Attendance Policy

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☐ School Policy

Approval:

☐ School

☐ LAB

☐ Board

Our Four Critical Questions

Why do we exist?

To improve outcomes, transform lives and enable social mobility.

How do we behave?

Trust • Kindness • Endeavour

What do we do?

We create a strong network of schools which transform the lives of students by enabling them to achieve high educational and personal goals, regardless of their background.

How do we succeed?

Through a clear backbone, strong culture, academic rigour and smart systems.

This policy is available to all stakeholders on the school website and hard copies can be requested.

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Key Contact Details

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Family worker, Attendance Lead & DDSL	Mrs E Garcia
Attendance & Admin Officer	Mrs S Cumming
Trust Lead	Miss E Campbell
Director of Primary Schools	Miss F Kelly

1. Aims

Orion Education believes that outstanding learning and progress can only take place in conjunction with outstanding attendance and punctuality. Research has shown that poor attendance impacts negatively on attainment and one long period of absence or a number of shorter absences over the course of a year can quickly add up. Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility: parents/carers, pupils and staff.

Improving attendance is everyone's responsibility. The barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates, and are often specific to individual pupils and families. The foundation of securing good attendance is that school is a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environment where all pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn.

Attendance is also a safeguarding matter. Poor attendance may be an indicator that a pupils' welfare is at risk, making them increasingly vulnerable. Weak attendance practice can risk pupils' wellbeing.

The Trust has a robust, clear strategy in place for:

- Supporting schools to develop and maintain a culture that promotes high attendance.
- Clear school attendance policies which all staff, pupils, and parents understand.
- Accurately completing admission and attendance registers with processes to follow up absence.
- Regularly monitoring and analysing attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require support with their attendance and put effective strategies in place.
- Building strategies to ensure strong relationships with families, to understand and remove barriers to good attendance. Supporting parents/carers to perform their legal duty.
- Sharing information to work collaboratively with partners when absence is becoming persistent.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance (Working together to improve school attendance) from the Department for Education (DfE). The statutory guidance is drawn from the following legislation setting out legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Education Act 2002
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 (referred to in this policy as "the Regulations")

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

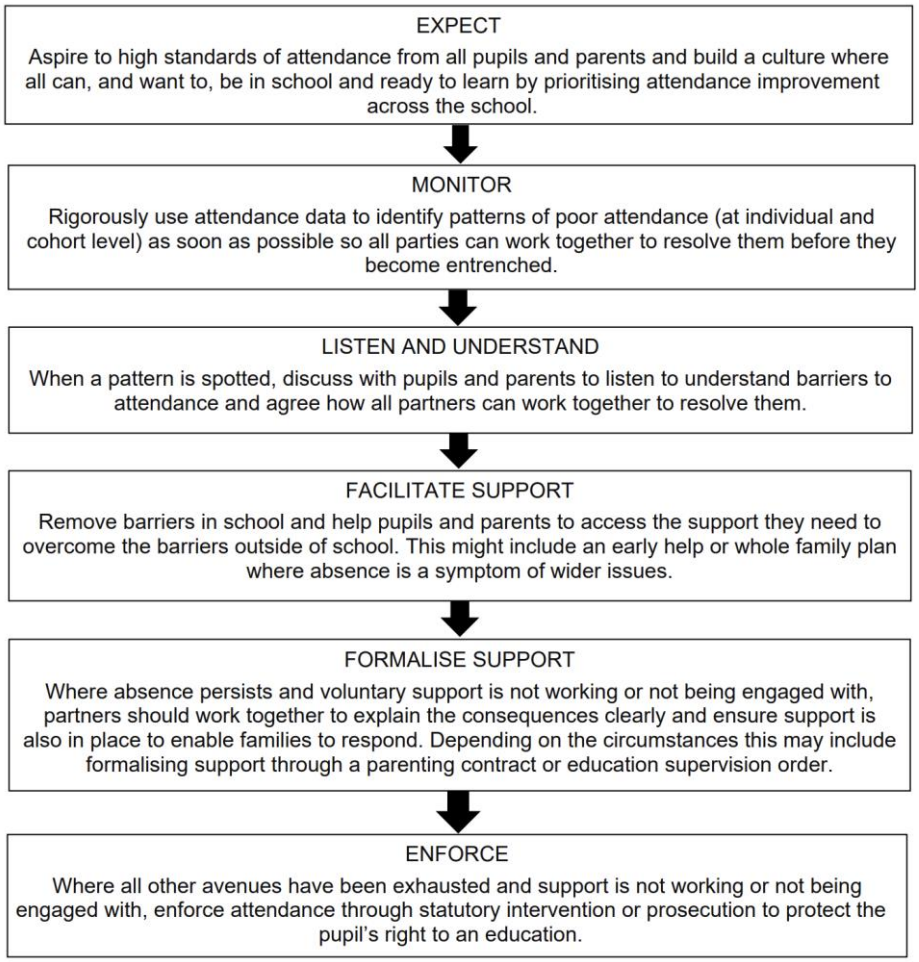
This policy complies with the Trust's funding agreement and articles of association.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following Orion Education and school policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding
- Children missing education,
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school,
- Exclusions

3. Expectations of Schools

All schools have a continuing responsibility to proactively manage and improve attendance across their school community. Successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance, at home, in school, or more broadly requires schools and local partners to work collaboratively with families. All partners should work together to:



To manage and improve attendance effectively, all schools are expected to:

• Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance.

• Have a clear school attendance policy that all staff, pupils, and parents understand.

• Accurately complete admission and have an effective day-to-day process in place for follow-up absence.

• Regularly monitor and analyse attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require support with their attendance and put effective strategies in place.

• Build strong relationships with families, listen to and understand barriers to attendance and work with schools to remove them.

• Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities, and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.

