

# Wrockwardine Wood CE Junior School

## Attendance Policy

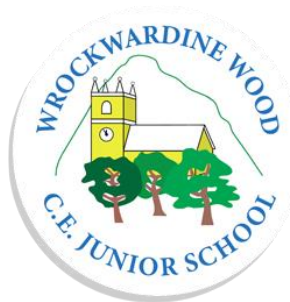


# 2024- 2025

**Date implemented: September 2024**

**Compiled by: T Cartwright**

**Date to be reviewed: September 2025**



## “Love, Laugh Learn”

We will ignite the ability in all to ***‘Love, Laugh and Learn’***, recognising the extraordinary and wondrous in everything and in everyone. Our rich, varied and creative curriculum, together with our Christian values, will empower all to flourish following Jesus’s promise ***‘I have come to give life and life in all its fullness.’*** (John 10:10)

### Our School Christian Values



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## Introduction

- At Wrockwardine Wood CE Junior School we expect children to attend school every day, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so.
- Excellent attendance and punctuality is important if children are to benefit from everything school has to offer. Wrockwardine Wood CE Junior School believes that regular attendance at school is vital for children to be successful.
- School education lays the vital foundations of a child's life and research clearly demonstrates the link between regular attendance, punctuality and educational progress and attainment.
- Parents/carers and the school staff are partners in making this a success and this partnership is very important to the school. As a school, we will encourage parents and carers to ensure that your child achieves maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent this are identified and acted on promptly.
- As parents/carers, it is your responsibility to ensure your child/children arrive at school and return home safely.

Meet our attendance team:

Mrs Cartwright	Miss Ashley	Mrs Smart
Headteacher	Pastoral manager	Nominated Attendance Person



## 1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#), through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance through high expectations and daily routines

### Our daily attendance routines:

- Meet & greet
  - Register open and close
  - Register check & follow up on unexplained absence
  - First day calling & home visits
  - Engaging external agencies
- 
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
  - Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled.
  - Acting early to address patterns of absence
  - Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

## **2. Legislation and guidance**

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) 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 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

## **3. Roles and responsibilities**

### **3.1 The governing board**

The governing board is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
  - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
  - Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources

- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge.
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils needs
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
  - The importance of good attendance
  - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
  - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
  - The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

The link governor responsible for attendance is Teri Bicker and can be contacted via the school office 01952387880.

### **3.2 Our attendance team:**

#### **The headteacher**

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Linking to safeguarding responsibilities as designated safeguarding lead
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Referring to the Local Authority to consider a penalty notice, where necessary
- Working with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers.
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs.
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to staff, governors, pupils and parents through all available channels

### **3.3 The designated Senior attendance champion responsible for attendance**

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- › Leading attendance across the school
- › Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- › Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- › Having an oversight of data analysis
- › Linking to safeguarding responsibilities as designated safeguarding lead
- › Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- › Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- › Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated leader responsible for attendance is Tracey Cartwright, can be contacted via [tracey.cartwright@taw.org.uk](mailto:tracey.cartwright@taw.org.uk) 01952 387880

### **3.4 The attendance officer/pastoral lead**

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- › Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 8)
- › Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- › Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- › Working with local authority to tackle persistent absence
- › Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- › Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- › Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- › Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- › Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- › Linking to safeguarding responsibilities as deputy designated safeguarding lead

The attendance officer is Claire Ashley and can be contacted via 01952 388861 or [Claire.ashley2@taw.org.uk](mailto:Claire.ashley2@taw.org.uk)

### **3.5 Class teachers**

Class teachers are responsible for:

- › Recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office by 9:15am on each morning and by 1:30pm on each afternoon.
- › Alerting a member of the attendance team to any attendance concerns
- › Working with the attendance team to encourage regular attendance
- › Praising improved and consistently good attendance
- › Contact the family of pupils after 3 days of absence to “keep them in mind”

### **3.6 School admin/office staff and nominated attendance person**

School admin/office staff will:

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

- Recording and maintaining records on our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. (See section 4, Recording attendance)
- Transfer calls from parents to the pastoral lead in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance
- Following up unexplained absences and alerting a member of the designated safeguarding team. (See 4.5)
- Identifying and referring pupils to the Local Authority who are missing out on education. (See 4.6 Identifying pupils who are missing out on education.)
- Liaising with the headteacher and governors (when required) regarding pupil absence who may reach the threshold for referral into the Local Authority for a penalty notice.

