

Attendance policy 2025/26



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Contents

1. Aims.....	2
2. Legislation and guidance	2
3. Roles and responsibilities	3
4. Recording attendance	6
5. Authorised and unauthorised absence	9
6. Strategies for promoting attendance	11
7. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school	Error! Bookmark not defined.
8. Attendance monitoring	12
9. Monitoring arrangements	14
10. Links with other policies	14
Appendix 1: attendance codes.....	15

1. Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations 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:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

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 School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2006/1751/contents>The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment
- <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2013/757/regulation/2/made>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/carers
- 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

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The 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
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising the Deputy Headteacher to be able to do so on his behalf
- Working with the parents/carers 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 pupils and parents/carers through all available channels
- Sharing information from the school register with the local authority, including:
 - Notifying the local authority when a pupil's name is added to or deleted from the school admission register outside of standard transition times
 - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who fail to attend school regularly, or who have been marked with an unauthorised absence for a continuous period of 10 school days
 - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who the school believes will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader also known as the 'senior attendance champion' is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis

- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- 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/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is David Swarbrick and can be contacted via 01282 865299 or swarbrick.d@fishermore.lancs.sch.uk

3.4 The attendance manager

The school attendance manager is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- 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 education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is Emily Gorrill and can be contacted via gorrill.e@fishermore.lancs.sch.uk

3.5 Class teachers/Form teachers

Class teachers/form teachers are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1), and submitting this information via Synergy no later than 8.45am for a morning session and no later than 12.10 pm for an afternoon session. A register at 2.50pm will also be taken by form teachers.

3.6 School admin staff

School admin staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the Attendance team/Year Leader where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

3.7 Parents

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

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

Parents are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every timetabled lesson on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 8.30am on the day of the absence (and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or local authority
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting Emily Gorrill, Attendance Manager who can be contacted via Synergy or by e-mailing gorrill.e@fishermore.lancs.sch.uk

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day, on time
- Attend every timetabled lesson on time
- Be punctual to all lessons

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

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

We will take our attendance register at the start of the form period each school day and once at the start of Period 4 for the afternoon period. 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 not
- The nature of the activity, where a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances, where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

The school day starts at 8.30am and ends at 3.00pm

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.30am and will be kept open until 8.55am. The register for the second session will be taken at 12.10pm and will be kept open until 12.20pm

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.30am or as soon as practically possible, by calling the school attendance team, who can be contacted via 01282 865299 or directly through Synergy.

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. If a pupil becomes a persistent absentee (under 90%) medical evidence may be requested for it to be authorised by the school.

Where the absence is longer than 5 days, or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

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.

4.3 Planned absence

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

However, we encourage parents 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 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 will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

Level	Trigger	Consequence
1	Late to school between 8.30am-8.55am	30-minute same night detention. Attendance Manager contacts home via Synergy
2	Late to school after 8.55am	60-minute same night detention. Attendance Manager contacts home via Synergy

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

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

- Call the pupil's parent on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may consider a home visit, especially if the pupil is considered to be vulnerable
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not

- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session(s) for which the pupil was absent
- Call the parent on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with: issue a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention (see section 5.2 below), as appropriate

Day of absence	Procedure for unauthorised absence
1st Day Response	Those pupils marked as N with no reason will have a phone call/ text/synergy message home by the School Attendance Officer (SAO). The SAO will make at least three attempts to contact parent by phone at different occasions during the day. If there is no response an e-mail will be sent to parents to explain that they have attempted to make contact unsuccessfully.
2nd Day Response	If the pupil is still coded as 'N' and if there has been no response to the attempted telephone contact, text or e-mail, then an 'Unauthorised Absence' letter will be emailed to parents. If there is no response to phone call, SAO will consider a home visit if the child is on our vulnerable pupil list
3rd Day Response	If the child is considered vulnerable, then a home visit will be made by either the SAO or pastoral leader. An 'Unauthorised Absence' letter will be posted through the door of the vulnerable pupil.
4th Day Response	A home visit will be made for any other pupil who has not responded to either a phone call or an email by either the SAO or pastoral leader. An 'Unauthorised Absence' letter will be posted through the door
5th Day Response	Begin penalty notice proceedings
10th Day Response	The absence will be reported to the children missing in education team when the pupil has missed ten school days without permission

4.6 Reporting to parents

Fisher More uses Synergy Attend for monitoring attendance and punctuality at both individual and whole school level. We will analyse data, patterns and trends to develop future action planning and target setting. Parents can track their child's attendance using the parental Synergy app.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

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

The headteacher will only grant a **leave of absence** to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the [2024 school attendance regulations](#). These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances

A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as attending funerals or weddings.

