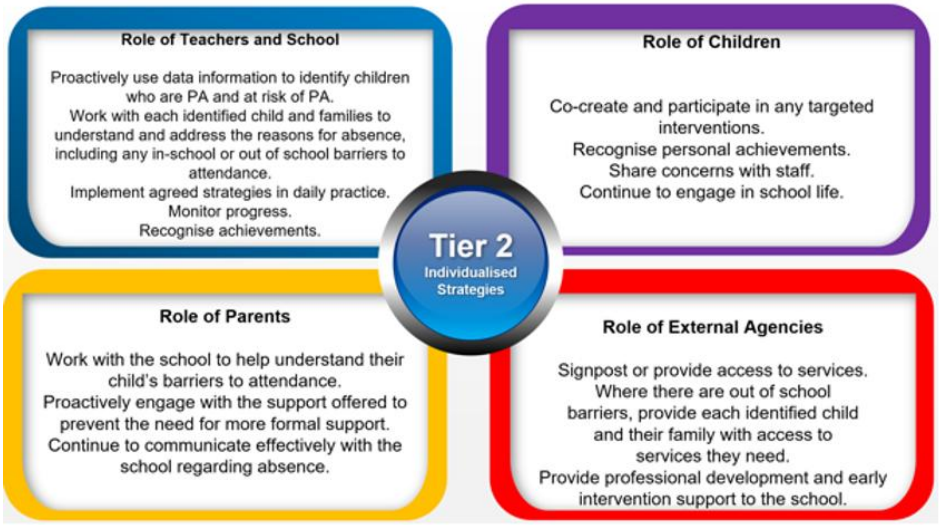
- Promoting good attendance and punctuality
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every child has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school.

School will work with children and their parents to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place. Securing good attendance is not something that can be achieved in isolation by one person acting alone, it must be a concerted effort across all parties: the child; parents; all school staff; the governing body; the local authority; and other partners. In order to achieve this, we implement:

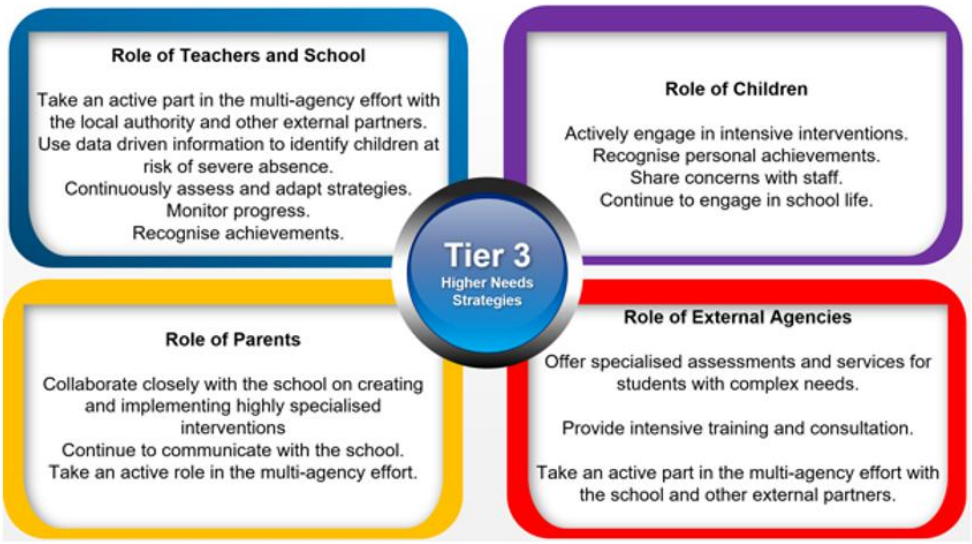
Universal approach:



Individual approaches for families:



Highest tier of support for families with complex attendance requirements:



For the purpose 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).

