

PUPIL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Document information

Effective from	Autumn Term 2026	Approved on	21 st October 2026
Last updated	Autumn 2024	Last updated by	L.Willetts
Review date	September 2028 <i>(unless legislation changes)</i>		

Signature



Date: 21st October 2026

Head Teacher

Signature



Date: 21st October 2026

Chair of Governors

The name and contact details of the Senior Attendance Champion – the senior leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in our school, is:

Name: Mrs L Willetts

01384 255910

senco@gracemary.sandwell.sch.uk

The name and contact details of the school staff member pupils and parents should contact about attendance on a day-to-day basis is:

Name: Mrs Bates or Mrs Oliarnyk (office team)

01384 255910

office@gracemary.sandwell.sch.uk

The name and contact details of the school staff member pupils and parents should contact for more individual support with attendance:

Name: Mrs Smith, Mrs Willetts or Mrs Oliarnyk

01384 255910

familysupport@gracemary.sandwell.sch.uk

GREEN Pupils with attendance 96% - 100%	0 – 8 day missed	- Bronze, silver, gold reward system. - End of year 100% attendance award
YELLOW Pupils with attendance 90% - 95.9%	9 – 18 days missed	Text message monthly until it increases to above 95.9% – inform parents/guardians attendance has fallen below the national expectation
AMBER Pupils with attendance 85% - 89.9%	19 – 28 days Missed <i>At least 114 hours of learning missed</i>	Your child's attendance is well below the threshold. RAPID improvements must be made Letter 1– inform parents/guardians attendance will be monitored for the next term and parents/guardians will be called to an attendance meeting and offered support
RED Pupils with attendance Below 84.9%	29+ days rep Missed <i>At least 174 hours of learning missed</i>	Letter 2– inform parents/guardians of attendance. Meeting will be carried out (school or home). Early Help will be offered and parents will be expected to work with the school to improve attendance. Expectations will be set through an agreement made. <i>This level of absence will highly affect pupils learning and progress.</i>

***190 school days per year**

School day

Gates open 8.25am

Registration opens 8.30am (children should be in their classroom)

Registration closes 8.40am

Afternoon registration: 12.15pm

End of the school day: 3.00pm

Introduction and Background

Grace Mary Primary School believes that regular attendance and positive engagement in school are fundamental to ensuring all pupils can achieve their full potential. Excellent attendance supports pupils' academic achievement, emotional wellbeing, social development and future life opportunities.

We are committed to promoting a culture in which every pupil is expected and supported to attend school every day, arrive on time and remain in school for the full school day.

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent/carer to ensure their child receives that education, either through regular attendance at school or otherwise than at school.

Where parents/carers choose to register their child at Grace Mary Primary School, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends regularly and punctually. Regular attendance means attending every session the school is open and arriving on time, except where an absence is unavoidable and authorised by the school, such as genuine illness or exceptional circumstances approved by the Headteacher.

We recognise that improving attendance is a partnership between home, school, the local authority and other agencies. We are committed to working proactively with pupils and families to identify and remove barriers to attendance at the earliest opportunity, ensuring that every child feels safe, welcomed, valued and able to access their education.

For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

It is a rule of this school that pupils must attend every day, unless there are exceptional circumstances, and it is the *headteacher*, not the parent, who can authorise the absence.

Policy Aims:

This policy aims to:

- Promote high levels of attendance for all pupils.
- Ensure pupils attend school regularly and punctually.
- Identify attendance concerns at an early stage.
- Provide support to pupils and families experiencing attendance difficulties.
- Meet statutory responsibilities regarding attendance monitoring and reporting.
- Foster a culture where attendance is valued and celebrated.
- Details the responsibilities of individuals and groups involved and the procedures in place to promote and monitor pupil attendance.

Legal Framework

This policy is based on:

- The Education Act 1996.
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance (Department for Education).
- Keeping Children Safe in Education.
- Relevant safeguarding and child protection legislation.