The attendance administrator is Karen Smart and can be contacted via karen.smart2@taw.org.uk / 01952387880

### **3.7 Parents/carers**

Where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult the school and/or local authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them)

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time. School gates open at 8:45, children can go straight into class and registration is taken at 8:55am.
- Call the school office to report their child's absence before time, e.g. 8:55am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence and advise when they are expected to return. Contact can be made by telephone 01952 387880 or email A3129@telford.gov.uk
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Keep to any attendance contracts/action plans that they make with the school and/or local authority
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting Claire Ashley Claire.ashley2@taw.org.uk

### **3.8 Pupils**

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time School gates open at 8:45am, register is taken at 8:55am.

## **4. Recording attendance**

### **4.1 Attendance register**

We will keep an attendance register and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending 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 unauthorised
- 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 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8:55am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8:55am and will be kept open until 9:25am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1:15am.

#### **4.2 Unplanned absence**

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8:55am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office staff (see also section 7). The parent/carer must notify the school each day of their child's absence.

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

Where the absence is longer than 5 days, if there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, or if we have concerns about a pupil's attendance and have issued a SAL2 notice the school may ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance, until medical evidence can be provided.

#### **4.3 Planned absence**

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

Details of the appointment must be given to the school office in person or via email A3129@telford.gov.uk at least 5 days in advance or as soon as possible.

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

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

#### **4.4 Lateness and punctuality**

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed at 9:25 will be marked as late, using the appropriate code (L)
  - After the register has closed at 9:25am will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code U. A U code is an unauthorised absence.



- Formal contact will be made with parents/carers to identify any concerns with punctuality.

Punctuality will be tracked by the attendance officer and attendance team and the school will advise parents/carers if their child's punctuality falls below 90%. If the punctuality does not improve then more formal letters will be issued, and support meeting will be offered if the attendance deteriorates further the school will involve the Attendance Support Team at the local authority.

#### **4.5 Following up unexplained absence**

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

- Contact the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, we may need to consult safeguarding partners or contact the police.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not.
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving additional agencies.
- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the pupil's youth offending team officer
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals.
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with: we may issue a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention (see section 5.2 below), as appropriate
- If no contact has been made with the parents/carers of an absent pupil on the first morning of absence, we will:

follow 'first day contact' procedures and contact the parent by telephone/text message.

##### **Day One.**

1. Ring / send a text to priority 1 number. Leave a message if no answer and record that you have done so (These calls to be completed by 10am)
2. At 12 noon, if we still have had no contact from parents the office will call priority number 1 and priority number 2 numbers, if there is still no contact the office will inform designated safeguarding lead or a member or senior leadership team and a decision will be made to do a safe and well check this may be using technology such as Microsoft Teams or in person at the child's home.
3. One or more members of staff may complete the safe and well check. Staff must not enter the home and will ask to see the child/ren. Staff who are doing the safe and well to inform a point of contact at school which family they are visiting.

If there is nobody home, staff will leave a safe and well letter.

##### **Day Two**

*If no contact again from parents, repeat the process.*

##### **Day Three**

*If no contact again from parents, repeat the process and then:*

- One or more members of staff will complete the safe and well this may be using technology such as Microsoft Teams or in person at the child's home. Staff must not enter the home and will ask to see the child/ren. Staff who are doing the safe and well to inform a point of contact at school which

family they are visiting. Safe and well checks may also be completed by other agencies EG. Strengthening Families, Social Services, Police

If there is nobody home staff will leave a safe and well letter and may follow one or more of the below processes:

- consider sending a School Attendance Letter (SAL), if an explanation has still not been received after three days of unexplained absence
- consider if there is evidence of a term time holiday taken without notification to the school
- refer to the school's 'Nominated Attendance Person' (NAP) or Attendance Support Team (AST0 at the Local Authority , to follow up absence if no response is received after 5 days of absence and refer to the family social worker or to 'Family Connect' if there are additional concerns regarding the family and no contact can be made with the parent
- where there are safeguarding or similar concerns regarding the pupil/family additional agencies should be contacted immediately if the school is unable to make contact with the family. (e.g social care, strengthening families)
- invite the parents into school for an 'Attendance Concern Meeting' (ACM) after a maximum of 10 days absence unless other action is planned. This meeting should include a senior member of staff, Pastoral Manager, parent, pupil and the NAP. The aim of this meeting will be to identify and resolve the difficulties which are preventing the pupil from attending school. The parents/carers will be made aware of the legal requirements regarding school attendance,
- pastoral lead will support the pupil's re-integration where a pupil is returning to school after an absence of longer than two weeks. In the event of a pupil returning after a long-term absence then a 'Reintegration Plan' can be implemented. The plan should include all members of the school staff and will be designed to be as supportive of the pupils needs as possible
- provide Early Help advice and support to the family, undertaking an Early Help Assessment if appropriate and make a referral to Strengthening Families if it is felt the family would benefit from additional support. In order to ensure the success of this policy every member of the school staff will make attendance a priority and convey to the pupils the importance of their education.