The importance of high levels of attendance:

School attendance is not merely a requirement but a fundamental pillar of education. It plays a pivotal role in shaping academic success, personal growth, and future prospects, making it an indispensable aspect of any educational system. Regular attendance to school can have a significant impact on:

- *Academic Achievement:* Regular attendance directly correlates with academic success. Children who attend school consistently are more likely to keep up with the curriculum, perform better in exams, and improve their life outcomes.
- *Knowledge Acquisition:* School is where children acquire knowledge and skills that are crucial for their personal and professional growth. Missing days means missing out on valuable learning opportunities.
- *Social Development:* School provides a vital social environment for children and adolescents to interact with peers, develop friendships, and learn essential social skills. Consistent attendance ensures children remain connected to their peer group.
- *Building Routine:* School attendance establishes a structured routine in children's lives, teaching them time management and responsibility, which are valuable life skills.
- *Teacher Interaction:* Regular attendance allows for meaningful teacher-child interactions. Teachers can provide personalised support, address questions, and assess individual progress more effectively when children attend regularly.
- *Preventing Knowledge Gaps:* Frequent absences can lead to significant knowledge gaps, making it challenging for children to catch up with missed lessons, potentially resulting in long-term academic struggles.
- *School Engagement:* Children who attend school regularly are more likely to engage in extracurricular activities, sports, and other enriching experiences that contribute to their overall development.
- *Legal and Parental Responsibility:* Parents or guardians are legally responsible for ensuring their child's regular school attendance. Failing to do so can lead to legal consequences.

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. When parents decide to have their child registered at Amblecote Primary School, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends the 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. Permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution. Where parents are separated both parents have equal responsibility in law for their child's attendance at school.

Regular attendance at school is essential for the children to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances. The children with the highest attainment at the end of key stage two have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment. At KS2, children not meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and maths have a higher overall absence rate than those meeting the expected standard. Any absence and/or lateness affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning and wellbeing.

Research has shown associations between regular absence from school and a number of extra-familial harms, including crime and serious violence. Your child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly.

Failing to attend Amblecote Primary School on a regular basis will be considered as a safeguarding matter.

Promoting high levels of attendance:
Good attendance is a learned behaviour, and for children of primary school age it is important that this is role modelled to them on a daily basis. For all adults surrounding the child it is important that we recognise the importance of developing good patterns of attendance from the moment they start school (this includes children of non-compulsory school age, for example nursery). Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents, children and all members of school staff. We recognise the connection between attendance, attainment, safeguarding and wellbeing.

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Set high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all children;
- Regularly provide information about attendance through our communication channels;
- Report to you on your individual child's attendance and punctuality;
- Recognise good or improving attendance;
- Refer poor attendance to other agencies.

Legislation and Guidance:
This policy is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance, Working Together to Improve School Attendance (July 2026) 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
- Part 3 of the Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments)

- https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/1751/contentsThe Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/757/regulation/2/madeIt also refers to:

- School census guidance
- Keeping children safe in education
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools
- Data Protection Act 2018

Roles and responsibilities:

The Headteacher acts as the school's Senior Attendance Champion and has strategic responsibility for leading attendance improvement across the school. This includes monitoring attendance trends, overseeing attendance interventions, working with families and external agencies, and reporting attendance information to governors. The Senior Attendance Champion will ensure attendance remains a priority across the school and that support is implemented at the earliest opportunity for pupils experiencing attendance barriers

Governors will receive regular attendance reports and provide challenge and support to school leaders regarding attendance trends, persistent absence and the effectiveness of attendance strategies.

Please refer to appendix 2 for further information regarding roles and responsibilities.

Admission and Attendance Registers:

The law requires all schools to have an admission register and an attendance register. All children must be placed on the admission register and have their attendance recorded in the attendance register.

The admission register must contain specific personal details of every child in the school along with the date of admission or re-admission to the school, information regarding parents and carers, and details of the school last attended. A child's name can only lawfully be deleted from the admission register if a reason set out in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended, applies.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every child is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

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:

- 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.

The school day starts at 8:45am when the gates and classrooms are open and ends at 3:15pm

Children must arrive in school by 8.55am.

Unplanned absence

The child's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.55am or as soon as practically possible by contacting the school. This can be done as follows:

- Phone the main school office on 01384 906535 and press option 1 to report your child's absence. This is a 24-hour recorded service and it is important that you clearly state your child's name and class with an explanation for their absence.
- Phone the main school office on 01384 906535 and press option 2 to speak to a member of the office staff.

You must explain your child's absence. Unexplained absences will be treated as a safeguarding concern.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness, or where there are on-going concerns regarding the child's attendance and/or punctuality.