See section 14 for a breakdown of stakeholder role and responsibilities and section 9 for guidance on the graduate approach to attendance.

Good attendance starts with close and productive relationships with parents and pupils. Our schools will treat all pupils and parents with dignity and staff should model respectful relationships to build a positive relationship between home and school that can be the foundation of good attendance.

4. Attendance Data and Targets

The school target is 100% attendance.

- The target for all pupils is to strive for 100% attendance to achieve their full potential.
- Attendance data will be collected and analysed and used to inform the school's attendance practices and interventions.
- Individual pupil data will be analysed and monitored to enable early intervention.
- Attendance data is provided on a half-termly basis to the Executive Leadership Team and weekly if the school falls behind the National Average.
- Attendance data and persistent absence data is communicated to the Local Authority.

5. School procedures

5.1 Attendance register

By law, all schools are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark 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 A for the DfE attendance codes. Registers are legal records, and all schools must preserve every entry in the attendance or admission register for 3 years from the date of entry.

Each school will show in Appendix F, details including:

- Pupil's expected arrival time in the school
- The time that the register for the first session will be taken and will be kept open until
- The time that the register for the second session will be taken after the lunch break
- How parents should report an absence or appointment
- How schools follow up on absence
- Strategies for promoting attendance, punctuality, promoting attendance rewards, sanctions, assemblies, meetings with parents/carers, etc.
- How schools deal with internal truancy

- How attendance is reported to parents and carers

5.2 Unplanned absence

Parents and carers must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by a time set out by each school or as soon as practically possible. **Appendix F** shows procedures individual to each school. These are also available on school websites.

Absence due to illness will usually be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. The school requires parents and carers to provide 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 with the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as **unauthorised**, and parents and carers will be notified of this.

5.3 Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; **advance notice is required** for authorising these absences. We encourage parents and 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. We also encourage parents and carers to ensure that pupils are in the school to be marked as attending before they leave for a medical or dental appointment. Pupils are expected to catch up with any work missed through absence.

Each school will have its own processes and systems detailing how parents and carers can notify the school in advance of a medical or dental appointment. These are available in **Appendix F a**nd on the school website. Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in sections 5.2 and 5.3.

5.4 Lateness and Punctuality

A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code. A pupil who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.

Appendix F contains specific details of the school's procedures for dealing with lateness.

5.5 Following up absence

Schools will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not, and identify the correct attendance code to use. Details of each school's approach can be seen in **Appendix F** and on the school website.

5.6 Children unexpectedly absent

If a pupil is unexpectedly absent all efforts will be made to assure their whereabouts and welfare as quickly as possible. Often this will be achieved via a call home but sometimes this may require a home visit that confirms the pupil's whereabouts and wellbeing. The Headteacher will not accept anything short of a definitive confirmation of the pupil's whereabouts. Orion schools follow the current DfE guidance, 'Keeping Children Safe In Education' which states that: 'Where reasonably possible, schools and colleges should hold more than one emergency contact number for each pupil or student. This gives the school or college additional options to make contact with a responsible adult when a child missing education is also identified as a welfare and/or safeguarding concern.'

5.7 Reporting to and meeting with parents and carers

Schools will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels, for example, the amount of time missed and the impact on the pupil's learning. This will be added to school reports and/or use online platforms and apps to keep parents/carers updated.

Schools will hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) consider to be vulnerable or are persistently or severely absent to discuss attendance and engagement at school. **See section 14** for a breakdown of stakeholder role and responsibilities and **section 9** for guidance on the graduate approach to attendance.

6. Authorised and unauthorised absence

6.1 Granting approval for term-time absence

There is no entitlement in law for non-essential absences during term time. The Headteacher may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. Family holidays taken during term time will **not** be authorised.

Exceptional circumstances include the following:

- acute family trauma
- terminal illness or death of a family member
- if a family member serves in the Armed Forces - Service personnel returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the individual will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays
- following advice from a health professional
- out of-school programmes such as music, arts, or sports operating at a high standard of achievement

The Headteacher will consider each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances, and relevant context behind the request. **A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Headteacher's discretion.**

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** may include:

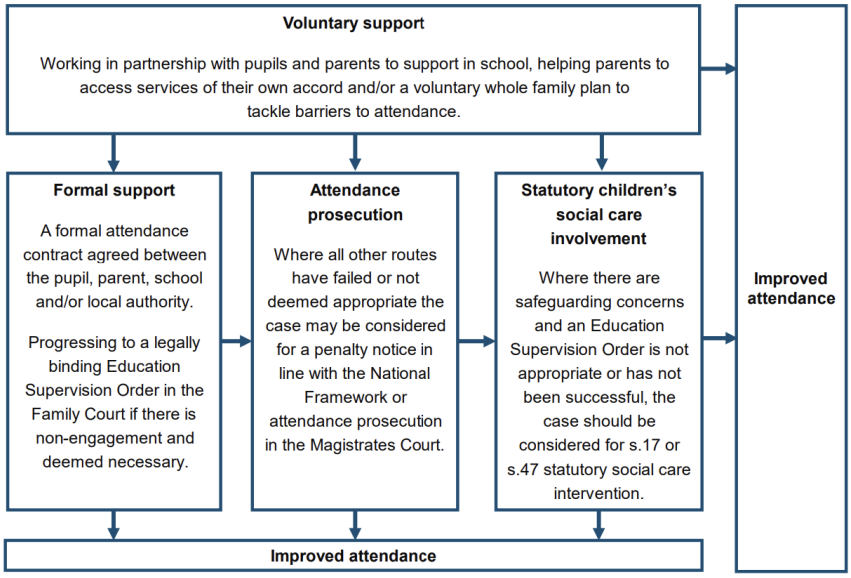
- Illness and medical/dental appointments – as explained in sections 5.2 and 5.3
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents/carers belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents/carers' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- 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
- Part-time timetables agreed between the school and parents/carers in exceptional circumstances, time limited to support reintegration
- Study leave for Year 11 pupils

6.2 Attendance legal sanctions

Page 47 to 60 of the DfE attendance guidance provides in-depth details of legal sanctions.