#### **4.6 Identifying Pupils who are absent from education and missing education.**

WWJS and the LA recognises that whilst some children are out of school for a few days, others can be persistently absent, go missing with their families and there are some that do not have educational provision in place at all. All of these are forms of children who are absent from education. At WWJS we regard any child who meets the threshold of being absent from education, for more than 10 days or (less if deemed necessary) as a safeguarding concern as being absent from or missing education can increase the risk of a child experiencing harm. Following our child protection policy, we may consult with the local authority children's services when school absence indicates safeguarding concerns.

The Education Act 1996 states that all children, regardless of their circumstances are entitled to an efficient, full-time education which is suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special needs they may have. We use the following classifications locally to aid monitoring and tracking:

1. Children Missing Education (CME) this is a national definition and covers children who are of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving education.
2. Children Who Are Absent From Education (CWAFE). This is referenced in Keeping Children Safe in Education and includes all pupils who are on a school roll, but who are missing education for a number of reasons, including but not limited to, persistent absence or severe absence, children who receive a modified timetable and children who have not attended school for a period of time.

In circumstances where a child meets the threshold for being absent from education or missing in education we will refer to:

Telford & Wrekin Policy & Procedure for: Children Who are Absent From Education

This guidance encompasses:

- Children Missing Education (CME)
- Children out of School (COOS)
- Children Not Receiving Education (CNRE)

Children may be missing education for a number of reasons which may include.

- Being absent from school for 10 or more school days consecutively.
- Not having a school place yet allocated to them.
- School refusal/avoidance
- Being Electively Home Educated (EHE) but not receiving a suitable education at home.
- Having disappeared from education and their whereabouts are unknown.

#### 4.7 Electively Home Educated (EHE)

Where a parent/carer has expressed their intention to remove a child from school with a view to educating at home we will provide information to the local authority and encourage parent/carers to attend an Elective Home Education Multi Agency Meeting (MAM) information sharing meeting. Where a child has an Education, Health and Care plan local authorities will need to review the plan, working closely with parents and carers to ensure EHE can be provided with the emphasis on ensuring the best interests of the child.

#### 4.8 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels via termly parents evening or reports. Parents also have access to their child's live attendance through the school's data reporting system DC-Pro where they can also see their child's end of year report.

Additionally, the school will report excellent attendance, improved attendance or concerning attendance through letters.

### 5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

#### 5.1 Approval for term-time absence

1. Parents wishing the school to consider granting leave in term time should read these notes carefully and then complete and send the request form found on our website [Request for leave | Wrockwardine Wood Church of England Junior School \(wrockwardinewoodjunior.org.uk\)](http://Request for leave | Wrockwardine Wood Church of England Junior School (wrockwardinewoodjunior.org.uk)) to the Headteacher. This form should be sent to the school in time for the request to be considered **before** the desired period of absence. (Parents are strongly advised not to finalise any planned absence before receiving the school's decision regarding their request). In any event the request form must be received by the school at least four weeks before the leave in term time requested dates to allow sufficient time for appropriate consideration.
2. The granting of leave of absence in term time is, by law, a matter for consideration and decision by the Headteacher. There is no automatic right to any leave in term time. The Department for Education (DfE) Guidance '*Working Together to Improve School Attendance (Feb 2024)*' states that: *Generally, the DfE does not consider the need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.* Telford & Wrekin Local Authority (LA) policy supports that view. Where such requests are made, the Headteacher should decide if there are **exceptional circumstances** before the leave is granted, if the leave is granted the Headteacher has the discretion to agree the duration of that leave.
3. Each case will be considered individually and on its own merits. Parents therefore, need to consider very carefully before making any request for leave in term time, the demands of the National and wider School Curriculum especially at the Key Stage assessment stage. In considering a request, the school may also take account of: -