Roles and Responsibilities

Governing Body

The Governing Body will:

- Recognise the importance of school attendance and promote it through the school's ethos and policies.
- Monitor attendance data and trends.
- Challenge leaders where attendance requires improvement.
- Ensure the school fulfils its statutory attendance duties.

Headteacher

The Headteacher will:

- Promote positive attendance across the school.
- Ensure attendance procedures are implemented consistently.
- Monitor attendance data and trends.
- Report attendance information to governors.

Attendance Lead

The Attendance Lead will:

- Monitor daily attendance records.
- Identify pupils at risk of persistent absence.
- Communicate with parents/carers regarding attendance concerns.
- Coordinate support plans and interventions.

Class Teachers

Teachers will:

- Record attendance accurately and promptly.
- Encourage good attendance and punctuality.
- Report attendance concerns to the Attendance Lead.

Parents/Carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Ensure their child attends school every day unless they are genuinely unwell.
- Inform the school of any absence on the first day.
- Provide evidence where appropriate. Note: The school will not routinely request medical evidence but may do so where there are concerns regarding the frequency, pattern or authenticity of absence.
- Avoid taking holidays during term time.

Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day.
- Arrive on time and ready to learn.
- Engage positively with attendance support where required.

Wellbeing and Attendance Support Team

Grace Mary Primary School is committed to promoting good attendance through a supportive, child-centred approach. We work in partnership with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies to identify and remove barriers to attendance.

The school's Wellbeing and Attendance Support Team, comprising Mrs Smith, Mrs Willetts and Mrs Oliarnyk (members of the Safeguarding Team), leads this work. In line with *Working Together to Improve School Attendance*, the team adopts a wellbeing-led approach, working with families to understand attendance concerns and provide appropriate support.

Whilst the school fulfils its statutory responsibilities regarding attendance, support and early intervention will always be our primary response. Penalty Notices and other legal measures will only be considered as a last resort when all reasonable support and intervention have been offered and exhausted.

The Wellbeing and Attendance Support Team will undertake the following roles:

- work with all staff to identify changes in pupils behaviours which may signify a potential emotion-based school avoider.
- work with pupils to identify barriers to their attendance through 'talking mats' (annex D) and 'push and pull factors' (annex E). These are shared with and/or completed with parents.
- promote the importance of attendance at every opportunity including tours of the school, initial home visits, new parents welcome meetings.
- to be the initial point of contact for all parents with queries about attendance;
- monitoring punctuality by recording the names of children who are late;
- liaising with the office staff after they conduct first day calls to establish reasons for absence;
- conducting weekly attendance sweeps to identify children whose attendance is below 95% to identify emerging concerns and offer early support before attendance declines further.
- We will inform parents by letter or telephone call if attendance if we are concerned about you child's attendance.
- liaising with the School Attendance Support Service (SASS);
- keeping in regular contact with families and carers of children;
- working closely with the Head Teacher and reporting attendance trends to the Head Teacher and Governing Body;
- conducting home visits with the safeguarding team;
- liaising with the CLA team for various local authorities
- working with the SENCo to act as a point of contact for specialist support and building up knowledge of support services available to children and families.
- attending Family Help/Strengthening Families meetings and other multi agency meetings.

Promoting Regular Attendance

At Grace Mary Primary school, we believe in developing good patterns of attendance and set high expectations for the attendance and punctuality for all our pupils from the outset. It is a central part of our school's vision, values, ethos and day to day life. We recognise the strong connections between attendance, attainment, safeguarding and wellbeing.

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is the responsibility of parents, pupils and all members of school staff.

To help us all to focus on this, we will:

- Submit a daily attendance return to the Department of Education, in line with the legal expectations placed on all schools;
- Build strong relationships and work jointly with families;
- Give parents/carers details on attendance in our newsletters and other points of contact throughout the year;
- Promote the benefits of high attendance;
- Accurately complete admission attendance registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence as required by law;
- Celebrate excellent attendance by displaying and reporting individual and class achievements i.e. through certificates and promotion of our silent disco class reward for having the highest school class percentage for 5 weeks;
- Reward good or improving attendance;
- Report to parents/carers regularly on their child's attendance and the impact on their progress;
- Contact parents/carers should their child's attendance fall below the school's target for attendance.