As absence is so often a symptom of wider issues a family is facing. The law protects pupils' right to an education and provides a range of legal interventions to formalise attendance improvement efforts, and where all other avenues have been exhausted, enforce it through prosecuting parents. Attendance legal intervention can only be used for pupils of compulsory school age and decisions should be made on an individual case by case basis.

Providing support first before attendance legal intervention



6.2.1 Attendance contract

An attendance contract - a formal written agreement between a parent/carer and either the school to address irregular attendance or alternative provision.

6.2.2 Education supervision orders (ESOs)

Can be used a useful alternative to provide formal legal intervention without criminal prosecution.

For the duration of the ESO, the parent's duties to secure the child's education and regular attendance are superseded by a duty to comply with any directions given by the local authority under the ESO.

The order initially lasts for one year, but extensions can be secured within the last 3 months for a period of up to 3 years at a time.

6.2.3 Parenting orders

Parenting orders are an ancillary order that can be imposed by the Court following conviction for non-attendance alongside a fine and/or community order. Parents' agreement is not required before an order is made. Any breach of the order could lead to a fine of up to level 3 (£1,000).

6.2.4 Notice to Improve

A Notice to Improve is a final opportunity for a parent to engage in support and improve attendance before a penalty notice is issued. If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate but offers of support have not been engaged with by the parent or have not worked, a Notice to Improve should usually be sent to give parents a final chance to engage in support.

6.2.5 Fixed Penalty Notice

Penalty notices are issued to parents as an alternative to prosecution where they have failed to ensure that their child of compulsory school age regularly attends the school where they are registered or, in certain cases, at a place where alternative provision is provided. There is a t**wo penalty notice limit** and escalation in cases of repeat offences.

National Thresholds

Schools should not have a blanket position of issuing or not issuing penalty notices and should make judgements on each individual case to ensure fairness and consistency across the country.

- The threshold is 10 sessions of unauthorised 57 absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks. A school week means any week in which there is at least one school session.
- This can be met with any combination of unauthorised absence (e.g. 4 sessions of holiday taken in term time plus 6 sessions of arriving late after the register closes all within 10 school weeks).
- These sessions can be consecutive (e.g. 10 sessions of holiday in one week) or not (e.g. 6 sessions of unauthorised absence taken in 1 week and 1 per week for the next 4 weeks).
- The period of 10 school weeks can also span different terms or school years (e.g. 2 sessions of unauthorised absence in the Summer Term and a further 8 within the Autumn Term).

When a school becomes aware that the threshold has been met, they are expected to make the following considerations to decide whether to issue a penalty notice in each individual case:

Is support appropriate in this case?

- If yes, schools are expected to continue with the existing support without a penalty notice or issue a Notice to Improve if that support is not working or is not being engaged with. A penalty notice can be issued if either has not worked.

- If no, for example a holiday in term time, a penalty notice should be issued subject to the other conditions below.

Is a penalty notice the best available tool to improve attendance and change parental behaviour for this particular family or would further support or one of the other legal interventions be more appropriate?

- Is issuing a penalty notice in this case appropriate after considering any obligations under the Equality Act 2010 such as where a pupil has a disability?

If the answer to those questions is yes, then a penalty notice should be issued. If not, another tool or legal intervention should be used to improve attendance.

7. Strategies for promoting attendance

Each School will have a clear strategy and graduated approach to promote, track and monitor attendance, which includes rewards, sanctions, assemblies, and meetings with parents and carers. In communicating with parents, schools will discuss the link between attendance and attainment and wider wellbeing, and challenge parents' views where they have misconceptions about what 'good' attendance looks like. These will be in line with those recommended by DfE.

8. Attendance monitoring

Schools will monitor pupil absence **daily**, with Senior Attendance lead and champion scrutinising patterns on a **weekly** basis using the **Arbor** reports and the **graduated attendance strategy** to promote attendance. However, where attendance is not yet in line with the national average then school leaders will scrutinise attendance **each day**. The analysis of attendance data will include data for each group (e.g. boy, girl, SEND, Disadvantaged, Others, EAL, ethnic groups), year group, and sub-groups within each year group (where this is statistically useful).

The Trust has the ability to monitor school attendance through its data management systems. The CEO and Executive Leadership Team will regularly discuss school attendance data through the Orion line management structure.

9. Graduated approach to attendance

The Orion graduated approach to attendance is shared by all our schools, providing varying levels of support to ensure no child is left behind and that intervention happens in a timely manner.

Supportive approaches are most effective when they are put in place as early as possible and therefore it is essential all partners work together in a timely manner. If a pupil's absence requires support from an outside agency which is not provided quickly (e.g. subject to a waiting list), schools and/or local authorities should consider other avenues of support or other temporary solutions whilst waiting.

First phase

Where a pattern of absence is at risk of becoming, or becomes, problematic schools will work with staff and draw on relationships with families, to and understand the barriers to attendance the pupil or family is experiencing. In doing so, the school will take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for absence and understand the importance of school as a place of safety and support rather than reaching immediately for punitive approaches.

Second phase

Where absence intensifies, so should the support provided, which will require the school to work in tandem with the local authority and other relevant partners. Where engagement in support is proving challenging, schools should hold more formal conversations with the parents (and pupil where they are old enough to understand).

Third phase

Where voluntary support has not been effective and/or has not been engaged with all schools should work with the local authority to put formal support in place in the form of an attendance contract or an education supervision order.

• Issue a Notice to Improve and/or penalty notice where support would not be appropriate or has not been successful or engaged with and it is likely to change the parents' behaviour.