The school may ask the child's parent/carer to provide medical evidence (e.g. doctor's note, prescription, appointment card, or other appropriate documentation). This may be requested when there are ongoing concerns about attendance or punctuality. The frequency of requests will be proportionate and communicated clearly to parents., such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Planned absence

We encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, the child should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Attending a medical or dental appointment could be counted as authorised as long as the child's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment **and** provides evidence of the appointment (e.g. appointment card, electronic messages). We would not expect this to be a frequent occurrence unless there are on-going medical needs that the school has been made aware of.

The child's parent/carer must apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. 10 days' notice is required for leave of absence for a whole day or longer.

Lateness and punctuality

School monitors lateness of children as being punctual for school is crucial. Lateness into school causes disruption to that child's learning and their confidence. It is paramount therefore that all children arrive at school on time.

A child 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

The school opens at 8.45am for all year groups. We expect the children to arrive at school between 8.45am and 8.55am. The school gates close at 8.55am and this indicates that the school day has started. Registers will be marked at this time and your child will receive a late mark if they are not present in the class.

Children arriving after the gates have closed at 8:55am are likely to be late to the classroom and the register will have been marked.

Children arriving 30 minutes after the school start time (9:15am) will be marked as an unauthorised absence.

The register will be closed 30 minutes after school's start time (9:15am.) In accordance with the regulations, if your child arrives after that time they may receive a 'U' mark that shows them to be on site, but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. If unauthorised lateness occurs after registers has closed it could result in a referral to the Local Authority for consideration of a Penalty Notice or enforcement proceedings against you.

If your child is at risk of being persistently late, or is already deemed persistently late, parents will be asked to meet with a member of school staff to initiate a supportive plan to address the issue.

Following up unexplained absence

It is vital that parents/carers inform us of their child's absence from school. Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school may:

- Call the child's parent/carer (and where appropriate social worker) on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the child's emergency contacts, the school may contact other services, for example the police, if there is a genuine concern regarding the wellbeing of the child and the family.
- Call the parent on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer
- In the event we are not able to contact you on the first day of your child's absence from school, we will continue with regular phone calls until contact has been made, school may attempt to visit the main family residence to do a safe and well check.
- 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
- Invite you in to discuss the situation and possibly create an attendance support plan where needed.
- Refer the matter to the School Attendance & Education Support Service, Local Authority and/or Children's Services if attendance remains a concern
- Report to child missing from education.

Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels. Parents can also request to view their child's attendance at any time. The following definitions will be used:

Persistent Absence (PA):

Definition: Persistent Absence is a term used to describe a level of student absence from school that is considered to be a significant cause for concern.

Threshold: In England, a student is considered to be persistently absent when they have an attendance rate of 90% or below. This means they have missed 10% or more of their school sessions. This is equivalent to 19 days absent in a school year.

Risk of Persistent Absence:

Definition: The term "Risk of Persistent Absence" refers to a situation in which a student's attendance is at a level that suggests they are at risk of becoming persistently absent.

Threshold: While there is no specific threshold for "Risk of Persistent Absence," it is typically used to describe students whose attendance is consistently low and becoming a concern, as the school communicates to parents in days, we identify 10 days or more as Risk of PA and we will follow internal school procedures.

Severe Absence (or Severe Persistent Absence):

Definition: The term "Severe Absence" or "Severe Persistent Absence" is used to describe the most serious cases of non-attendance.
Threshold: Particular focus and support will be provided to pupils who are absent from school more than they are present (those missing 50% or more of school). These severely absent pupils may find it more difficult to be in school or face bigger barriers to their regular attendance and as such are likely to need more intensive support across a range of external agency partners.

Absence Definitions

• Arrival at school after the register has closed.

• Not attending school for any reason.

Authorised Absence

• An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave.

• Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time,

for which the school has granted leave.

• Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave

• An absence due to a family emergency

Unauthorised Absence

• Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason.

• Truancy before or during the school day.

• Absences which have never been properly explained.

• Arrival at school after the register has closed.

• Absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.

• Absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed.

• Leaving school for no reason during the day.

Authorised and unauthorised absence

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason such as genuine illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time and evidence of the appointment has been seen, emergencies or other unavoidable causes.

The headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings.

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.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave of absence' request has been granted. This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes but is not limited to:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Children who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Unauthorised leave of absence/holiday or day trips in term time.
- 10+ unauthorised absences in 10 rolling school weeks

Regular attendance concerns are most effectively addressed when the school, parents and child work together. If your child is reluctant to attend school for any reason, please speak to your child's teacher as soon as possible. We will work in partnership with you to understand any concerns and identify appropriate support.

Safe and Well Checks

The school has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils. Where concerns arise regarding a child's attendance, welfare or whereabouts, the school may undertake a Safe and Well Check to ensure that the child is safe and receiving appropriate care.

A Safe and Well Check may be considered when:

· A pupil's attendance is causing significant concern, including persistent or severe absence.

· The school has been unable to establish contact with a parent/carer despite reasonable attempts through all known contact methods.

· The school has been unable to make contact with any named emergency contacts.

· There are safeguarding concerns linked to a child's absence from school.

· A child is currently receiving support from Children's Services, Early Help, a Social Worker or another safeguarding agency, and the school is unable to verify the child's welfare.

· A child fails to attend school without explanation and their absence is considered unusual or out of character.

Where appropriate, members of the school's safeguarding team may carry out a home visit. The purpose of the visit is to establish that the child is safe and well, to understand any barriers to attendance and to offer support

where needed. Staff conducting visits will carry official identification and will follow the school's safeguarding procedures at all times.

If a Safe and Well Check is unsuccessful, or if there are ongoing safeguarding concerns, the school may seek support from external agencies, including the Local Authority Attendance Team, Children's Services and, where appropriate, the Police, to ensure the child's safety and wellbeing.

The school will always seek to work collaboratively with families to improve attendance and support pupils; however, the welfare and safety of the child will remain the school's primary consideration at all times

Part-Time Timetables

Part-time timetables will only be used in exceptional circumstances and where they are judged to be in the best interests of the child. The school maintains the ambition that all pupils should access a full-time education wherever possible.

Part-time timetables will not be treated as a long-term solution and will only be implemented following careful consideration of the individual circumstances of the child.

Any part-time timetable will:

- Be agreed with parents/carers.
- Be time limited.
- Include clear outcomes and review dates.
- Be supported by a plan for reintegration to full-time education.
- Be regularly monitored by the school.

Where appropriate, the school will work with external agencies, health professionals and the Local Authority when implementing and reviewing a part-time timetable.

Attendance will be recorded using the appropriate DfE attendance codes and the arrangement will be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains in the child's best interests.

Approval for term-time absence

Holidays in Term Time:
Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents not to take children on holiday in school time. **Term time holidays will not be authorised by the school.**

Leave of Absence:
It is an expectation of this school that a leave of absence shall not be granted in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Exceptional circumstances are those which are "rare, significant, unavoidable and short". Only the headteacher (or the DHT in the absence of the HT) may authorise such a request and all applications for a leave of absence must be made on a 'Leave of Absence' form provided by the school (10 days notice is required for leave of absence for a whole day or longer). Where a parent takes a leave of absence to which the application was refused or takes a leave of absence where no application was made to the school, the issue of a penalty fine (upon a return from such leave) by the Local Authority may be requested.

There is no automatic entitlement in law to leave of absence and the government made an amendment to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 in September 2013 to reflect this.

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a child during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the child is authorised to be absent for. Even where exceptional circumstances have been agreed, school will not authorise leave of absence for a period of 10 sessions due to the detrimental impact on a child's education.

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

Each request must meet specific 'exceptional circumstances' which would not be expected to be repeated within an academic year, or to occur regularly throughout a child's school life.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and no less than 10 school days before the absence. Requests must be submitted using the school's leave of absence request form, available from the school office. The headteacher will require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (where evidence has been provided)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the child's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller children travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision.

Leave of absence shall not be granted unless:

(a) an application has been made in advance to the school by a parent with whom the pupil normally resides and
(b) the school considers that leave of absence should be granted due to the exceptional circumstances relating to that application.

