

Growing Together

Where every child matters and is prepared for a future of possibilities...



SPRINGSIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL PROMOTING GOOD ATTENDANCE POLICY

This policy is based on the DfEs 'Working together to improve attendance' guidance (published Feb 2024 and applying from Aug 2024). It also references Ofsted's report (February 2022) 'Securing good attendance and tackling persistent absence'

September 2026

Springside Primary School is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all.

We expect pupils to:

- Attend school every day
- Attend school punctually
- Attend school prepared for the day

We believe that attending school, on time, is key to enabling children to make the most of the opportunities we offer to prepare them for their future.

Every pupil should be able learn in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. Attending school regularly promotes the welfare and safety of children whilst they are not in the care of their parents/carers.

For a child to reach their full educational achievement, to make the most out of what Springside has to offer and to prepare them for their future, a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We will work in partnership with our families to identify the reasons for poor attendance and support them in addressing any barriers to the attendance of their child.

Promoting good attendance is a matter for the whole school community. This policy sets out our expectations and our approach. Our approach is in line with the Department for Education's guidance (Feb 2024) 'Working together to improve school attendance' applies from 19th August 2024. This policy also takes into account the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equalities Act 2010, the Race Relations Act 2000 and the 1996 Education Act.

Our approach to securing good attendance is based on the principle of support first, in line with Ofsted's research, our approach can be summarised as 'Listen, understand, empathise and support – but do not tolerate.'

Each year the school will examine its attendance figures and set attendance/absence targets. These will reflect both national and Bury attendance targets.

The school will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals.

This policy will contain within it the procedures that the school will use to meet its attendance targets. This policy will be applied consistently and fairly. In applying this policy, we will take into account the needs of individual pupils.

The school will also write an annual attendance strategy/action plan which will further outline the school's annual targets and measures which will be put into place in order to achieve these targets.

Expectations

It is our responsibility to maintain a culture that promotes good attendance which is supported by consistently applied systems.

Our dedicated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance is Miss Thornicroft.

Another member of staff in school who supports attendance on a day-to-day basis is Mrs Griffiths.

Parents/ carers must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and to any special educational needs they may have, by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

We are committed to working with parents to promote positive attendance. We expect all our parents to:

- Maintain effective routines at home to support good attendance
- Contact the school as soon as possible if your child is absent to let us know the reason for the absence and the expected date of return. This should be followed up with a written note as soon as possible
- Avoid unnecessary absences. For example, pre-planned medical/ dental appointments should take place outside of school hours.
- Inform us of any change in circumstances that may impact on your child's attendance.
- Support us by becoming involved in your child's education, acknowledging the value of education and the importance of children receiving the same messages from home and school
- Work with us to address any barriers to attendance for your child including attending all meetings requested to discuss attendance issues.

When they are old enough to understand, we expect all our pupils to:

- Be aware of when they should attend school
- Attend all lessons on time and be ready to learn
- Speak to a member of staff if they are experiencing difficulties at school or at home which may impact on their attendance
- Communicate with parents/ carers to encourage a written explanation to be shared with school to explain any absence that has happened or is foreseen
- Follow the school procedure if they arrive late

School Procedures

In the case of specific illnesses that require pupils to be kept off school, parents should follow public health advice to ensure the wellbeing of the whole school community. These illnesses are Chickenpox, Diarrhoea and Vomiting, Impetigo, Measles, Mumps, Scabies, Scarlet Fever and Whooping Cough – see ‘How long should you keep your child off school – checklist poster’ (which can be found online)

At Springside our classroom staff and senior leaders meet and greet our pupils either on school grounds or at the entrance to classrooms. This begins at 8.40am each day. Pupils are then able to go to their classrooms at 8.50am before school starts at 9.00am. From September 2026, EYFS will open their doors to greet children at 9am, this will give parents and carers time to take older children to their entrance at the rear of the school building for 8.50am and then have time to get back to the EYFS entrance by 9.00am.

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised (various codes are available such as medical appointment codes), unauthorised or as an approved educational activity (attendance out of school). Only the head teacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

Lateness

Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 9.00am. The registers will remain open for 30 minutes. Children arriving between 9.00am and 9.30am, will be recorded as arriving ‘late’. Children arriving after 9.30am will be recorded as ‘late after the registers are closed’ which is an unauthorised absence and this will result in half a day absence being recorded. If a pupil has an acceptable explanation i.e. a medical appointment (medical evidence may be required in certain circumstances) the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered but this will still affect a child’s absence record.