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

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

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

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 4 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the attendance manager. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Other valid reasons for **authorised absence** include (but are not limited to):

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Parent(s) 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
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

- Other reasons the school may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):
- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
- Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority
- Attending work experience
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

5.2 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.

Penalty notices

The headteacher (or someone authorised by them), local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

If the school issues a penalty notice, it will check with the local authority before doing so and send it a copy of any penalty notice issued.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks)
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

Each parent who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

If a **second** penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days.

A **third** penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day). These penalty notices are not included in the National Framework, not subject

to the same considerations about support being provided, and do not count towards the limit as part of the escalation process.

In these cases, the parent must pay £60 within 21 days, or £120.

Notices to improve

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

Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

They will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under [section 7 of the Education Act 1996](#)
- Details of the support provided so far
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

A variety of rewards are given to pupils throughout the academic year to celebrate good attendance. A pupil's attendance also impacts on whether they are invited to attend the end of year rewards trip or the Year 11 Prom. Each term pupils with 100% attendance are allocated certificates and merits and will be invited to reward assemblies. Each term an attendance focus week will be calendared. During this period, anyone who has 100% attendance will have the opportunity to be rewarded with vouchers.

Section 6.1 – Rewards and Recognition

In addition to the rewards outlined in Section 6, the school will link attendance to the wider rewards and merits system to encourage sustained improvement. This will include:

- Awarding additional merits for pupils who improve their attendance over a half-term, even if they have not yet reached 100%.
- Recognising pupils who move from persistent absence (below 90%) to improved attendance through certificates, pastoral praise, or leadership acknowledgement.
- Including attendance as a contributing factor in the assessment of Attitude to Learning (ATL) scores, ensuring that pupils understand the importance of punctuality and presence in every lesson.
- Celebrating punctuality with recognition for pupils who achieve a full half-term without any late marks

7. Attendance monitoring

Fisher More uses Synergy Attend for monitoring attendance and punctuality at both individual and whole school level. We will analyse data, patterns and trends to develop future action planning and target setting. Parents can track their child's attendance using the parental Synergy app.

7.1 – Reintegration and Support

When a pupil returns to school after a prolonged or repeated absence, the school will:

- Conduct a reintegration meeting involving the pupil, parents/carers, and relevant staff (such as form tutor, Year Leader, SENCo or DSL if appropriate).
- Where necessary, put in place a phased return, personalised timetable, or pastoral support plan.
- Provide access to peer support or wellbeing check-ins to help the pupil settle back into routines.
- Liaise with external agencies (e.g., ELCAS, social care, or education welfare officers) where additional support is required.

8. 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 and cohort level.

Specific pupil information will be shared with the DfE on request.

The school has granted the DfE access to its management information system so the data can be accessed regularly and securely.

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 form tutors and Heads of Year, 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 the pupil premium lead)
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

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)

8.5 – Attendance Monitoring by Subgroup

The school will analyse attendance not only at whole-school and individual levels, but also across key subgroups (including disadvantaged pupils, those with SEND, pupils with English as an additional language, and year group cohorts). This analysis will be used to:

- Identify patterns of inequity or groups at greater risk of persistent absence.
- Ensure interventions are fairly distributed and targeted to those most in need.
- Report subgroup trends to governors termly for scrutiny and support.