Understanding Types of Absence

Any absence affects the routine of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning journey and ability to progress. Any pupil's absence or late arrival disrupts teaching routines and so may affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is parental responsibility and allowing absence from school, without a good reason, creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parent), as either **authorised** or **unauthorised**. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required. Each half-day is known as a 'session'.

Authorised absences are morning or afternoon sessions away from school for a genuine reason such as illness, medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Examples include:

- Genuine illness.
- Medical or dental appointments that cannot be arranged outside school hours.
- Religious observance.
- Exceptional circumstances approved by the Headteacher.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been granted. This type of absence can lead to the school referring to the Local Authority for penalty notices and/or legal proceedings.

Examples include (however this list is not exhaustive):

- No reason for the absence given by parents/carers.
- Their own or family member birthdays.
- Family holidays during term time without approval.
- Shopping trips.
- Oversleeping.
- Non-specific illness explanations without appropriate evidence when requested.

Term-Time Leave

The school strongly discourages leave during term time.

Requests for exceptional leave must:

- Be submitted in writing using the school's leave request form.
- Be made in advance wherever possible.

The Headteacher will consider each request individually and decide whether it meets the criteria for exceptional circumstances.

Persistent Absenteeism (PA) and Severe Absenteeism (SA)

A pupil is defined by the Government as a '**persistent absentee**' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for any reason; this can be authorised or unauthorised absence. Absence at this level will cause considerable damage to any pupil's education and we need the full support and co-

operation of parents to resolve this. All pupils who have attendance levels of 90% or below are considered to be a persistent absentee.

A pupil who has missed 50% or more schooling is defined by the Government as '**severely absent**'. Pupils within this cohort may find it more difficult to be in school or face bigger barriers to their regular attendance and, as such, are likely to need more intensive support.

Absence Procedures

The name and contact details of the school staff member pupils and parents should contact about attendance on a day to day basis is:

Name: Mrs Bates or Mrs Oliarnyk (office team)

01384 255910

office@gracemary.sandwell.sch.uk

We monitor and review all pupils' absence, and the reasons that are given, thoroughly.

If a child is absent from school the parent must follow these procedures:

- Contact the school on the first day of absence before 8.30 am;
- The school has an answer phone available to leave a message if nobody is available to take your call, or you may call into school personally and speak to the office staff. Please be aware that, if you leave a voicemail to report your child's absence, you may receive a call from the school so that we may discuss the absence before making a decision as to whether the absence is to be recorded as authorised;
- Contact the school on every further day of absence, again before 8.30 am;
- If no contact is received, the school will record the sessions missed as unauthorised and follow safeguarding procedures, including contacting emergency contacts where necessary.
- Ensure that your child returns to school as soon as possible and you provide any medical evidence, if requested, to support the absence. Medical evidence may be requested where your child is having multiple periods of absence which are reported as being due to medical reasons. When determining whether a child is too ill to attend school, both parents and school staff can consider the advice contained within the NHS School Absence and Childhood Illness (annex C).

If your child is absent we will:

- Telephone or text you on the first, and every subsequent day of absence, if we have not heard from you. However, it is your responsibility to contact us;
- If we are unable to make contact with parents by telephone, we will telephone emergency contact numbers, send letters home and a home visit may be made, in the interests of safeguarding;

If absence continues we will:

- Contact you via text message, telephone or in writing if your child's attendance is causing concern, and/or where punctuality is a concern;
- Arrange a meeting so that you may discuss the situation with our Attendance Champion or Wellbeing staff;

- Create a personalised action/support plan, such as an attendance contract, to address any barriers to attendance and make clear each person's role in improving the attendance patterns of your child;
- Offer signposting support to other agencies or services, if appropriate;
- Refer the matter to the Local Authority for relevant legal sanctions, if attendance deteriorates following the above actions.

Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable and can sometimes lead to irregular school attendance patterns. Good time-keeping is a vital life skill which will help children as they progress through their school life and out into the wider world.

Pupils who arrive late disrupt lessons and, if a child misses the start of the day, they can feel unsettled and embarrassed and risk missing vital work and important messages from their class teacher.

The times of the start and close of the school day for all pupils at Grace Mary Primary School are:

- Gates open: 8.25am
- Registration opens: 8.30am (children should be in their classroom)
- Registration closes: 8.40am - *Children being registered between 8.40 am and 9.00 am will receive and 'L' code to recognise they are late*
- Afternoon registration: 12.15pm
- End of the school day: 3.00pm

How we manage lateness:

- Children arriving after 8.40am are required to come into school via the school office. If accompanied by a parent/carers they must sign them in and provide a reason for their lateness, which is recorded;
- Children being registered between 8.40 am and 9.00 am will receive and 'L' code to recognise their lateness.
- At 8.40 am the registers will be closed. In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after that time, they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site – 'U', but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean that they have an unauthorised absence;
- The school may contact parents/carers regarding punctuality concerns;
- From time to time a member of school staff will undertake a 'Late Gate' check, greeting late arrivals at the main entrance to the school.

Unauthorised lateness could result in the school referring to the Local Authority for sanctions and/or legal proceedings. If your child has a persistent lateness record, you may be asked to meet with Mrs Willetts or Mrs Smith, but you can approach us at any time if you are having difficulties getting your child to school on time. We expect parents and staff to encourage good punctuality by being good role models to our children and, as a school, we celebrate good class and individual punctuality.

Understanding barriers to attendance

Whilst any child may occasionally have time off school because they are too unwell to attend, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any barriers preventing regular attendance are best resolved between the school, the parents and the child. If a parent thinks their child is reluctant to

attend school, then we will work with that family to understand the root problem and provide any necessary support. We can use outside agencies to help with this, such as the School Nurse, Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing support services (e.g Reflexions or Inclusion Support Services), a Child and Family Support Worker or the relevant Local Authority team/s. Where outside agencies are supporting the family, you may be invited to attend a Team Around the Family meeting (TAF) to consider what is working well and what needs to improve. An individual support plan will be agreed and subsequently reviewed.

Some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include pupils who suffer from long-term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities, or other vulnerabilities. High expectations of attendance remain in place for these pupils, however we will work with families and pupils to support improved attendance whilst being mindful of the additional barriers faced. We can discuss reasonable adjustments and additional support from external partners, where appropriate.

The school recognises that attendance difficulties may be linked to SEND, emotional wellbeing, mental health needs, medical conditions, safeguarding concerns or wider family circumstances. Support and reasonable adjustments will be considered on an individual basis.

Under the DfE's statutory guidance, schools are required to submit a sickness return to the Local Authority for all pupils who have missed/are likely to miss 15 or more school days (consecutive or cumulative) due to medical reasons/illness.

See Annex A for summary tables of responsibilities for school attendance.

Local Authority attendance support services

The Schools Attendance Support Service works strategically by offering support to schools, to reduce persistent absence and improve overall attendance.

Parents are expected to work with the school and local authority to address any attendance concerns. Parents should proactively engage with the support offered, aiming to resolve any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be resolved in this way, the school may consider more formal support and/or refer the child to the Local Authority. If attendance does not improve, legal action may be taken in the form of a Penalty Notice (see Annex B for the Sandwell Code of Conduct) or prosecution in the Magistrates Court.

School Attendance and the Law

New legislation was passed, The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 which introduced a National Framework in England. By law all children of compulsory school age must receive an appropriate full-time education (Education Act 1996). Parents have a legal duty to ensure their child attends school regularly at the school at which they are registered.