- the **exceptional** circumstances stated that have given rise to the request;
  - whether the child is compulsory school age;
  - the stage of the child's education and progress and the effects of the requested absence on both elements;
  - whether the same trip could be taken during the 13 weeks school is closed to pupils?
  - students/pupils on examination courses or due to take SATS will **not** normally be granted leave of absence.
4. Where parents have children in more than one school, a separate request must be made to each school. The Headteacher of each school will make their own decision based on the factors relating to the child at their school. However, there is an expectation that all schools involved will communicate and all agree a decision whether to authorise or not. It is hoped that if this situation arises parents will be persuaded to accept the reasons for refusal given and, thereby, withdraw any leave requests.
  5. Where requests for a grant of leave in term time are received from only one parent the response letter – agreeing or refusing – will be either addressed to both/all parents where they live at the same address or to each where they do not. This is to ensure, particularly in the case of a refusal, that both or all parents are fully aware of the consequences of ignoring a refusal as the refusal letter clearly states that each parent may receive a penalty notice.
  6. Should the school decide to grant the leave. but the child **does not return to school at the time s/he was expected to** (i.e. following the expiry of the granted leave in term time period) and, no information is available to the school to explain/justify the continuing absence or, make known the whereabouts of the child, **his/her place at the school could be lost.**
  7. Should the School decide **not to grant the leave** and parents still take their child out of school the absence will be recorded as **unauthorised** which may be subject to a Penalty Notice fine of £160 per parent per child. This Penalty Notice fine will be reduced to £80 if paid within the first 21 days. Failure to pay the £160 fine within the period 22 to 28 days may lead to Court proceedings, which could ultimately result in a fine of up to £2500 and/or imprisonment of up to three months.

Valid reasons for authorised absence include:

- > Illness (including mental illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- > Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents/carers belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents'/carers' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart. We set our dates in accordance with guidance from Telford & Wrekin Council.
- > Traveller pupils 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.

Unavoidable family circumstances for which time off is agreed by school ie bereavement, funerals, family crisis and other unforeseen situations as deemed appropriate in discussions between families and school staff.

## 5.2 Legal sanctions

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

From August 19<sup>th</sup> 2024 the Government have introduced a new 'national framework for Penalty Notices'. (in Telford & Wrekin the changes apply from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024).

There are significant changes that parents need to be aware of:

- If your child has 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10 school week rolling period, you may be issued with a Penalty Notice. These 10 sessions may include any unauthorised absence, including leave in term time and do not have to be consecutive.
- Penalty Notices are increasing to £160 from September 2024. This can be reduced to £80 but only for the first Penalty Notice issued, if paid within 21 days – this reduction does not apply to any subsequent Penalty Notice.
- Any 2<sup>nd</sup> Penalty Notice, to the same parent for the same child, issued within three years of the date of the first Penalty Notice will be charged at a flat rate of £160
- A third Penalty Notice will not be issued within a three-year rolling period, to the same parent for the unauthorised absence of the same child, - alternative action or legal measures will be utilised for subsequent offences
- If in an individual case the local authority believes a Penalty Notice would be appropriate, they retain the discretion to issue one before the threshold is met. For example, when a parent purposefully tries to avoid a Penalty Notice by taking their child out of school when there is only four pupil days in school and the fifth day is for example a PD day or bank holiday attached to that week..
- In some circumstances a 'Notice to Improve' may be issued – However, a Notice to Improve will only be used in cases where support is appropriate. They will not be issued in cases of unauthorised leave in term time for holidays, where information for parents is included on schools website or a simple warning by the school that a Penalty Notice could be issued if unauthorised leave in term time is taken will suffice.

'Parents should always apply to the Headteacher for any request for leave in term time by completing a request form available from school. (DfE guidance states schools should not authorise leave retrospectively so any leave in term time taken without a request being submitted will be unauthorised absence)'

In developing and publishing the new national framework, the Government has renewed appeals to parents not to take their children out of school during term time. The Governors and Headteacher of this school support this and students will only be given permission to take leave in term time if there are exceptional circumstances. The DfE Guidance Working Together to Improve School Attendance (Feb 2024) states that: Generally, the DfE does not consider the need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance. (Paragraph 38.)