In light of the changes to the Pupil Registration Regulations, Amblecote Primary School will only grant leave where parents can prove exceptional circumstances. Only in the case of emergency should these requests be made less than 10 days in advance of leave (for request totalling one day or more). Where the decision is made not to authorise leave in term time, school will inform parent/carers in writing. A general guide for parents, is that leave for any holiday, activity or event that could be arranged during the annual 13-week holiday time would not be authorised. School will not provide work for a child who is away from school due to an unauthorised absence.

On any occasion that school refuses a request for leave in term time, should parent/carers proceed with the leave it will be recorded as a (G) (family holiday not agreed or in excess of agreement), on the school register.

Where a child is absent either prior to or immediately after a leave of request, parents will be asked to provide travel documentation to confirm that dates align with original leave of absence request. School may refer to the Local Authority under Regulation 8, 1 (f) of The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 consider removal from the school register.

Where school suspects that a holiday may be taken without a leave of absence form being submitted, in line with safeguarding responsibilities, school may conduct a home visit. If no contact can be made, a letter will be hand delivered to the main residence requiring the parent to make contact with the school. School may repeat this action on daily basis until contact has been made. In some circumstances the police may be called to ensure that the children are safe.

Where requests of leave of absence are made, we would recommend that all parents are made aware of this prior to the leave being requested from the school. The school may communicate the response to the request to all legal parents, irrespective of whether they live together (unless there are safeguarding concerns/court orders in place).

Legal sanctions

Notices 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.

Notices 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.

They 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 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

With the introduction of the new National Framework for Penalty Notices, the following changes will come into force for penalty notices issued for unauthorised absence recorded by schools after 19th August 2024.

National threshold:
There will be a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England of 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period. The 10-school week period can span different terms or school years.

<u>Who may be fined?</u>
Penalty notices may be issued to each parent who allows their child to be absent from school. However, they should usually only be issued to the parent or parents who have allowed the absence (regardless of which parent has applied for a leave of absence).

<u>First offence</u>
The first time a penalty notice is issued, the fine amount will be £160 per parent, per child if paid within 28 days, reduced to £80 if paid within the first 21 days.

<u>Second offence (within 3 years)</u>

The second time a penalty notice is issued, the amount will be £160 per parent, per child, payable within 28 days. The lower rate is not an option.

Third offence and any further offences (within 3 years)
The third time an offence is committed, a penalty notice will not be issued and local authorities will need to consider other available measures to address the absence concerns. Parents found guilty of an offence under s444 (Education Act 1996) can be fined up to £2,500 and will have a criminal conviction.

Children Missing Education (CME):
Children missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. Our procedures for dealing with children that go missing from education are based on the LA and DCSB procedures. We will ensure that we follow these procedures for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future. We will ensure that we report children missing education to the LA CME officer, in line with statutory procedures. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education/children-missing-education-statutory-guidance-for-local-authorities-and-schools

Attendance monitoring
School will regularly analyse attendance and absence data to identify children or cohorts that require support with their attendance and put effective strategies in place as outlined in Appendix 2.

Reducing persistent absence (PA) and those children at risk of PA:

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 19 days or more out of the 190 school days (which equates to 10% or more). Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and wellbeing, and we need parents' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

We monitor all absence regularly and thoroughly adopting a 'sessions missed' approach. PA children and those at risk of PA are tracked and monitored carefully and support provided accordingly. In cases where children are identified as being at high risk of PA, the local authority school attendance and service (SA and ESS) may issue warning notifications. This may lead to legal intervention if improvements are not made.

To address any identified attendance issues effectively, Amblecote will implement a range of strategies such as early intervention, support for vulnerable families, attendance support plans, intervention programmes, and creating a positive and inclusive school environment. Understanding the specific factors affecting attendance for individual children and families is crucial for developing any targeted interventions and support systems to improve attendance outcomes. Regular monitoring of attendance informs our early intervention support including creating informal support plans as necessary.

Links with other policies
This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

Telephone Numbers:
There are times when we need to contact parents about lots of things, including absence. We need to have your contact numbers at all times. So, help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up to date number – if we do not then something important may be missed. **You have a duty to notify school as soon as possible of any changes to contact details.**

School is expected to hold at least two contact numbers for every child.

Deletion from Roll:

For any child leaving, other than at the end of year 6, parents are required to complete a Transfer form when moving to another school within the local authority. They should contact Dudley for the correct form. If they are transferring out of the borough, they contact the new authority that they are transferring to for the correct form.