Parents may be recognised differently under education law, than under family law. Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 states that a 'parent', in relation to a child or young person, includes any person

who is not a parent (from which can be inferred 'biological parent') but who has parental responsibility, or who has care of the child.

A person typically has care of a child or young person if they are the person with whom the child lives, either full or part time and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their biological or legal relationship is with the child.

National Framework for Penalty Notices

There is now a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England, of 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period. The 10 sessions of absence do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence (G, O and/or U coded within the school's registers). The 10 school week period can span different terms, school years or education settings.

Where attendance concerns remain despite support and intervention, the school and/or Local Authority may issue a Notice to Improve before considering a Penalty Notice, where appropriate. Sanctions may include issuing each parent (for each child) with a Penalty Notice for £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days (for the first offence). A second Penalty Notice issued within a three-year period will result in a fine of £160 per parent, per child. If a third offence is committed the matter may be referred to the local authority for consideration of prosecution via the Magistrates Court. If prosecution is instigated for irregular school attendance, each parent may receive a fine of up to £2500 and/or up to 3 months in prison. If a parent is found guilty in court, they will receive a criminal conviction.

There is no entitlement in law for pupils to take time off during the term to go on holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure or recreation, or to take part in protest activity in school hours. In addition, the Supreme Court has ruled that the definition of regular school attendance is "in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school."

The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 set out the statutory requirements for schools. All references to family holidays and extended leave have been removed. The amendments specify that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are "exceptional circumstances" and they do not have any discretion to authorise up to ten days of absence each academic year.

It is a rule of this school that a leave of absence shall not be granted in term time unless there are reasons considered to be exceptional by the headteacher, irrespective of the child's overall attendance. Only the headteacher or his/her designate (not the local authority) may authorise such a request and all applications for a leave of absence must be made in writing, in advance, on the prescribed form provided by the school. The school will usually consider that the parent who has made the application is therefore allowing the leave of absence, and also that all parents who are on the holiday are allowing the leave. Where a parent removes a child after their application for leave was refused or where no application was made to the school, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

It is likely that penalty notices will be requested, in line with the National Framework and Sandwell Code of Conduct, in respect of each parent believed to have allowed the absence.

Absence data

We use data to monitor, identify and support individual pupils or groups of pupils when their attendance needs to improve, and schools are required to submit pupil attendance data to the Department for Education on a daily basis Education (Information about Individual Pupils) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024. Persistently and severely absent pupils are tracked and monitored carefully. We also combine this with academic tracking, as increased absence affects attainment.

We 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.

Removal from roll: A child (of compulsory school age) is only removed from the school's register for specific reasons, including; notification that the child is on another school's roll, notification that the child is being home educated; approval from the Local Authority following 21 days of absence and no return date being given to school; notification of death of a child.

Elective Home Education: If a parent wishes to electively home educate their child they must inform the head teacher in writing. It is likely that the school will arrange a meeting with parents to discuss this. The school in turn will notify the school's attendance support team by completing an elective home education removal from roll form. Parents will be contacted by a member of the school's attendance support team and removed from school's roll/register.

Flexi-Schooling

Flexi-Schooling is at the discretion of the Headteacher. Requests must be made in writing to the Headteacher. This is an approach to education that would only be approved in exceptional circumstances and with the support of the Local Authority.

Safeguarding

Poor attendance can be an indicator of safeguarding concerns. Where attendance issues raise safeguarding concerns, appropriate action will be taken in line with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Data Protection

Attendance information will be stored and managed in accordance with:

- UK GDPR.
- Data Protection Act 2018.
- School data protection policies.