Class registers are taken promptly at 9.00am. Any pupil arriving after 9.00am is required to report to the main school office to be signed in and provide a reason for lateness (This will

ensure the child is added to the class register and is recorded as being in school in case of an emergency such as a fire evacuation).

Pupils who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education, but also that of others. Where persistent lateness gives cause for concern, a meeting with the Headteacher will be arranged to discuss what support can be offered.

The afternoon registration will be at 1.00 PM.

The registers will close at 1.30PM.

Our normal school day ends at 3.30pm, office staff will also record children who are picked up early and therefore missing education at the end of the day.

Absence Reporting Procedures

If a child is absent, parents/carers should call the school office on the first day stating the reason for the absence and the expected date of return. If the absence continues longer than expected, the parents should contact the school office on each day of the absence to keep the school informed about the reason for absence and expected date of return.

If no contact is made by parents/carers explaining the absence by 9.30am on the first day, the office staff will first send a message asking parents or carers to contact school. If there is still no contact, they will then try to phone a parent to discuss the absence, secure a reason for the absence and to discuss a return date. If no contact is made, a text message or voice mail will be left again asking parents/carers to contact school. If there is no response, the school will try to make contact with the pupil's other emergency contacts. If we cannot contact a parent and are concerned about a pupil then, a home visit may be carried out by a senior leader in school. If the family are supported by a social worker then the social worker will be informed of the absence. If we have further safeguarding concerns about a child, we may request a welfare check to be made by the police.

If, after the child returns to school no explanation of absence is given by the parents/carers, the school will attempt to speak to the parents/carers. The absence will be recorded as unauthorised after 5 school days if no explanation can be obtained.

Regular register checks are carried out by the School's Attendance Lead (Miss Thornicroft, supported by Mrs Griffiths). If a child's attendance falls below 92% a letter may be sent home by the Head Teacher requesting an improvement and offering support. If the attendance rate does not improve, the Head Teacher may contact the parents/carers by letter, do a home visit or invite parents/carers to a formal meeting.

We will telephone home if a pupil leaves school without permission.

Persistent Absence (Defined in legislation as 10% or more absences)

Either authorised or unauthorised. A child who is persistently absent is at risk of failing to achieve their full potential within the school environment.

Any pupil whose absence is concerning will be discussed with the school's **Local Authority Attendance Officer (SAO)**. The schools link SAO visits the school once a term to support the school in addressing any attendance issues. The school will record details of the action that they have taken. Any child who is absent from school for more than 3 days without contact, the school may carry out a home visit.

Frequent Absence

It is the responsibility of the school attendance team and other staff in school to be aware of and bring the Headteacher's attention to, any emerging attendance concerns.

In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem with the parents. If this is unsuccessful the school may refer to outside agencies such as the School Nurse if the problem appears to be a medical one. In other cases, the school will seek advice from the school's SAO.

A Welcome Back

It is important that on return from an absence that all pupils are made to feel welcome. This should include ensuring that the pupil is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other pupils.

Absence notes

Notes received from parents explaining absence should be kept for the remainder of the academic year. If there are attendance concerns about the pupil, that may require further investigation, then the notes may need to be retained for a longer period.

Requesting Leave of Absence

A leave of absence will only be granted (authorised) under exceptional circumstances. In making our decision we will take into account the specific circumstances and context behind the request. If a leave of absence is granted, the head teacher will determine the length of the time the pupil can be away from school. Requests for a leave of absence should be made in writing to the head teacher giving as much notice as possible.

The school will only grant leave of absence in **special circumstances**. Taking a holiday during school term because it would be cheaper, better weather, work commitments or tagging it on to the beginning or end of a school break is not in the DfE's (Department for Education's) view considered to be a 'special circumstance.'

Generally, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation will not constitute an exceptional circumstance.

Parents/carers must inform the school in writing – on paper or via email (at least 2 weeks before an absence) for permission to take their child out of school during term time. If the request is denied school will inform the parent/carer of the reason by letter. If the parents/carers choose to continue with the planned absence it will be taken as an **unauthorised absence**.

In the **rare circumstance** when the Head teacher is satisfied that there are genuine reasons for the extended leave in term time, this will be an authorised absence.

If we have not been notified of a request for leave of absence but a child is absent from school and we have not heard anything from parents after 3 days of absence or we suspect that the child is on holiday, a home visit will be conducted and a card pushed through the house door to ask that contact is made with school.