Addressing Attendance Concerns:

School will always show a commitment to building strong relationships with families and it is these relationships that can be the foundation of good attendance. School will keep you informed of your child's attendance and will communicate with you if your child's attendance is a concern. Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. The Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, Attendance Officer and member of staff with responsibility for pastoral support are available to support our families in ensuring high levels of attendance for all children.

However, if your child's attendance does not improve and unauthorised absences persist school may refer the case to Dudley Council, Education Support Service (ESS). They are a statutory service who issue sanctions such as Penalty Notices or refer the case for prosecution in the Magistrates Court, based on the evidence provided by the school.

The school recognises that some children may face additional barriers to regular attendance, including young carers, pupils with SEND, long-term medical conditions, mental health needs, physical health needs, and other vulnerabilities. While maintaining high expectations for attendance, we are committed to working closely with pupils, families, and relevant professionals to identify and address barriers to attendance. Support will be individualised and may include reasonable adjustments, referrals to external agencies such as the school nurse, and coordinated multi-agency working where appropriate. Where a pupil is supported by a Youth Offending Team worker or resides in another local authority area, the school will work collaboratively with all relevant agencies to ensure attendance and safeguarding arrangements are effectively coordinated and responsive to the child's needs.

Appendix 1: attendance codes

Register Code	Description
/	Present AM
\	Present PM
L	Late (before registers closed) marked as present
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
C	Authorised absence as pupil is absent due to other authorised circumstances
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
E	Authorised absence as pupil is excluded, with no alternative provision made
I	Illness (NOT appointments)
M	Authorised absence due to medical/dental appointments
R	Authorised absence due to religious observance
S	Authorised absence due to study leave
T	Authorised absence due to traveller absence
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution

B	Approved education activity as pupil being educated off site (NOT dual registration)
P	Approved educational activity as pupil is attending an approved sporting activity
V	Approved education activity as pupil is away on an educational visit or trip
W	Approved educational activity as pupil is attending work experience
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
G	Unauthorised absence as pupil is on a family holiday, NOT agreed, or is taking days in excess of an agreed family holiday
N	Unauthorised absence as pupil missed sessions for a reason that has not yet been provided
O	Unauthorised absence as pupil missed sessions for an unauthorised absence not covered by any other code/description
U	Unauthorised absence as pupil arrived after registers closed
D	Dual registered (at another establishment - NOT counted in possible attendance
X	Not required to be in school - for non-compulsory school age children
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances - not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll - not counted in possible attendances
#	Planned whole or partial school closure - NOT counted in possible attendances
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

Appendix 2

All pupils

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

Pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance. Proactively engage with the support offered to prevent the need for more formal support.	Proactively use data to identify pupils* at risk of persistent absence. Work with each identified pupil and their parents to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-school barriers to attendance. Where out of school barriers are identified, signpost and support access to any required services in the first instance and act as lead practitioner if attendance is the only issue and/or the local threshold for formal early help is not met. If the issue persists, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the local authority and other partners. If a case meets the local threshold for formal early help/family support, this includes conducting the early help assessment and acting 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.	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	Hold a regular 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. Where there are out of school barriers, provide each identified pupil and their family with access to services they need in the first instance. If the issue persists, and there are multiple needs consider whether the threshold for early help is met and facilitate access where it is. Regardless, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the school and other partners. Provide the lead practitioner in cases where threshold is met and all partners agree that a local 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.

*The school will identify and support young carers whose caring responsibilities may affect attendance and will work with families and partner agencies to reduce barriers to education.

Persistently absent pupils

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance. Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.	Continue support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent and: Where absence becomes persistent, put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers. Where necessary this includes working with partners. 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 support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, work with the local authority on legal intervention. Where there are safeguarding concerns, intensify support through a referral to statutory children's social care. Work with other schools in the local area, such as schools previously attended and the schools of any siblings.	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	Continue support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent and: Work jointly with the school to provide formal support options including attendance contracts and education supervision orders. 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, enforce attendance through legal intervention (including prosecution as a last resort).

Severely absent pupils

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance. Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.	Continue support as for persistently absent pupils and: Agree a joint approach for all severely absent pupils with the local authority.	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	Continue support as for persistently absent pupils and: 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. Work with other schools in the local area and the local authority to share effective practice where there are common barriers to attendance.	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.