Each application for leave in term time will be considered and if it is agreed and authorised the Headteacher will determine the duration of any leave. However, if the application is not agreed and the absence occurs the dates will be unauthorised. Parents will be notified of any decision in writing. This notification may be hand delivered directly to the parent or posted to the parents' home address.

As a school we are asked to inform you that in line with Telford and Wrekin Council Policy, if your child is absent for 10 school sessions within a 10-week rolling period and that absence is unauthorised, you may be subject to a Penalty Notice fine, criteria is as detailed above.

In addition to penalty notices we will also consider referring a pupil with poor attendance to the Attendance Support Team (AST) in the Local Authority prosecutions under section 444(1) and (1A) of the Education Act 1996. This may lead to an interview under caution (IUC) and Legal intervention. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

## 6. Strategies for promoting attendance

Promote a culture of high attendance expectations through demonstrating the benefits of good attendance throughout school life.

- Individual classes attendance will be displayed
- Weekly assemblies will highlight good attendance for individual classes
- Whole class attendance rewards will be issued using schools reward systems.
- Attendance is rewarded half termly by formal recognition of progress and in attendance assemblies where certificates are issued for those children with the highest attendance.
- Use the weekly newsletter to communicate attendance with the whole school community.
- Teacher phone calls home on day three of absence to “keep the pupils in mind.”
- Pupil voice through our attendance ambassadors
- Use of our Wraparound Care (opens at 7:30am bookable via our website)

The school will advise parents as soon as their child’s attendance drops below 94% See Appendix 2: Monitoring and Support. If the attendance does not improve then more formal letters will be issued, a support package and action plan will be put in place and if the attendance deteriorates further the school will involve the Attendance Support Team at the local authority.

Each child’s attendance can be summarised as:

Grading	Attendance %	Rating	Action
A	95 – 100%	Good – Well done	This will help all aspects of your child’s progress and life in school. This will give them a good start in life and supports a positive work ethic. Your child’s attendance is at, or above, the school target.
B	90 – 95%	Below expected	Strive to build on this. Your child’s attendance is below expected and will be monitored. A letter may be sent to you to inform you of your child’s attendance.
C	85 – 90%	Poor	Absence is now significantly affecting your child’s attainment and progress. This is a cause for concern and will be closely monitored. You will receive a letter from the Nominated Attendance Person in School and intervention will be commenced.
D	80 – 85%	Unacceptable	Absence is seriously affecting attainment and progress and disrupting your child’s development. Your child’s attendance is a major concern. It is probable that legal intervention will have already commenced.

E	< 80% attendance	Grave concern	Legal proceedings will by now have progressed rapidly.
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The school and the Telford and Wrekin Attendance Support Team work closely together and regularly monitor both attendance and punctuality. Non-attendance is an important issue that is treated seriously. However, each case is different, and the school acknowledges that no one standard response will be appropriate in every case. Consideration is given to all factors affecting attendance before deciding what intervention strategies to apply.

## **7. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school**

We recognise that supporting pupils returning to school after a prolonged period of absence will need an individual tailored approach where school works together with the family and external agencies ( if appropriate) to meet individual needs.

### **7.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance we may:**

- Meet with the pupil and a family member before they start back to discuss their concerns and agree a plan for their first day/week back. This can help alleviate anxiety.
- Arrange peer support and inform teachers of any special requirements.
- Request support from external agencies.
- Make a pastoral support action plan.
- Inform all staff of any barriers to attendance that is appropriate to be shared.
- Discuss a plan for pre teaching/catching up.
- Monitor for changes in quality of work and overall behaviour. Consult with parent / carer and student early on if there are any concerns.
- Have a specific point of contact for parents and pupils.
- Consider the use of a modified timetable.

### **7.2 Pupils absent due to mental or physical ill health or SEND we may:**

- Meet with the pupil and a family member before they start back to discuss their concerns and agree a plan for their first day/week back. This can help alleviate anxiety
- Use the meeting to update or complete an Individual Healthcare Plan.
- Where a pupil has an education health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that related to the pupil's needs, the school will inform the local authority
- Request support from medical or hospital school staff. Where possible liaise with the school nurse to ensure all relevant medical information is updated.
- Inform staff who need to know of the effects of the medical condition on the student, and who should be contacted if the student falls ill while at school or on a school outing.
- Arrange peer support and inform teachers of any special requirements.
- Request support from external agencies.
- Inform all staff of any barriers to attendance that is appropriate to be shared.