If a parent or carer has notified school that their child is ill but we suspect they are on holiday, a home visit will be conducted to check if the family are at home. If the family are not at home, it will be up to the family to ensure they obtain suitable evidence (such as medical evidence) to prove they were at home and not on holiday. It is the parents' or carers' responsibility to prove they were not on holiday and not the school's responsibility to prove that they were.

Managing Attendance Analysing Data and Setting Targets

We will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance, highlighting any amount of time missed and the impact on learning.

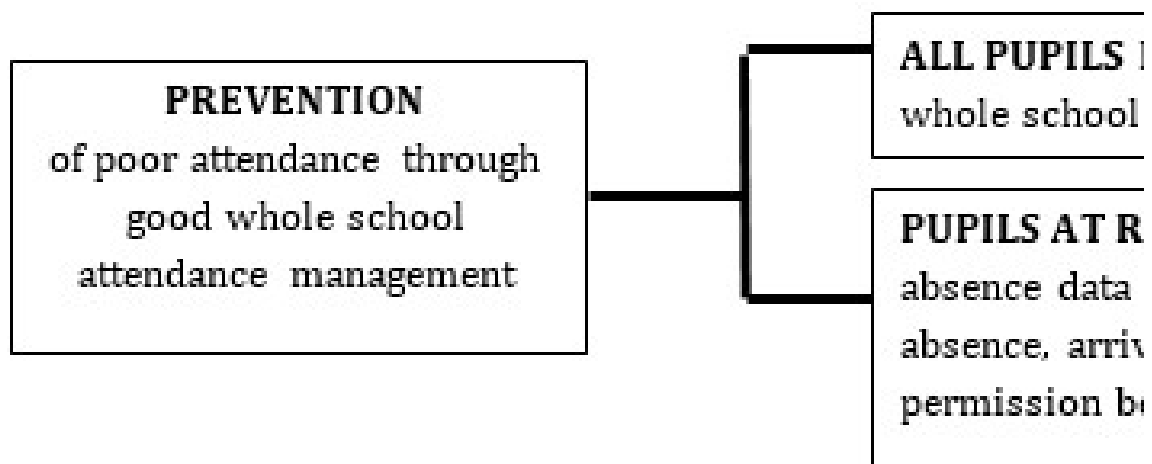
We value and recognise the importance of good attendance. We use the following to promote and celebrate good attendance:

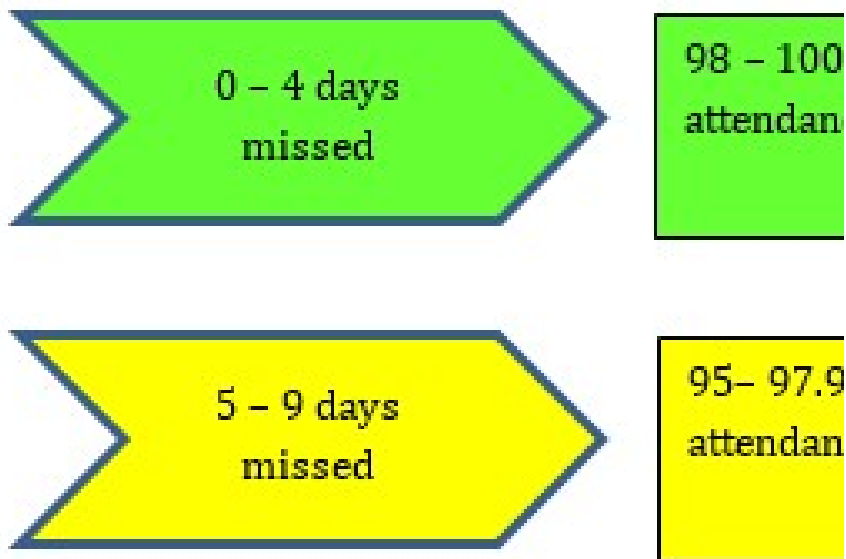
- Individual certificates
- Class rewards such as extra playtimes

We will regularly analyse attendance data to identify pupils who have consistently high attendance, those who have shown improvements in their attendance and to identify pupils who may be vulnerable. We will also analyse specific groups, classes, year groups to inform our strategy/action plan in promoting good attendance.

Our approach to attendance management is based on prevention, early intervention and targeted support. At all stages we aim to work in partnership with parents/ carers to address any barriers to attendance and/ or punctuality together. Where support is not successful, or is not engaged with, the law protects pupils' right to an education and provides a range of legal interventions to formalise attendance improvement efforts, and where all other avenues have been exhausted, enforce it through prosecuting parents.