• Intensify support through statutory children's social care involvement where there are safeguarding concerns, especially where absence becomes severe (below 50% attendance).

• Prosecute parents where all other routes have failed or are not deemed appropriate. This could include making the case for a community or parenting order where the parent is convicted to secure engagement with support.

E21C Graduated Attendance Approach - Primary	Descriptor	Threshold Attendance	Actual Days	Absent Days	Lost Hours	Letters
Celebrate and Sustain • We celebrate learners who attend school every day on time in assemblies and 1-2-1 conversation • Weekly lunchtime **'Celebration Club'** for children with 100% attendance for the week before • **Attendance lead** thanks parents and children for their commitment to ensuring high attendance • For example, every week of 100% attendance in a full term, child's name is entered into a raffle for a high value prize	**Excellent**	100%	190	0	0	Letter 1 if drops below 97%
		99%	188	2	10	
	Very Good	98%	186	4	20	
	Good	97%	184	6	30	
		96%	182	8	40	
Stage 1 - Engage • **Attendance has fallen below 96% leading to increased monitoring** • **Student added to monitoring list and discussed at weekly pastoral meeting** • **Attendance Officer** makes contact and offers additional support to family • **Family Worker** to support and involve any other relevant agencies • Family to be discussed at meeting with **EWO** • **Class Teacher** to have weekly conversation with child about successes/EBIs for attendance that week	**Needs to Improve/ Action Required**	95%	181	9	45	Letter 2 if drops below 96%
		94%	179	11	55	
		93%	177	13	65	
		92%	175	15	75	
		91%	173	17	85	
Stage 2 – Referral to EWO • **Pupil is persistently absent from school** • **Attendance Lead** calls parents to notify that attendance has dropped below 90% and is informed a PN could be issues if attendance continues to decline • **Family Worker** invites parents to access early help support with attendance – contract developed • **Family to be referred to EWO** • Class teacher to continue weekly check-ins with child	**Cause for Concern**	90%	171	19	95	Letter 3 if drops below 90%
		89%	169	21	105	
		88%	167	23	115	
		87%	165	25	125	
		86%	163	27	135	
Stage 3 – Attendance Panel/Conference • Parents invited to attend an attendance meeting with **Deputy Head, Family Worker, Attendance Officer, and EWO (if possible** • A **4-week contract** agreed to improve attendance with clear targets set • Make parents aware of potential next steps if little/no improvement	**Serious Cause for Concern**	85%	162	28	140	Letter 4 if drops below 85%
		84%	160	30	150	
		83%	158	32	160	
		82%	156	34	170	
		81%	154	36	180	
Stage 4 - Referral to Local Authority/Possible Prosecution • If little/no improvement meeting with local authority lead and external agencies • The attendance contract will be reviewed and will be shared with agencies • Parents will be informed of referral to the LA for prosecution and type • Trust lead and the LA will continue to monitor attendance	**Extreme Cause for Concern**	80% and below	152	38	190	Penalty Notice Letter

E21C Graduated Staged Approach - Secondary	Descriptor	Threshold Attendance	Actual Days	Absent Days	Lost Hours	Letters
Celebrate and Sustain • **Celebrate learners** who attend school every day on time in assemblies and in conversation with individuals	Excellent	100%	190	0	0	100% Letter
		99%	188	2	10	
• During briefings/bulletins **Headteacher** reminds and thanks staff for their commitment to attendance	Very Good	98%	186	4	20	Letter 1 if drops below 97%
• **Attendance lead** thanks parents and learners for their commitment ensuring high attendance (via half-termly text message, postcards, bulletins)	Good	97%	184	6	30	
• **Rewards** – distributed to learners and tutor groups each week		96%	182	8	40	
Stage 1 - Engage • Attendance has fallen below **96% leading to increased monitoring** • Learner **added to monitoring list and discussed at weekly pastoral meeting** • **Attendance Officer/Tutor** makes contact and offers additional support to family • **HOY or Pastoral lead** to support learner and involve other relevant agencies • **Discussions start with EWO** to prevent further decline • **Parents informed of penalty notice possibility** • **Tutor** to have weekly conversation with learner about successes/EBIs for attendance that week	Needs to Improve/ Action Required	95%	181	9	45	Letter 2 if drops below 96%
		94%	179	11	55	
		93%	177	13	65	
		92%	175	15	75	
		91%	173	17	85	
Stage 2 – Referral to EWO & Attendance Contract • **Pupil is persistently absent from school** • **Attendance Lead** calls parents to notify that attendance has dropped below 90% and PN could be issued iff attendance continues to decline. • **Head of Year** invites parents to open an early help referral – **attendance contract** drawn up • **Family to be referred to EWO** • **HOY or Pastoral lead** to continue weekly check-ins with learner	Cause for Concern	90%	171	19	95	Letter 3 if drops below 90%
		89%	169	21	105	
		88%	167	23	115	
		87%	165	25	125	
		86%	163	27	135	
Stage 3 – Attendance Panel/Conference • Parents invited to attend an Attendance meeting with **Deputy Head, HOY/Pastoral Lead, Attendance Officer, DSL and EWO (if poss.)** • A 4-**week contract** agreed to improve attendance with clear targets set • Make parents aware of potential next steps if little/no improvement	Serious Cause for Concern	85%	162	28	140	Letter 4 if drops below 85%
		84%	160	30	150	
		83%	158	32	160	
		82%	156	34	170	
		81%	154	36	180	
Stage 4 - Referral to Local Authority/Possible Legal Action • If little/no improvement meeting with local authority lead and external agencies • The attendance contract will be reviewed and will be shared with agencies • Parents will be informed of referral to the LA for prosecution and type • Trust lead and the LA will continue to monitor attendance	Extreme Cause for Concern	80% and below	152	38	190	Penalty Notice Letter

10. Internal Truancy

Truancy is any intentional, unjustified, unauthorised, or illegal absence from compulsory education. It is an absence caused by pupils of their own free will and usually does not refer to legitimate excused absences, such as ones related to medical conditions.