Annex A: DfE guidance Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance. From 19th August 2024

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65e8ae343649a2001aed63aa/Summary_table_of_responsibilities_for_school_attendance_applies_from_19_August_2024_.pdf

All pupils

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

Pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent

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

Persistently absent pupils

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

Severely absent pupils

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

Support for cohorts of pupils with lower attendance than their peers

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

Support for pupils with medical conditions or SEND with poor attendance

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

Support for pupils with a social worker

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

Looked after and previously looked after children

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

Monitoring

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

Annex B - SANDWELL CODE OF CONDUCT

See below.

Annex C – Illness Absence Guidance

[Is my child too ill for school? - NHS](#)

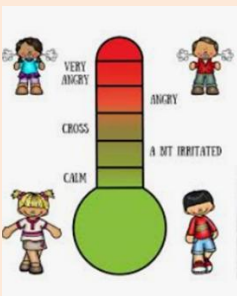
Annex D – talking Mats

Annex E – Push / Pull factors.

Annex F – Amber Letter

Annex G – Red Letter

Annex D – Talking Mats

 Loud noise	 Friends	 Talking to people I know (adults and children)
 Playtime and lunchtime	 Sleep	 My own space
 My lessons	 Busy places	 Playing outside
	 Understand my feelings	

Keeping Clean  Travelling to and from school	 Asking for help	Show how I feel safely  My learning
 Getting ready for school	 Going out	 Being at home
 Eating	 Social media	

		
Yes I feel good about this	I'm not sure	I'm worried about this

		
Yes I feel good about this	I'm not sure	I'm worried about this

Annex E –Push and Pull factors**Emotion based school refusal – push/pull factors.**

School	Home
PUSH (towards attending school) e.g. friends, academically bright etc	PULL (away from school, home factors) e.g. change in family circumstances, illness etc
PULL (away from school, school factors) e.g. worry about not being able to do the work following being out of school, peer issues etc	PUSH (towards staying at home) e.g. reduces anxiety about attending school, able to care for vulnerable family members etc

Annex F – Amber letter**Re: Persistent Absence – Your child is currently on AMBER****Child's name:**

GREEN Pupils with attendance 96% - 100%	• Bronze, silver, gold reward system. • End of year 100% attendance award
YELLOW Pupils with attendance 90% - 95.9%	Text message monthly until it increases to above 95.9% – inform parents/guardians attendance has fallen below the national expectation
AMBER Pupils with attendance 85% - 89.9%	Your child's attendance is well below the threshold. RAPID improvements must be made Letter 1– inform parents/guardians attendance will be monitored for the next term and parents/guardians will be called to an attendance meeting and offered support
RED Pupils with attendance Below 84.9%	Letter 2– inform parents/guardians of attendance. Meeting will be carried out (school or home). Early Help will be offered and parents will be expected to work with the school to improve attendance. Expectations will be set through an agreement made. <i>This level of absence will highly affect pupils learning and progress.</i>

Your child's attendance is currently 'x'%.**Your child has had 'X' separate absences since September 20??****This equates to 'x' days off**

Dear Parents/Carers

Our current attendance target range for all children is 96% - 100%. This target is set Nationally, and all families are expected to meet this. Any child with below 90% attendance is considered by the Department of Education to be a 'Persistent absentee'. For persistent absentees, the school is expected to have plans in place to both support children and to improve attendance.

This letter advises you that your child has fallen into the **Amber Zone** and therefore does not meet the expected standard.

We would like to offer you the opportunity to improve your child's attendance with support from school. Therefore if you would like to take up this opportunity please telephone 01384 255910 to arrange an appointment with Mrs Smith & Mrs Willetts (face to face or over the phone). Otherwise please ensure

that your child attends school every day. If absences continue unannounced home visits will be completed to check the wellbeing of the children.

Why is regular school attendance so vital?

There is a clear link between low attendance at school and low achievement. Children who miss a substantial amount of school fall behind their peers, and struggle to catch up. *Most of the work they miss is never made up, which can lead to big gaps in their learning.*

Poor attendance often starts in Early Years, and children who fall into this pattern are likely to underachieve at Key Stage 2. Pupils who miss between 10% and 20% of school (19 to 38 days per year) stand only a 35% chance of achieving end of Key Stage 2 expectations, compared to 73% of those who miss fewer than 5% of school days. Friendships can be affected by persistent absence, too: it can be hard for a child who misses lots of school to form relationships with their classmates.