We will regularly analyse attendance data to identify pupils who are at risk of poor attendance (<95% attendance), have poor attendance (<92% attendance) or are identified as being either persistently absent (<90% attendance) or severely absent (<50% attendance).





The school will set attendance targets each year. A system for analysing performance towards the targets will be established and a senior school manager will be responsible for overseeing this work.

Our schools targets are:

2026/2027: 95.5% overall attendance.

Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA)

We will regularly analyse attendance data to identify pupils or cohorts of pupils that need support. We will focus staff efforts on developing targeted actions for those cases.

If we have concerns about a pupil's attendance and/ or their punctuality then we will work in partnership with parents to support improvements. This may involve a meeting in school to support the family in identifying, and addressing, the barriers to attending school and/or attending school on time.

We recognise that poor attendance can be an indication of difficulties and trauma in a child's life. This may be related to problems at home and/or in school. Parents should make school aware of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance, for example, bereavement, divorce/separation, incidents of domestic abuse. This will help us to identify any additional support that may be needed. It is expected that the child and their family work collaboratively with us to identify the most appropriate support. Where relevant, the support would involve following the Emotionally Based School Avoidance pathway.

Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) is a term used to describe children and young people (CYP) who experience challenges in attending school due to negative feelings (such as anxiety). EBSA is commonly associated with emotional and physical distress, and a reluctance to attend school, which can lead to reduced attendance and further anxiety regarding school.

In most cases, there is no single or easily identifiable cause, but a complex interplay of different factors relating to school, the family/home, and other factors often outside school which would be contributing toward persistent school avoidance.

Early intervention is key and this will be supported by having a whole-school ethos which not only, communicates "a clear vision for attendance, underpinned by high expectations and core values", but also recognises the fact that there is no one-size-fits-all approach. In accordance with the principles of early intervention, we will take a graduated approach, utilising the range of resources we have at our disposal and seek advice and help at the appropriate stage and level, when it is needed.

Supporting Children and Families

We will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance. These may include:

- A recognised whole school approach that celebrates achievement in school
 - Reward systems for positive behaviours
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- Discussion with parents and pupils
- Discussion with the Virtual School where the child is looked after and/ or has a social worker
- Working with attendance professionals, internal and/ or external to the school
- Attendance panels
- Attendance support plans
- Attendance Contracts
- Referrals to support agencies
- Pupil Voice Activities
- Friendship groups
- Personal, social and health education
- Anxiety-based school avoidance resources
- Trauma-informed approaches
- Early help referral options
- Reward systems
- Time limited part-time timetables
- Additional learning support
- Behaviour support
- Inclusion resources
- Reintegration support packages

The school will use opportunities as they arise to remind parents/carers, that it is their responsibility to ensure that their children receive their education and how the time missed impacts on learning. Where necessary, school will regularly report to parents/carers what their child's attendance percentage is. This will enable parents to keep a track and make any changes as necessary.

We recognise that some pupils are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance, for example, those pupils with special educational needs, those with physical or mental health needs, migrant and refugee pupils and looked after children.

We will hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) consider to be vulnerable to discuss attendance at, and engagement with, school. This will include pupils who are classed as being persistently absent (10% or more absence), those who are severely absent (50% or more absence), those with patterns of absence and pupils who show an unexpected or unexplained dip in attendance.

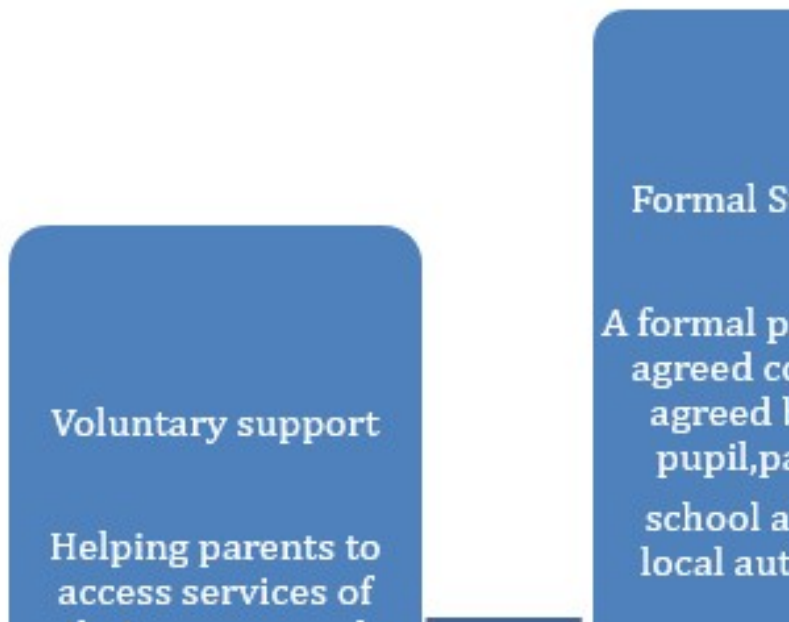
Working with parents, we will identify pupils who need support from wider partners and will make the necessary referrals as quickly as possible. With parental consent, this may include exploring Early Help support through the completion of the 'Story So Far' tool, or through discussion within a team around the school meeting.

