



Bletchingley Village Primary School and Nursery

Attendance Policy

Review Date: April 2026
Reviewed by: Denise Coady (HT)
Next Review: September 2026

BLETCHINGLEY VILLAGE ATTENDANCE POLICY

Principles and Aims

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

Some pupils find it harder than others to attend school and therefore at all stages of improving attendance, schools and partners should work with pupils and parents to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place. Securing good attendance cannot therefore be seen in isolation, and effective practices for improvement will involve close interaction with schools' efforts on curriculum, behaviour, bullying, special educational needs support, pastoral and mental health and wellbeing, and effective use of resources, including pupil premium. It cannot solely be the preserve of a single member of staff, or organisation, it must be a concerted effort across all teaching and nonteaching staff in school, the trust or governing body, the local authority, and other local partners.

Attendance is essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances. The pupils with the highest attainment at the end of key stage 2 and key stage 4 have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment. At KS2, pupils not meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and maths had an overall absence rate of 4.7%, compared to 3.5% among those meeting the expected standard. Moreover, the overall absence rate of pupils not meeting the expected standard was higher than among those meeting the higher standard (4.7% compared to 2.7%).

For the most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided. Research has shown associations between regular absence from school and a number of extra-familial harms. This includes crime (90% of young offenders had been persistently absent)¹ and serious violence (83% of knife possession offenders had been persistently absent in at least 1 of the 5 years of study)². Whilst every pupil has a right to a full-time education and high attendance expectations should be set for all pupils, our attendance policy should account for the specific needs of certain pupils and pupil cohorts. Our policy should be applied fairly and consistently but also consider the individual needs of pupils and their families who have specific barriers to attendance under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

At Bletchingley Village Primary School and Nursery, good attendance is considered a high priority. Parents are informed of school and nursery hours and expectations in our prospectuses, at their induction meetings and our attendance information leaflet which is sent to all parents. Good attendance is rewarded. Poor attendance and lateness adversely affect both pupils and staff.

Nursery children are not of statutory school age and, therefore, will not count against attendance percentages, although, regularly attended sessions ensure that pupil's next steps can be consistently built upon. This policy applies to pupils in the Primary School and aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/understanding-the-educational-background-of-young-offenderssummary-report>

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/knife-and-offensive-weapon-sentencing-january-to-march-2018>

for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#).

[Resources for families | Children's Commissioner for England \(childrenscommissioner.gov.uk\)](#)

Legal responsibilities

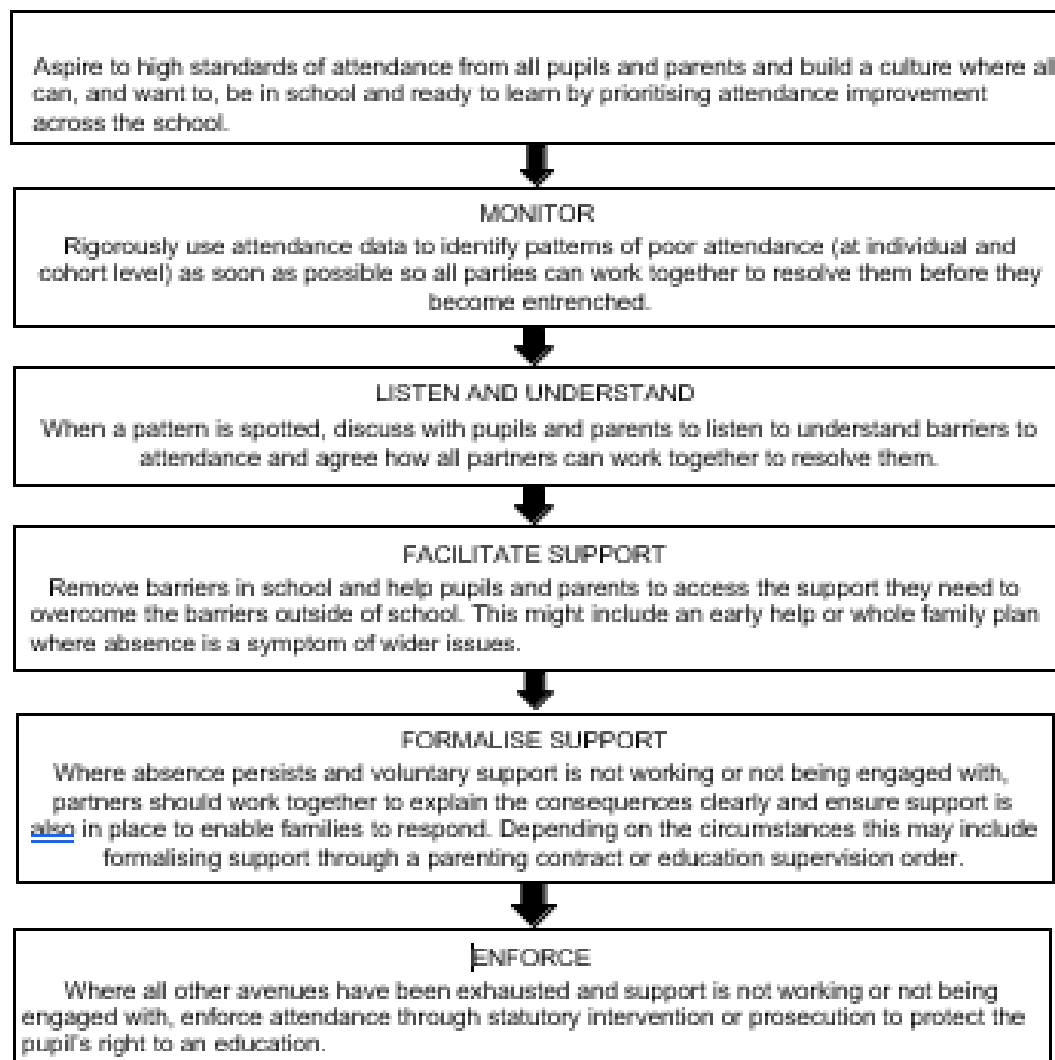
- Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their child attends primary school regularly and punctually.
- The LA has a legal duty to ensure that parents carry out this responsibility
- The school has a legal duty to record absence of registered pupils in compliance with the regulations
- The governing body has a legal duty to ensure the school register is kept in accordance with regulations and must set attendance targets which are then forwarded to the LA.