The most effective way for this to be addressed is through registration at each lesson throughout a school day where pupils are required to move between classes. Where a pupil does not register for an individual lesson schools have a process in place whereby key members of staff are alerted to a missing pupil in order that they can initiate a search for the pupil. If this becomes a frequent event for a pupil to truant within the school, it would be best addressed through a discussion with them and parents to identify the reasons for this happening and put necessary interventions in place to support the pupil to remain in lessons.

If a pupil can't be located and believed to have left the school site, it is necessary to follow your normal truancy procedures.

11. Persistent and severe absence

Where absence escalates and pupils miss 10% or more of school (equivalent to 1 day or more a fortnight across a full school year), schools will work with the local authority to work together to put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers to attendance and reengage these pupils. The Trust attendance lead will work with schools and relevant services on severely absent pupils who are absent 50% of school, to make this group the top priority for support. Some of these pupils may be finding 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 partners.

Referrals for a full children's social care assessment will be made if all avenues of support and intervention have been implemented, but severe absence for unauthorised reasons continues, it is likely to constitute neglect.

Re-integration following Long-term Absence

Where a pupil has been absent for a prolonged period, perhaps due to illness, the school will:

- Welcome the pupil back to the school and value their return.
- Provide support for the pupil in consultation with parents/carers to enable a successful return to the school.
- Ensure that all relevant staff are informed of the circumstances.
- Work with other agencies, where appropriate, to ensure a successful outcome.
- Consider a personalised programme of return, if appropriate.
- Nominate a key member of staff to monitor and review the pupil's return.

12. Part-time Timetables

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. In some circumstances their education may be provided partially at school and partially at another educational setting or through education otherwise than at a school in line with section 19 of the Education Act 1996 or section 42 or 61 of the Children and Families Act 2014.

Time away from school to receive education in other ways must be recorded in the attendance register using the appropriate codes see **Appendix A**. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a school to provide a pupil of compulsory school age with less than full-time education through a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending school or another setting full-time, and a part-time timetable is used to help the pupil access as much education as possible. A part-time timetable should not be used to manage a pupil's behaviour.

A part-time timetable should:

• Have the agreement of both the school and the parent the pupil normally lives with.

• Have a clear ambition and be part of the pupil's wider support, health care or reintegration plan.

• Have regular review dates which include the pupil and their parents to ensure it is only in place for the shortest time necessary.

• Have a proposed end date that takes into account the circumstances of the pupil, after which the pupil is expected to attend full-time, either at school or alternative provision. It can, however, be extended as part of the regular review process. In some limited cases, a pupil with a long-term health condition may require a parttime timetable for a prolonged period.

Where the pupil has a social worker, the school is expected to keep them informed and involved in the process.

If the pupil has an education health and care plan, the school should discuss the part-time timetable with the local authority so that any support package that is in place can be reviewed as swiftly as possible.

In agreeing to a part-time timetable, a school has agreed to a pupil being absent from school for part of the week or day and therefore must record the absence accordingly (Code C2).

13. Children at Risk of Missing Education

Where the school has completed all reasonable steps to locate a student and cannot then a CME should be submitted within 10 days. The school and LA should then work in partnership to locate the student. As this could be a safeguarding issue, leaders should ensure that regular follow-up contact is made with the Local Authority if the whereabouts of the pupil is not known or communicated to the school.

If a vulnerable child cannot be contacted on the first day of absence, a home visit should be completed; a non-vulnerable by the third day of absence. This should continue until the information has been

secured. Leaders should follow the guidance issued by the Department for Education: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education

14. Education off site

All schools can also allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities or to attend other schools or settings:

• To attend an offsite approved educational activity. (Code B)

• To attend another school at which the pupil is registered (dual registration). (Code D)

• To attend provision arranged by the local authority. e.g. alternative provision or as part of an education, health, and care plan. (Code K)

• To participate in an approved sporting activity. (Code P)

• To attend an educational visit or trip arranged by the school. (Code V)

• To attend work experience. (Code W)

As these circumstances are part of delivering a full-time education they are not classified as absences for statistical purposes.

15. Pupils leaving the school and Removal from roll

The ORION vision is driven by a passion and commitment to include everyone. We believe all our children and young people are precious and as such, we are keen to ensure that we track the destinations of pupils who leave each school.

School leaders must ensure that detailed records are kept for pupils who stop attending the school and are removed from the roll/admissions register. All removals from roll must be approved by the Head Teacher and signed off using the removal from roll form.

Details must include (but not exclusive to):

- the pupil's reason for leaving
- their destination and the destination's educational provision (e.g. name of school, home schooling arrangements)
- new home address (if applicable)
- group (disadvantaged, SEND, EAL, gender)
- ethnicity

Where a pupil moves abroad, leaders must take all reasonable steps to assure themselves that the pupil is moving to another school. This is to ensure that all pupils are safe and in full-time education as necessary. A CME should be completed for any pupil that moves abroad where the receiving school is not confirmed.

Wherever possible, the Headteacher will meet with the pupil and their family,, where a request has been made to remove a pupil from roll at a no-standard transition point during the school year. This is to ensure that an effective level of support has been offered to the pupil and family as well as ensuring that the destination of the pupil is known.

Leaders must ensure that pupils are only removed from the school's roll/admissions register if one or more of the criteria (defined by The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006; paragraph 8) are met and as described in the Department for Education's guidance https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance).

Leaders should follow their Local Authority's procedures for removing a pupil from roll, which will always involve officially notifying the Local Authority of the reasoning and intention to do so.

See Appendix B for the ORION removal from roll form to be used to record and monitor removing pupils from roll.