We will support pupils back into school following a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence to build confidence and bridge gaps.

If we have any concerns about the welfare and wellbeing of a pupil then, in line with our safeguarding policy and procedures, we will make any necessary referrals.

Support offered to families, both internally and externally, will be child-centered, trauma informed and inclusive; planned in discussion and agreement with both parents and pupils.

Where support with parents is not successful, or is not engaged with, the law protects pupils' right to an education and provides a range of legal interventions to formalise attendance improvement efforts, and where all other avenues have been exhausted, enforce it through prosecuting parents.



We will work with Bury local authority to use the full range of legal interventions available to us to protect our pupils' right to an education. These are:

- Parenting contracts
- Education supervision orders
- Attendance prosecution
- Parenting orders
- Fixed penalty notices

Decisions on which intervention to take will be made on a case-by-case basis after considering the individual circumstances of the family.

Fixed Penalty Notices

School and the local authority will have regard to our safeguarding duties as set out in the Statutory guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Fixed penalty notices will be served on parents as an alternative to prosecution where parents have failed to ensure that their child regularly attends the school. Fixed penalty notices will be used where the pupil's absence has not been authorised by the school and the absence constitutes an offence. Fixed penalty notices can be issued to each parent liable for the attendance offence/s which should usually be the parent or parents with day-to-day responsibility for the pupil's attendance.

We will only use a fixed penalty notice, in line with the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007, where support to secure regular attendance has not been successful. Fixed penalty notices will be issued for unauthorised holiday in term time.

Fixed penalty notices can 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 fixed period or permanent exclusion. The parents must have been notified by the school at the time of the exclusion the days that the child must not be present in a public place.

Children 'Missing in Education' (CME)

If we have any concerns about the welfare and wellbeing of a pupil then, in line with our safeguarding responsibilities, we will make any necessary referrals.

If we have been unable to contact the family, and have not seen the pupil, then we will inform the Local Authority so that joint enquiries can be made to establish the whereabouts of the child through Children Missing Education procedures.

When a child leaves school, they will remain on the school register until they arrive at their new school and the CTF file can be transferred. School will record the child's absence until

they arrive at their new school. If after 20 school days, and no contact has been made by a new school, a CME form will be completed and sent to the LA. In this circumstance, school can remove the child from their register.

If a child is moving abroad (or out of the borough), the same process will be followed. It is essential that school tries to obtain a forwarding address or means of contact so that the child's whereabouts can be tracked. After 20 school days, a CME form will be completed and sent to the LA containing as much information as the school has.

Normally, a home visit will be completed within the 20 school days so that it can be established that the family have left their accommodation.

Additions to the policy in light of the findings of the serious case review – Chadrack Mbala-Mulo – Published March 2018

- On entry to school, parents will be given the opportunity to disclose any information about themselves (medical or otherwise) that might be relevant to the care of their child and/or relevant when responding to an emergency.
 - Springside will try to record at least 3 emergency contact details for every child so that other family members/ friends could be contacted in an emergency.
 - Relevant information will be recorded in children's record files e.g. contact details for professionals working with families and special housing circumstances e.g. known access restrictions to premises (it is important that in the case of an emergency, home visits are conducted and staff must be able to access the main door of a place of residence). Where appropriate, school will make contact with Local Authority Housing Services to help professionals gain access to premises with security-controlled entrances.
 - All staff will be aware that unexplained absence of a child is a safeguarding issue and home visits are essential as part of the good practice of the school.
 - When a child's whereabouts are unknown and all avenues of contact have been explored, it is the school policy to contact the police to report a missing child (The police will only force entry to a property if school can prove that there is a real risk that the child is about to become harmed or has been harmed, they cannot force
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entry to every child's house on the first day of absence if contact cannot be made with parents).