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 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments\)](#)
- <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2006/1751/contents>[The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2006/1751/contents>[The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2013/757/regulation/2/made>It also refers to:<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](#)

It is the parents' responsibility and their legal duty (Section 7 of the Education Act 1996) to ensure that their child receives full time education. We seek a partnership with parents to encourage good attendance and punctuality. To clarify roles and responsibilities, our whole school approach is summarised in Appendix 1.

The school attendance policy reflects that pupils are expected to attend 100% of the time, unless the absence is authorised by the Headteacher (or delegated person in the school.) Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless these are considered to be exceptional circumstances.



| KEY PERSONS INVOLVED | |
|--|--|
| SLT: Headteacher: Denise Coady Deputy Head: Laura White (M/W) Jessica Cushman(Tu/Th) SENDco Suzie Whittick | absence@Bletchingleytlit.co.uk 01883 743337 |
| SAO: Schools Attendance Officer: | Mrs Brown 01883 743337 absence@Bletchingleytlit.co.uk |
| Attendance Advice and intervention, Surrey | Mrs Dawn Ellul |

Incentives and Rewards to promote good attendance

Class attendance is celebrated in a weekly assembly as well as in the weekly newsletter. The class with the highest attendance of the week, has the prize of looking after the Attendance Squirrel Mascot. Pupils are awarded termly attendance certificates for attendance at 99% and above as well as end of year certificates and pencil rewards. In Year 6 the coveted trophy of the highest attendance is also awarded.

School Procedures

The School Day

8.35-9.00 staggered window for pupils to arrive for early work

9.00 Nursery session starts

3.00 Nursery session finishes

3.20 School finishes (Reception- Year 6)

Registers

The register is a legal document and is confidential. It may be requested in a court of law as evidence in a prosecution for non-attendance.

Electronic registers are completed twice daily using the Arbor Attendance register, at the start of morning school and immediately after lunch break. Official registers are produced every half term.

The register should be completed by the class teacher by **9.00** and checked by the office by **9.15 am** each morning and within 10 minutes of the start of the afternoon session, by **1.10pm**. After this time, the child will be considered late/absent and will need to report to the main office. Marks 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 2 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- For pupils of compulsory school age, 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.

Lateness

Children who arrive late must report to the office and parents/carers must sign pupils in.

Children will be marked late if they arrive **after 9.00am**.

Children from any Key Stage, who arrive **after 9.20am**, without any justifiable reason will be recorded as an unauthorised late.

To minimise disruption at the beginning of the day, when children are late, parents must leave their children at the office; they must not accompany them to the classroom.

Persistent lateness (90% and under) will result in a letter from the Headteacher and a meeting.

A class teacher who has any particular concerns about attendance or punctuality should refer the child to the Headteacher. Registers are monitored by the SAS (Schools Attendance Officer) at least half-termly and daily by our School Admissions and Attendance Officer (SAO).