On receipt of written notification to **home educate**, schools must inform the Local Authority that the pupil is to be deleted from the admission register.

Elective Home Education (EHE) requests must be followed by the following steps:

1. A formal meeting between a member of the Leadership Team and the parent.
2. A formal letter sent to document the meeting
3. Completion of Request for Removal from Roll form, signed by the Head Teacher.

Parents and carers have a duty to ensure their child of compulsory school age receives suitable full-time education, but this does not have to be at a school.

See Appendix C and D for the Elective Home Education Guidance.

In all circumstances where a pupil's name is removed from the school roll other than at or after the end of the final term of the school year and/or when they are in the school's most senior class, the local authority must be informed, and the details set out in Regulation 12(4) provided. If the local authority has requested notification for all leavers this should be done.

16. Roles and responsibilities

15.1 The Trust Attendance Lead

- The Trust Attendance lead will report to the Executive Leadership Team and is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for all ORION schools on a weekly basis.
- The Executive Leadership Team will be informed if attendance falls below the national average, with clear action steps to ensure rapid improvement
- To monitor and support improved attendance in schools within the Trust in line with key identified priorities and Trust-wide systems and processes.
- Support schools in fulfilling their statutory duties in relation to attendance and be capable of instigating legal action following appropriate protocols.
- Advise key school and Trust staff of trends, concerns, and referrals.
- Undertake ½ termly attendance certificate and school registration inspections and whole school attendance audits.
- Prioritise support and interventions for persistent absentees which are specific and impactful and aid in consistently improved attendance.
- Promote schools' celebration and rewards systems to support with improving attendance.

15.2 Headteacher

- Is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it as required.
- Contribute to setting challenging targets to meet national averages for the school overall, ensuring a strategy is devised to make solid progress towards them.
- Appoint the Attendance Lead at a senior level to supervise attendance management, training, and monitoring. Ensure there is sufficient time to analyse data, liaise with teachers and Local Authority officers.
- Receive reports on attendance at whole school, year group and class level. Discuss and share strengths and limitations and give attendance a high status in the school.
- Report statistics to the Governors and as part of the termly report, comparing each half-term with those for the previous year at the same time.

15.3 SLT - Senior Attendance Lead and Champion

- Work with the Headteacher to agree on relevant internal attendance targets. Monitoring attendance weekly and evaluating progress towards the targets. Identify pupils who have low attendance to plan early intervention.
- Monitor attendance at school, year group, class, and individual levels. Working with the Head to develop a school-wide strategy.
- Ensure there is a clear attendance policy, showing who will do what and at what threshold.
- Provide training and CPD opportunities for staff, keeping attendance at the forefront of each member of staff's mind, as everyone's responsibility.
- Promote regular attendance, by making use of reward systems, assemblies, parents' evenings, performance reviews, etc.
- Involve the advisory body/governing board - seeking the support of governors in promoting good attendance.
- Line lead the attendance officer, ensuring registers are checked and updated daily, with the required action taken at each threshold level.
- Ensure all staff take registers on time as a legal document that must be kept carefully and accurately. Advise the headteacher of any teacher who fails to maintain the register properly and implement disciplinary procedures where appropriate.
- Follows the ORION Trust Attendance Policy and Appendix D to follow up with families where attendance drops or is not yet high enough, working with relevant school staff and external agencies.

15.4 Attendance Officer

- Follow the school's procedures for first day calling. If no explanation has been received by the time registers close, seek one from parent/carers.
- Meet at least once a week and hold regular discussions with the Attendance Lead. Ensure the system works. If it does not, come up with suggestions to improve it.
- Provide data on a weekly basis to class teachers and the school's Attendance Lead.
- Make sure the Attendance Lead and/or the Headteacher know about families where there is an attendance concern.

- Work with the Head of Year or Pastoral lead to issue attendance letters using thresholds outlined in the graduated attendance strategy.
- Check and file all absence notes that are received and ensure that details are reflected appropriately through categorisation of absence in the registers.
- Pass messages from parents/carers to the class teacher or other relevant members of staff.
- Where appropriate, arrange and take part in home visits, always completing a risk assessment, and communicating with the designated safeguarding lead, the attendance lead and/or headteacher.

15.5 Office Reception staff

- Administrative staff are expected to take calls from parents and carers about absence and record it on the school system.
- They will also adhere to the Attendance Policy and challenge information received via phone calls or emails if there is any doubt in its accuracy.

15.6 Special Needs Co-ordinator

- Communicate with the local authority where a pupil's attendance falls, or they become aware of barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs.
- Where possible agree adjustments to its policies and practices that are consistent with the special educational provision set out in the education health and care plan in collaboration with parents.
- Where needed work with the local authority to review and amend the education health and care plan to incorporate the additional or different attendance support identified.

15.7 All staff

- All staff are responsible for promoting good attendance.
- Class Teachers/Form Tutors/Teaching Assistants/Pastoral Staff are responsible for recording attendance daily, using the correct codes.
- All staff will follow the Attendance Policy and work with pupils and parents where there are concerns about their attendance.
- Staff will engage with training provided and will seek guidance if they are unsure about their role and responsibilities.
- Promote excellent attendance through regular conversations, rewards and other encouragement.
- Following absence, do your best to speak with pupils
- Ensure registers are always completed appropriately; never leave blank spaces. Seek advice if needed from the attendance officer.
- Look carefully at attendance data. Make it your business to spot patterns of absence and overall levels of attendance of individuals.
- Make a personal connection with parents of pupils who have regular absences, or patterns of irregular attendance.

- Ensure the Headteacher or Attendance Lead is informed of concerns over attendance, informing the Designated Safeguarding Lead if there are child protection and/or safeguarding concerns.

15.8 Parents and carers

Parents and carers are responsible (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/parental-responsibilitymeasures-for-behaviour-and-attendance) for ensuring that children of statutory school age receive their entitlement to full-time education. Schools will work with parents and carers to support this responsibility.