Above 97%: less than 6 days absence a year - These young people have every chance to make really strong progress at school.
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95%: 10 days absence a year - These children benefit from strong overall attendance and are well placed to make good progress at school.

90%: 19 days absence a year - Young people in this group are missing a month of school per year; it will be difficult for them to achieve their best.
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85%: 29 days absence a year - Young people in this group are missing six weeks of school per year; there is a real risk that this lower attendance will hinder children's progress. This level of absence is seen as persistent absenteeism.

80%: 38 days absence a year - Young people in this group are missing a year of school over five years of education and are not benefitting from their entitlement to an education.

Yours sincerely

Mrs C Sturmey
Headteacher

Annex G –Red letter**Re: Persistent Absence – Your child is currently on RED****Child's name:**

GREEN Pupils with attendance 96% - 100%	• Bronze, silver, gold reward system. • End of year 100% attendance award
YELLOW Pupils with attendance 90% - 95.9%	Text message monthly until it increases to above 95.9% – inform parents/guardians attendance has fallen below the national expectation
AMBER Pupils with attendance 85% - 89.9%	Your child's attendance is well below the threshold. RAPID improvements must be made Letter 1– inform parents/guardians attendance will be monitored for the next term and parents/guardians will be called to an attendance meeting and offered support
RED Pupils with attendance Below 84.9%	Letter 2– inform parents/guardians of attendance. Meeting will be carried out (school or home). Early Help will be offered and parents will be expected to work with the school to improve attendance. Expectations will be set through an agreement made. <i>This level of absence will highly affect pupils learning and progress.</i>

Your child's attendance is currently 'x'%.**Your child has had 'x' separate absences since September 20??****This equates to 'x' days off.**

Dear

Parents/Carers

Our current attendance target range for all children is 96% - 100%. This target is set Nationally, and all families are expected to meet this. Any child with below 90% attendance is considered by the Department of Education to be a 'Persistent absentee'. For persistent absentees, the school is expected to have plans in place to both support children and to improve attendance.

This letter advises you that your child has fallen into the **Red Zone** and therefore does not meet the expected standard.

A meeting with the school Wellbeing/Safeguarding Leader & Attendance Officer has been arranged for you at (time) on (date). Please call the school office to confirm attendance or make other arrangements for the meeting. A home visit can be arranged. If absence continues, unannounced home visits will be carried out by the Safeguarding Leader and Attendance officer.

Why is regular school attendance so vital?

There is a clear link between low attendance at school and low achievement. Children who miss a substantial amount of school fall behind their peers, and struggle to catch up. *Most of the work they miss is never made up, which can lead to big gaps in their learning.*

Poor attendance often starts in Early Years, and children who fall into this pattern are likely to underachieve at Key Stage 2. Pupils who miss between 10% and 20% of school (19 to 38 days per year) stand only a 35% chance of achieving end of Key Stage 2 Expectations compared to 73% of those who miss fewer than 5% of school days. Friendships can be affected by persistent absence, too: it can be hard for a child who misses lots of school to form relationships with their classmates.

Above 97%: less than 6 days absence a year - These young people have every chance to make really strong progress at school.
95%: 10 days absence a year - These children benefit from strong overall attendance and are well placed to make good progress at school.
90%: 19 days absence a year - Young people in this group are missing a month of school per year; it will be difficult for them to achieve their best.
85%: 29 days absence a year - Young people in this group are missing six weeks of school per year; there is a real risk that this lower attendance will hinder children's progress. This level of absence is seen as persistent absenteeism.
80%: 38 days absence a year - Young people in this group are missing a year of school over five years of education and are not benefitting from their entitlement to an education.

Yours sincerely

Mrs C Sturmey
Headteacher