9. Communication with Parents and Pupils

To ensure families are fully engaged with attendance expectations, the school will:

- Provide half-termly attendance reports to parents, highlighting successes and areas for improvement.
- Share attendance updates through the Synergy app, letters, and direct communication from form tutors and Heads of Year.
- Involve pupils in discussions around attendance barriers through school council and tutor-time activities, ensuring that pupil voice informs strategy.
- Publish an annual attendance summary on the school website, demonstrating transparency and accountability.
-

10. Safeguarding and Attendance

The school recognises that poor attendance may be a symptom of wider safeguarding concerns. Staff will:

- Cross-reference attendance data with safeguarding records to identify risks such as neglect, exploitation, or hidden harm.
- Escalate concerns in line with the school's safeguarding policy where persistent absence raises welfare concerns.
- Treat patterns of unexplained or prolonged absence as a safeguarding issue, ensuring swift intervention and support.

11. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

12. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every 12 months by David Swarbrick, Deputy Headteacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

Appendix 1: attendance codes

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

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

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

Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		

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

Appendix 2 – Letter templates

Letter 1a – Attendance concerns

Dear #ContactName#,

ATTENDANCE CONCERN: #StudentLegalForename# #StudentLegalSurname# #StudentYearGroup#

The DfE states that pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. As a school we have high expectations for attendance. Good attendance at school is vital because even short periods of absence can mean that a child's ability to keep up with schoolwork may be significantly reduced. Friendship groups can also be affected by time away from school and this can be upsetting for children.

As part of monitoring pupil progress, we review the attendance of all our pupils at least once every half term. Our latest register check revealed that #StudentChosenFirstName#'s attendance is of concern. Whilst we appreciate that these absences may be due to illness, or other reasons authorised by school, we ask that you consider #StudentChosenFirstName#'s current attendance level before further school days are missed as this level of absence means that #StudentChosenFirstName# has missed a significant amount of school.

Our key priority as a school is to ensure that all children are attending frequently. When issues arise, we want to communicate with our families to explore the barriers to attendance and what support can be put into place.

It is for this reason that we are highlighting our concerns around attendance and asking for your support. If you would like to discuss your child's attendance in more detail or require any support, please contact Mrs Gorrill, attendance manager.

Letter 1b – Risk of becoming a Persistent Absentee

Dear #ContactName#

ATTENDANCE CONCERN: #StudentLegalForename##StudentLegalSurname# #StudentYearGroup#

Regular attendance at school allows for continuous learning but also fosters a sense of community and belonging in the school environment. Pupils whose attendance falls below 90% are classed as being persistently absent, potentially leading to significant underachievement. #StudentChosenFirstName#'s attendance currently stands

at #Attendance_Attendance_CurrentAcademicYear_IndividualStudent#. Research shows that pupils who are frequently absent can often fail to meet their full potential as the absences from school disrupt their learning and impact on their relationships within school. Every day which is missed from school means your child loses around 5 hours of learning.

To avoid #StudentChosenFirstName# becoming persistently absent, it is important that there is an improvement in their attendance levels. Whilst we can appreciate that some of #StudentChosenFirstName#'s absences this year may have been due to unavoidable circumstances, we would appreciate your co-operation in making an improvement.

Under certain circumstances, school is required to notify the Local Authority of low levels of attendance. However, in most circumstances schools can work with parents and pupils to make improvements without having to consider this option.

Therefore, we would ask for your support in reaching an improved level of attendance. If there is any way in which you feel school can support you, or if you have any queries about the content of this letter, please contact school and arrange an appointment to see Mrs Gorrill, attendance manager.

Letter 2a – Attendance concern – referral to County Support Team

Dear #ContactName#

ATTENDANCE CONCERNS: #StudentLegalForename# #StudentLegalSurname# #StudentYearGroup#

School attendance is very important so that children are given as much opportunity as possible to develop academically and socially. Regular attendance at school allows for continuous learning but also fosters a sense of community and belonging in the school environment. When children are absent from school, they often find it difficult to catch up on the work they have missed and can feel unsettled by this.

The attendance of all our children is monitored at least once every half term, as part of our pupil progress reviews. Our latest register check revealed that #StudentChosenFirstName#'s attendance is currently #Attendance_Attendance_CurrentAcademicYear_IndividualStudent#. This is of concern as it is much lower than the average for most of our pupils. For this reason, we ask for your support in improving #StudentChosenFirstName#'s attendance, as we believe that this is one of the main ways in which our children will be happy at school and achieve their full potential.