- Discuss a plan for pre teaching/catching up.
- Monitor for changes in quality of work and overall behaviour. Consult with parent / carer and student early on if there are any concerns.
- Have a specific point of contact for parents and pupils.
- Consider the use of a modified timetable.

### **7.3 Pupils returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence we may:**

- Meet with the pupil and a family member before they start back to discuss their concerns and agree a plan for their first day/week back.
- Arrange peer support and inform teachers of any special requirements.
- Discuss a plan for pre teaching/catching up.
- Monitor for changes in quality of work and overall behaviour. Consult with parent / carer and student early on if there are any concerns.
- Have a specific point of contact for parents and pupils.

## **8. Attendance monitoring**

The school admin/office and the attendance officer/pastoral lead monitors pupil absence daily, weekly and creates alerts for pupils who are monitored for safeguarding or attendance purposes.

Parents are expected to contact the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 3.2)

If after contacting parents a pupil's absence continues to rise, we will consider creating an attendance action plan and involving the Attendance Support Team at the local authority.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

The severely absence threshold is 50%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 50%, the pupil will be classified as a severely absentee.

Pupil-level absence data is collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. We compare our attendance data to the national average and share this with governors.

### **8.1 Monitoring attendance**

- The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil, year group, vulnerable groups and cohort level.
- Specific pupil information will be shared with the DfE on request.
- Identify whether there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern.
- The school has granted the DfE access to its management information system so the data can be accessed regularly and securely



Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average and share this with the governing board.

Data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics.

The school will benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement, and share this with the governing board.

## **8.2 Analysing attendance**

The school will:

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

## **8.3 Using data to improve attendance.**

The school will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
- Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence, and their families (see section 8.4 below)
- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinators, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads)
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

## **8.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence**

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's strategy for improving attendance.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence

- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
  - Discuss attendance and engagement at school
  - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
  - Explain the help that is available
  - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
  - Review any existing actions or interventions
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence.
- Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 5.2, above)
- Build strong relationships with families, listen to and understand barriers to attendance and work with families to remove them.

## 9. Monitoring arrangements

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

## 10. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

## Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's [guidance on school attendance](#).

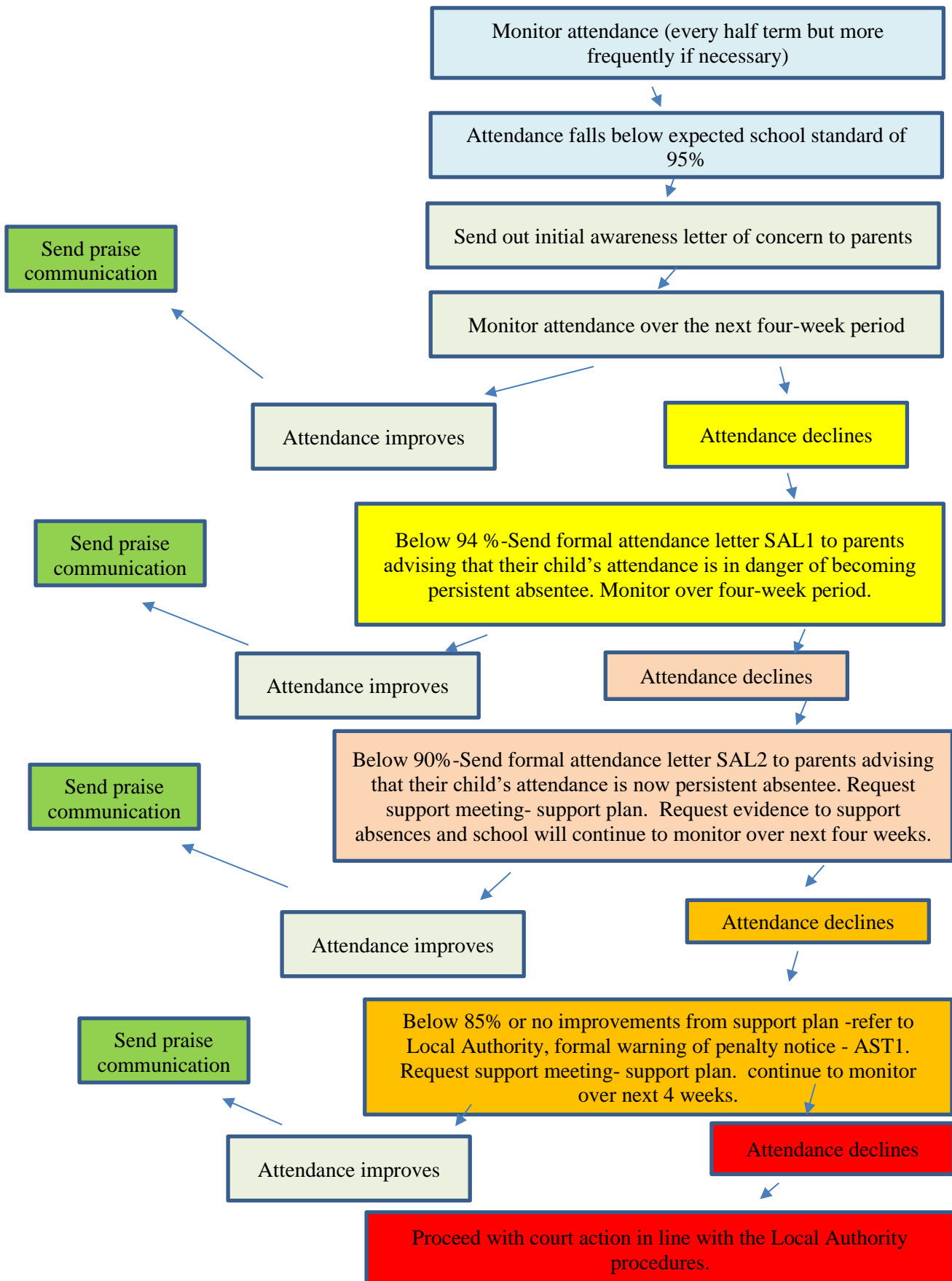
Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
<b>Attending a place other than the school</b>		