Support for pupils with medical conditions or SEND with poor attendance

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance. Proactively engage with the support offered.	Maintain the same ambition for attendance and work with pupils and parents to maximise attendance. 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. Consider additional support from wider services and external partners, making timely referrals. Regularly monitor data for such groups, including at board and governing body meetings and with local authorities.	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. 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.

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:
Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance. Proactively engage with the support offered.	Know who the pupils who have, or who have had, a social worker are. Understand how the welfare, safeguarding, and child protection issues that they are experiencing, or have experienced, can have an impact on attendance – whilst maintaining a culture of high aspiration for the cohort. Provide additional academic support and make reasonable adjustments to help them, recognising that even when statutory social care intervention has ended, there can be a lasting impact on children's educational outcomes. Work in partnership with the local authority at a strategic and individual level, sharing data on attendance including, at an individual level, informing 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.	Ensure that all Children's Social Care practitioners, understand the importance of good attendance for pupil's educational progress, for their welfare and their wider development – and understand their role in improving it. Through the work of Virtual School Heads, they should: • Undertake systemic monitoring and data sharing of the attendance of children with a social worker in their area: developing and implementing targeted cohort level interventions to improve attendance. • Provide advice, challenge and training to schools on how to promote and secure good attendance for children with a social worker. • Develop whole system approaches, with social care, to support the attendance of children in need.

Looked after and previously looked after children

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
Work with the school and local authority to help them understand the child's barriers to attendance – including the development of Personal Education Plans. Proactively engage with the support offered.	Have high expectations for the cohort – with expert support and leadership provided by the designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after pupils. Work in partnership with the local authority Virtual School Head to develop and deliver high quality Personal Education Plans for looked after children that support good attendance. Work directly with parents to develop good home-school links that support good attendance. For previously looked-after pupils this could include discussion on use of the Pupil Premium Plus funding managed by the school.	Designate a member of staff to have responsibility for the promotion of the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after pupils. Monitor and review attendance of the cohort and consider how school policies, including behaviour policies, are sensitive to their needs and support good attendance.	Promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children – doing everything possible to minimise disruption to education when a pupil enters care. (LA that looks after the child:) Appoint an expert Virtual School Head (VSH) – will: • Monitor, report on, and evaluate the education outcomes of looked after children, including their attendance, as if they attended a single school- whenever they live or are educated. • Ensure schools know when they have a pupil looked after by the authority on their role and that information is shared with the school on issues that may impact on their attendance. • Ensure that all looked-after pupils have high quality, up to date, effective Personal Education Plans developed in partnership with schools, social workers and carers – including, where necessary, clear interventions and use of pupil premium plus funding to support good attendance. • Provide expert advice and information on the education of previously looked-after pupils to schools and parents – including their attendance.

Monitoring

Parents:	Schools:	Academy trustees and governing bodies:	Local authorities:
Schools regularly update parents on their child's attendance. (If parents feel the school and or local authority have not delivered what they are expected to they should discuss the case with the school and/or local authority's attendance support team.)	The school's Senior Attendance Champion will ensure all school based staff complete their attendance responsibilities in line with the school's policies and procedures. The governing board or academy trust will hold the headteacher or executive leadership to account for their delegated responsibilities and for compliance with regulatory and statutory requirements. They will review progress and provide challenge when required. The board will help school leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most and ensure that school staff receive adequate training on attendance. Ofsted will expect schools to do all they reasonably can to achieve the highest possible attendance as part of the behaviour and attitudes judgement. This includes, where attendance is not consistently at or above what could reasonably be expected, that schools have a strong understanding of the causes of absence (particularly for persistent and severe absence) and a clear strategy in place that takes account of those causes to improve attendance for all pupils. Ultimately, in cases where a school has not met expectations or statutory duties the Secretary of State can consider a complaint.	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. Ofsted may consider the local area partnership's approach to improving attendance of children and young people with SEND as part of the SEND Area Inspection, and the local authority's approach to improving attendance for children with a social worker through inspecting local authority children's services. Ultimately, in cases where a local authority has not met expectations or statutory duties the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman or the Secretary of State can consider a complaint.