If #StudentChosenFirstName#'s attendance does not improve, we will need to contact you again to discuss the situation further. It may also be necessary to ask our Local Authority School Attendance Support Worker for advice in this matter. Therefore, we would ask for your support in reaching an improved level of attendance.

If there is any way in which you feel school can support you, or if you have any queries about the content of this letter, please contact school and arrange an appointment to see Mrs Gorrill, attendance manager.

Letter 2b – Attendance concern – Legal responsibilities

Dear #ContactName#

Re: #StudentLegalForename# #StudentLegalSurname# #StudentYearGroup#

Despite writing to you previously about our concerns regarding your child's attendance, #StudentChosenFirstName#'s attendance has now fallen to #Attendance_Attendance_CurrentAcademicYear_IndividualStudent#. A copy of their attendance record accompanies this letter.

It is important to be aware of the legal responsibilities regarding a child's regular attendance at school. As a parent or carer, ensuring that your child attends school regularly is not only crucial for their education but also a legal requirement. Non-compliance can lead to legal proceedings. To prevent such outcomes, it is advisable to take pro-active steps to improve your child's school attendance.

We value #StudentChosenFirstName#'s attendance at school and wish them to receive the best educational opportunities available to them. We would like to support you to improve your child's attendance and would like to invite you into school to discuss this matter. Please contact Mrs Gorrill on 01282 865299 or call into school to make an appointment as soon as possible.

Letter 3a – Persistent Absentee and Invite to meeting

Dear #ContactName#

PERSISTENT ABSENCE: #StudentLegalForename# #StudentLegalSurname# #StudentYearGroup#

School attendance is crucial for a child's academic and social development. Attendance is given high priority by school and by both local and central government. High attendance rates are linked to better academic performance and stronger peer relationships. Recognising this, school actively monitors attendance patterns and implements strategies to minimise absenteeism. Persistent absenteeism, defined as attendance below 90%, is a particular focus, with efforts aimed at understanding and addressing the underlying causes to support students in maintaining consistent school attendance.

A recent register check has shown that #StudentChosenFirstName#'s attendance is currently #Attendance_Attendance_CurrentAcademicYear_IndividualStudent#. This means that they are a persistent absentee. When attendance falls into this category it is likely that it will need to be brought to the attention of our Local Authority School Attendance Support Worker. Furthermore, persistent absence data is reported to the Department for Education, which means that #StudentChosenFirstName#'s attendance record will be included in this data.

You are invited to attend a meeting in school with Mrs Gorrill on at _____. It would also be useful for #StudentChosenFirstName# to attend this meeting with you. During this meeting we hope to discuss your child's attendance in more detail, to identify any barriers to attendance and whether you require any support.

If the date or time of this meeting is not convenient, please contact school as soon as possible and we will endeavour to rearrange it. Please note that failure to attend this meeting, or to contact school to rearrange, is likely to result in school discussing this case with the local authority attendance team. You are reminded that as a parent/carer it is your legal responsibility to ensure that your child attends school regularly and punctually. Failure to do so could result in legal action being taken against you.

Letter 3a – No improvement to Persistent Absentee meeting

Dear #ContactName#

Re: #StudentLegalForename# #StudentLegalSurname# #StudentYearGroup#

It is of concern that your child's attendance level has fallen to #Attendance_Attendance_CurrentAcademicYear_IndividualStudent#. A copy of #StudentChosenFirstName#'s attendance record is enclosed. Good attendance at school is vital because even short

periods of absence can mean that a student's ability to keep up with schoolwork may be significantly reduced. Friendship groups can also be affected by time away from school and this can be upsetting for some students.

We value **#StudentChosenFirstName#**'s attendance at school and wish them to receive the best opportunities available to them. You are invited to attend a meeting in school on **#CurrentDate_CurrentDate_0#** at _____ with Mrs Gorrill. It would also be useful for **#StudentChosenFirstName#** to attend this meeting with you. During this meeting we hope to discuss your child's attendance in more detail, to identify any barriers to attendance and whether you require any support. If the date or time of this meeting is not convenient, please contact school as soon as possible and we will endeavour to rearrange it.

We will also be discussing your child's absence with our LA School Attendance Support Worker to gain further advice on how to proceed with this matter.