<b>K</b>	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
<b>V</b>	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
<b>P</b>	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
<b>W</b>	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
<b>B</b>	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
<b>D</b>	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
<b>Absent – leave of absence</b>		
<b>C1</b>	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
<b>M</b>	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
<b>J1</b>	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>C2</b>	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
<b>C</b>	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
<b>Absent – other authorised reasons</b>		
<b>T</b>	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes

<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>I</b>	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
<b>E</b>	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
<b>Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause</b>		
<b>Q</b>	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
<b>Y1</b>	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
<b>Y2</b>	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
<b>Y3</b>	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
<b>Y4</b>	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
<b>Y5</b>	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In police detention</li> <li>• Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or</li> <li>• Detained under a sentence of detention</li> </ul>
<b>Y6</b>	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
<b>Y7</b>	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
<b>Absent – unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school

<b>N</b>	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
<b>O</b>	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
<b>U</b>	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
<b>Administrative codes</b>		
<b>Z</b>	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
<b>#</b>	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

## Appendix 2: Monitoring and support



## How we monitor and support attendance

100%	95%	90%	85%	80%	75%
190 days of education for your child each year	10 days absent = 10 days missed education  180 days of education for your child each year	19 days absent = 19 days missed education  171 days of education for your child each year	29 days absent = 29 days missed education  161 days of education for your child each year	38 days absent = 38 days missed education  152 days of education for your child each year	47 days absent = 47 days missed education 143 days of education for your child each year
<b><u>Excellent</u></b>	<b><u>Initial concern</u></b>	<b><u>Worrying</u></b>	<b><u>Not fair on your child</u></b>		
Best chance of success. Gets your child off to a flying start	Missed learning opportunities	Less chance of success Makes it harder to reach potential	Hard to make progress Possible friendship and social difficulties  Educational outcomes and life chances are impacted		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendance rewards</li> <li>Certificates</li> <li>End of year attendance raffle</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial concerns letter</li> <li>Attendance monitoring</li> <li>Certificates when improvement is seen</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendance meeting with attendance officer/pastoral lead</li> <li>Begin formal attendance procedures in line with the LA</li> <li>Attendance support plan</li> <li>Certificates when improvement is seen</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>penalty warning notice</li> <li>Attendance meetings</li> <li>Court action- fines up to £2500 per parent.</li> <li>Possible custodial sentence</li> </ul>		

We acknowledge that no one standard response will be appropriate in every case. Consideration is given to all factors affecting attendance before deciding what intervention strategies to apply.