15.9 Shared responsibility between School and Education Attendance Service

- Regular monitoring of attendance levels across the whole school, classes, year groups, tutor groups and at individual pupil level, particularly persistent absentees, and vulnerable groups
- Continued liaison (after referral to EAS) with pupils and families.
- School-based strategies and interventions – meetings in school, re-integration programmes, meetings with parents, report, and monitoring systems.
- Supporting with the appropriate categorisation of absence
- Maintenance of records relating to contact from parents, submission of notes, telephone contact, medical certificates, change of address etc.
- Attendance Officers to maintain accurate and contemporaneous notes of contact and interventions with pupils and family
- Monitoring of vulnerable groups, especially children in public care, children on the Child Protection Register, young offenders, and pupils with high mobility factors.

Appendix A: Attendance Codes

DfE's Attendance Codes, Descriptions and Meanings. DfE guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment

J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available

Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national, or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g., due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial, or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		

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

Appendix B: Removing a pupil from roll procedure

The unlawful off rolling of a pupil from a school is a safeguarding issue. Please ensure you have confirmation of the new education provision the pupil is transferring to before removing a pupil from your roll. It is important that the whereabouts of the pupil are known before removal takes place. **The Principal/Headteacher/Head of School must authorise any off rolling.**

If the pupil is missing, please complete a Local Authority CME form. From September 2020, ALL roll removals, with the exception of normal transition points, unless this is requested, must be reported to the Local Authority.

Detailed DfE guidance: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupilren-missing-education

Main circumstances where a pupil can be removed from a school/academy roll:

- Where the pupil is registered at the school in accordance with the requirements of a school attendance order and another school is substituted by the LA.
- Where a pupil is registered at more than one school and is now is registered elsewhere.
- When the pupil has been withdrawn by parents/carers and will be educated otherwise.
- When the pupil transfers to an alternative place of education and the name and address of the new provision has been established.
- When the pupil no longer resides at a place which is at a reasonable distance from the academy.
- When the pupil has failed to return from previously authorised leave within 10 days of the agreed return date.
- When the pupil has been certified medically unfit to attend school and will remain so.
- When the pupil has been absent for 20 continuous days or more without explanation.
- When the pupil is in custody for a period exceeding four months.
- When the pupil has died.
- When the pupil ceases to be of statutory school age before the academy next meets.
- When the pupil has been permanently excluded.
- When a nursery pupil is not transferring to reception or a higher class.

REQUEST TO REMOVE A PUPIL FROM ROLL

NAME:	**YEAR GROUP:**	**DATE OF BIRTH:**

ADDRESS:	
This pupil has been removed from the roll because:	**Y/N**
The pupil has moved to another school. Add new school details below	
The pupil will be educated at home: (Secondary schools only) Parent must sign the EHE form	
Other reasons for roll removal:	
The pupil has been permanently excluded. Date of the PEX hearing: Date of the end of the appeal period (15 days from the PEX hearing)	
The pupil's whereabouts are unknown. Date home visit completed: Date CME completed: Date pupil details uploaded to S2S: (If there are safeguarding concerns, date matter referred to the DSL)	
Home visit required? If yes, when completed and by whom?	
Member of staff requesting removal from the roll:	
Are there any safeguarding concerns? Y/N If yes, please provide more information	
Permission granted to remove the pupil from the roll YES / NO	
Signature: **Date:** **(This must be the Headteacher or a member of the senior leadership team)**	
DATE ROLL REMOVAL WAS NOTIFIED TO THE LOCAL AUTHORITY:	

Appendix C: Elective Home Education (EHE)

The law states that all children of statutory school age must receive suitable education. The parent is responsible for ensuring their child receives education and is entitled to choose to educate their child other than provision provided by the Local Authority or School Trusts.

A parent may choose an independent school or may decide to provide the education themselves or by others. If a parent chooses to make arrangements for their child other than at school the following procedures will take place.

STEP 1

If a child is on roll at school, the parent must advise the Headteacher in writing of the intention to education other than at school, additionally requesting that the child's name is removed from the school register/ roll. The school will then notify the Education Attendance Service.

If a child is not on a school roll but is of statutory school age parents are advised, although not obliged, to notify the Local Authority of their intention to educate other than at school.

STEP 2

After notification parents will receive a form to complete and return to the Education Attendance Service which details the arrangements made for providing the child with suitable education. Parents will also receive information about educating children other than at school. This information will include useful names and addresses of organisations independent of the Local Authority.

STEP 3

On returning the form to the Education Attendance Service, the Inspectorate Section are notified by the EAS. An inspector will write to the parent to make an appointment to visit to discuss educational arrangements.

STEP 4

The Inspector will compile a report based on their visit and any other information available. The Inspector within the report will have deemed whether the education provided is satisfactory or not.

If the education is deemed **satisfactory** a review date will be arranged and the child's name will be placed on the register of those children educated other than by the Local Authority.

If the education is deemed **unsatisfactory** a visit will be arranged by the EHE Officer with the intention of discussing the available options. Parents will be given time to make amendments to arrangements should they wish to pursue educating other than at school. A further visit will then be arranged by the Inspector to review the arrangements. If the arrangements are still deemed unsatisfactory, the Education Attendance Service will give advice about finding a school place.

Appendix D: ORION ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION (EHE)

CLARIFICATION FOR PARENTS OF THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES (SECONDARY SCHOOLS)

This is not a notification of your intention to commence elective home education.

If you wish to proceed with EHE you are requested to notify the school separately in writing, and you will then be contacted by the Local Authority.

You have advised the school of your interest in home education. If you do proceed with elective home education, you are committing to the following:

- To take full responsibility for your child's education.
- To provide full-time education for your child.
- To provide an education which is 'efficient and suitable'.
- To provide an education which meets your child's needs, including any special educational needs.
- To provide an education which does not exclude future opportunities for your child.