- School will ensure they have a comprehensive knowledge of the family circumstances of all children with SEN in school, especially those with social and communication difficulties.

The registration system

The School will use a computerised register system for keeping the school attendance records. School attendance data is shared automatically with the Local Authority and the DfE.

New national registration codes will be introduced from September 2024, these are detailed below.

Code	Meaning	Type
/ \	Present at the school / morning \ afternoon	Present Mark
B	Attending any other approved educational activity - Alternative Provision not arranged through the approved framework	Present Mark
C	Authorised Circumstance (see next page for breakdown)	Authorised Absence
D	Dual registered at another school - Attending Sheffield Inclusion Centre - Attending Alternative Provision at another school site - Chapel House / Becton Outreach / CAMHS Lodges - Hospital education - Education at a secure / residential site - Off-site direction / managed move	Present Mark
E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made	Authorised Absence
G	Holiday not granted by the school or Term Time Leave not granted by the school	Unauthorised Absence
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Authorised Absence
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution	Authorised Absence
K	Attending education provision arranged by the Local Authority - Home Tutoring - Approved Framework for Alternative Provision - Blended Learning	Present Mark
L	Late arrival before the registers have closed	Present Mark
M	Attended a medical appointment	Authorised Absence
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Unauthorised Mark
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	Unauthorised Absence
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Present Mark
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements	Not expected to attend
R	Religious Observance	Authorised Absence
S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination. Must be used sparingly with revision opportunities in school.	Authorised Absence
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes, and the pupil has attended for at least 200 sessions in preceding 12 months.	Authorised Absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Unauthorised Absence
V	Attending an Educational Trip or Visit	Present Mark
W	Attending Work Experience	Present Mark
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school	Not expected to attend
Y	Unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause (see next page for breakdown)	Not expected to attend
Z	Prospective or previous pupil not on admission register	Not expected to attend

Code	Meaning	Type
The Y code: Unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause, is broken down into the following sub codes to provide better differentiation of the reason:		
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available	Not expected to attend
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel	Not expected to attend
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed. For example, this may be due to damage or teacher strikes.	Not expected to attend
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed. For example, extreme weather, damage, no hot water, or heating.	Not expected to attend
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention. For example, in police detention, remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or detained under a sentence of detention.	Not expected to attend
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law. contrary to or prohibited by any guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of infection or disease.	Not expected to attend
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause. For example, an emergency has prevented the pupil from attending. The unavoidable cause must be something that affects the pupil, not just the parent.	Not expected to attend
The C code: Authorised Absence is broken down into the following sub codes to provide better differentiation of the reason:		
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances. Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days a pupil can be absent from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the school's discretion.	Authorised Absence
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.	Authorised Absence
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable.	Authorised Absence

Registers by law must be kept for at least 3 years.

Computer registers must be printed out at least once a month and bound into annual volumes.

Alternatively electronic back-ups or micro-fiche copies can be made. These also need preserving for at least three years.

Entries in paper registers must be in ink.

All corrections must be visible (no correcting fluid)

Register Security

- Class teachers are responsible for taking the register promptly at the start of each session.
 - In the event of a school emergency evacuation, evacuation reports will be collected and taken to the roll call assembly points by the school administration staff.
 - In accordance with good practice for safeguarding children, registers are maintained for every before and after school activity and kept by the teacher responsible for that activity. These must also be collected from and returned to the school office.
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Appendix 1

The Law

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable-

[a] To his age, ability and aptitude and

[b] To any special needs he may have.

either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child.

The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act.

Part V1 Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

Register and Admission Roll keeping.

The legal requirements are found in:

The Education [Pupil Registration] (England) Regulations 2006

Appendix 2

Categorisation of Absence

Any pupil who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories.

1. Unauthorised Absence
2. Authorised Absence
3. Approved Educational Activity

1. Unauthorised absence

This is for those pupils where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason.

2. Authorised absence

This is for those pupils who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.

3. Approved Educational Activity

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school.

Note Pupils recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes.

This would include:

- Work experience placements
 - Field trips and educational visits
 - Sporting activities
 - Link courses or approved education off site
 - Most types of dual registration
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Appendix 3

Flow chart showing how schools, and local partners, work with families to improve attendance