As a parent/carer of a child who is a registered pupil at this school, you hold legal responsibility for ensuring your child attends school regularly. All Lancashire schools share the government's determination to raise levels of pupils' attendance and attainment to ensure the best possible start in life for our children.

If there is no improvement in your child's attendance, we may submit a referral to the Local Authority School Attendance Legal Team.

Penalty notices will be charged at a rate of £160 per parent per child. This can be paid at £80 if paid within 21 days.

Any second penalty notice issued to the same parent for the same child within a rolling 3-year period, (starting from 19th August 2024), will be issued at the rate of £160 to be paid within 28 days with no option for a discounted rate. Failure to pay a penalty notice can result in prosecution and a criminal record.

Prosecution will be considered if you have previously received two penalty notices for the same offence within a rolling 3-year period, (from 19th August 2024).

The School Attendance Legal Team may decide to either issue a penalty notice or prosecute you.

From August 2024, if you have previously received two penalty notices for the same offence within a rolling 3-year period, the Local Authority cannot issue a further penalty notice and must consider alternative action which may be a prosecution.

The Local Authority will also consider other factors when determining whether a penalty notice should be issued, or a prosecution should be brought against you. These factors include any previous legal action that has been taken against you for school non-attendance, your level of engagement with school, and the level and severity of your child's current absence.

Letter 4a – Legal intervention

Dear **#ContactName#**

Re: #StudentLegalForename# #StudentLegalSurname# #StudentYearGroup#

It is of concern that your child's attendance level has fallen to **#Attendance_Attendance_CurrentAcademicYear_IndividualStudent#** during this academic year. A copy of **#StudentChosenFirstName#**'s attendance record is enclosed. This shows that your child has had numerous unauthorised absences during this academic year.

We value **#StudentChosenFirstName#**'s attendance at school and wish them to receive the best opportunities available to them. Despite us inviting you to attend a meeting on **#CurrentDate_AddCalendarDays_0#**, you failed to attend.

We would like to support you to improve your child's attendance and would like to again invite you into school to discuss this matter on **#CurrentDate_AddCalendarDays_0#** at **<time>** with Mrs Gorrill.

During this meeting we hope to discuss your child's attendance in more detail, to identify any barriers to attendance and whether you require any support. If you are unable to make this appointment, please contact Mrs Gorrill on 01282 865299 or call into school as a matter of urgency.

As a parent/carer of a child who is a registered pupil at this school, you hold legal responsibility for ensuring your child attends school regularly. All Lancashire schools share the government's determination to raise levels of pupils' attendance and attainment to ensure the best possible start in life for our children.

Under the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 an authorised officer may issue each parent with penalty notice for each child, with a fine of £160, as an early deterrent to prevent unauthorised absence developing. Failure to pay the penalty notice can result in court proceedings being taken against the parents concerned.

The Local Authority has legal powers to take action via the courts for persistent non-attenders and may choose to use these powers rather than issuing a penalty notice fine. Under Section 444(1) Education Act 1996, parent/carer(s) can be prosecuted for failure to ensure regular school attendance via the Magistrates' Court. The penalty for an offence under this act can be a fine up to £1,000.

There is a more serious offence under Section 444(1A). Parents prosecuted under this offence may be issued with a maximum fine of £2,500, a term of imprisonment of up to 3 months, or both. Under Section 444(1A) failure to attend court could lead to an arrest warrant being issued, requiring the defendant to attend court for sentencing.

Whilst we would wish to avoid taking these steps, we have serious concerns regarding your child's attendance. If the attendance does not improve and there is no engagement from you, we will have no choice to refer the matter to the Local Authority School Attendance Legal Team, and the instigation of legal action may become unavoidable.

Yours sincerely,

Letter 5– Unexplained Absences

Dear **#ContactName#**

Unexplained Absence

It has been noted that **#StudentChosenFirstName#** has been absent from school for several days. As the school has not been contacted with a reason for **#StudentChosenFirstName#**'s absence, we have attempted to contact you without success. We would be grateful if you could contact us to let us know why your child has been away from school as soon as possible.

The dates of the unexplained absences are: <dates>.

Your co-operation in this matter would be most appreciated.

Yours Sincerely,

The School Attendance Team