You should also be aware of the following:

- The Local Authority cannot provide any funding to support educating your child at home.
- Schools will not provide work, books or enter your child for exams.
- Bromley: If you withdraw your child from school but subsequently choose to reapply to the same or a different school may find that there are no suitable places readily available. A long wait on the waiting lists of one or more schools may ensue and there is no guarantee of re-entry.
- If your child is at risk of permanent exclusion when you withdraw them from their school, and you subsequently advise that you can no longer provide home education, you will be requested to return your child to school. This might include making applications for alternative local schools.
- It is most likely that the case would be referred to the borough's Children Missing Education Panel which may determine that a period of time at alternative provision is the appropriate placement, and not necessarily a placement in a different mainstream school.
- For many reasons, parents frequently find that they cannot sustain home education in the longer term.
- Preparing your child for national qualifications and registering them for examinations will be your sole responsibility; this includes finding an examination centre willing to enrol your child.
- If you elect to withdraw your child from school, the school will inform the Local Authority.

- The Local Authority's Home Education advisor will contact you and work with you to review the provision of education within the legal framework.
- If the provision of education at home is found not to be 'efficient or suitable' at two reviews, you will be asked to complete an application in order that your child to return to school.
- You will be expected to take the school place which is allocated. If your child fails to attend, the Education Welfare Service will consider issuing a School Attendance Order.
- A referral may be made to Social Care if there are concerns about a child's welfare. A welfare check may be carried out.

Please be aware that information relating to attendance, any exclusions or any other relevant details will be shared if a request is received following a school application for your child.

You are asked to sign this document to indicate that you have read and understood your responsibilities with regard to Elective Home Education as indicated above.

Child's full name _____ Date of birth _____

Signed: _____ Name:_____

Relationship to child:_____ Date:_____

Copy provided to Parent/Carer by _____

Appendix E: Application for pupil leave of absence

The statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance makes it clear that a Headteacher may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

The Headteacher should determine the number of school days a child can be absent from school if the leave is granted.

Exceptional circumstances are defined as:

- Leave for a bereavement of a close family member is usually considered an exceptional circumstance but for the funeral service only, not extended leave.
- Leave to visit family members are also not normally granted during term time. Students may however need time to visit seriously ill relatives.
- Leave for important religious observances but only for the ceremony and travelling time, not extended leave. This is intended for one-off situations rather than regular or recurring events.
- Leave which takes the needs of the families of service personnel into account if they are returning from long operational tours that prevent contact during scheduled holiday time.
- Leave which makes reasonable adjustments for pupils with special educational needs or disabilities.
- Leave for families who may need time together to recover from trauma or crisis.

The Headteacher will take into account a pupil's previous record of attendance when making decisions.

It is important to note that the Head can determine the length of the authorised absence as well as whether the absence is authorised at all.

This form should be completed to enable the Headteacher to decide whether to authorise the application for leave.

Authorising leave from the school is at the discretion of the Headteacher.

If the leave is taken without the authorisation of the Headteacher, a Penalty Notice for unauthorised absence may be issued.

PARENTAL APPLICATION

The school expects every pupil to achieve 100% attendance.	
FULL NAME OF PUPIL:	**YEAR GROUP:**
ADDRESS:	
REASON FOR THE APPLICATION:	
PROPOSED DATE FROM:	**PROPOSED DATE TO:**
PARENTAL SIGNATURE:	**PARENT NAME – PRINT:**
OFFICE USE: **ATTENDANCE PERCENTAGE:** **RECOMMENDATION OF THE SENIOR ATTENDANCE LEAD**	
AUTHORISE LEAVE	**UNAUTHORISE THE LEAVE**

LEAVE OF ABSENCE REPLY

Dear Parent/Carer

In response to your request for a leave of absence for your child(ren):

LEAVE OF ABSENCE IS: **AGREED** **PARTIALLY AGREED** **NOT AGREED**

COMMENTS:

If leave is taken without authorisation legal action for unauthorised absence may be pursued.

Headteacher: Date:

Appendix F: School Procedures

Schools should add this information to their school website

The time school starts, and pupils are expected to arrive by
08.40 to 08.45
Time the AM register is taken and the time the pupil is considered late.
08.50
The time the register is closed and when the pupil is marked absent
09.30
The time the PM register is taken after the lunch break
13.30
How parents should report an absence, including illness, or medical appointments, include the name and contact details of the AO
<u>How parents should report an absence, including illness, or medical appointments</u> • Before 08.30 Via telephone or leave message on absence line. • Evidence of absence/appointment should be shared with the school. • Attendance Officer will follow up marks that are unauthorised to gain evidence
How schools will follow up on unplanned and unreported absence e.g., calls, home visits
• Phone call home by 9.30am • Use additional contact numbers on Day 1 to ascertain where child is/ask for them to contact parent to call/email the school Home visits to be completed as follows: • Children deemed to be vulnerable – on day 1 of absence. You will be notified of a home visit by telephone and letter. Two members of school staff will attend • All other children on Day 3

Strategies for promoting attendance and punctuality, including rewards, sanctions, assemblies, meetings with parents/carers etc.
• Celebrate daily attendance, classes with 100% punctually and attendance. • Attendance is celebrated within the classes by the teacher and teaching assistant. • Attendance is celebrated each Friday in our Celebration Assembly. • Individual certificates are given to children with our target attendance and above
Protocols for dealing with internal truancy
We have welcoming and warm teachers who ensure that children are in class at all times. If a child was not in class, a senior leader would be alerted. Please refer to our behaviour policy
Attendance reporting to parents and carers – including intervals
• Following graduated approach • Every school day counts reminder each week via Newsletter • Termly parents' evenings • End of year reports