Leaves of Absence from school

Categories of Absence

Absence is authorised when:

- i. The pupil is ill or prevented from attending by an unavoidable cause/medical needs. Depending on the reason, the pupil may be allocated Home Learning.
- ii. The day is set aside exclusively for 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
- iii. The Headteacher has been notified of, and given permission for a specific expected absence.
- iv. Appointment card or letter has been provided to confirm the pupil has to attend for medical or dental appointments.
- v. Requests of leave for exceptional circumstances.
- vi. 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
- vii. 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):

- viii. Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
- ix. Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)
- x. Attending provision arranged by the local authority

- xi. 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

Unplanned Leave of Absence

Parents are instructed to inform the school of all absences by either personal contact to the main office, letter, email absence@Bletchingletytlt.co.uk or via telephone 01883 743337 **option 1**; daily for each day of absence. Notification of the nature of the illness and the expected length of absence is also expected. A record of absence messages are saved on the pupils electronic personal file.

Guidance for vomiting and diarrhea suggests 48hrs need to be observed before returning to school. We will consider each case on an individual basis and advise parents/carers accordingly. We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised, unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where the absence is longer than [e.g. 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.

Planned Absence, Medical/other Appointments

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. For medical or other appointments during the school day, notification is required in advance, but where possible these should be arranged out of school hours. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary. Appointment cards or evidence must be shown to school.

The pupil's parent must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Please refer to: Requests for Leave of Absence during term time to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

Absence Procedures and following up unexplained absence from School

On the morning of the first day of unexplained absence, the office will make contact with the parent/carer of any child who is not in school, for whom we have not received an absence message for by 9.15 am the office, to ascertain the reason.

A message reminder will be sent to the parent via text and email. This message will be re-sent until the parent contacts the school. The office will also continue to contact the parent/carer through a phone call, email and/or text message. The office will re-send this again if there is no response, and contact the other contacts we hold on record. This is recorded as unauthorised.

As part of our safeguarding practice, we may conduct a home visit, if we have not received any communication regarding the absence and/or we have endeavoured to make contact without success.

Home visits are then recorded under our Safeguarding practices and the notes from the visit added to this record. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an School's Attendance Officer.

The office will identify whether the absence is approved or not and 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.

For persistent unauthorised absence a telephone call is made to the parent/carer on the first day of each non-attendance and recorded on the pupil file. For some pupils the inclusion officer or other agencies may be contacted.

School may offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance by identifying 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, school will consider requesting medical evidence, issuing a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention.

Communication

School will treat all pupils and parents with dignity and staff should model respectful relationships to build a positive relationship between home and school that can be the foundation of good attendance. In communicating with parents, schools should discuss the link between attendance and attainment and wider wellbeing, and challenge parents' views where they have misconceptions about what 'good' attendance looks like. Where a pupil or family needs support with attendance, it is important that the best placed person in the school works with and supports the family and wherever possible the person should be kept consistent.

If an explanation for absence is unsatisfactory, parents will be contacted to discuss any difficulties with the Headteacher and the school's Attendance Officer.

Parents are informed of their child's attendance during termly consultations and in the end of year report. Parents can login to their pupils Arbor profile to check their daily percentage. Attendance is colour coded as to whether this is

- ❖ outstanding 99-100% (green with outstanding written),
- ❖ expected/good 96%-97% (green),
- ❖ 95% to 91%, cause for concern (yellow)
- ❖ 90% and below expectation (red)

Where a pattern of absence is at risk of becoming, or becomes, problematic school will draw on these relationships and listen to and understand the barriers to attendance the pupil or family is experiencing. In doing so, school will take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for absence and understand the importance of school as a place of safety and early support.

Where barriers are outside of the school's control, we will facilitate all partners to work together to support pupils and parents to access any support they may need voluntarily. As a minimum, this will include a meeting with pupils and parents at risk of persistent or severe absence to understand barriers to being in school and agreeing actions or interventions to address them. This may also

include referrals to services and organisations that can provide support. These actions should be regularly discussed and reviewed together with pupils and families.

If attendance does not improve, parents are notified that any further absences for illness will be unauthorised without proof of medical evidence.

If a pupil's attendance is unsatisfactory, a letter is sent home highlighting their percentage and impact to education to parents. If attendance continues to fall, then proof of medical evidence, a meeting with the Headteacher and School Attendance Officer and/or a meeting with Inclusion Officer will be arranged.

If a child's attendance drops below 90%, the school will involve the School's Attendance Officer (see below).

Requests for Leave of Absence during term time

Parents are strongly discouraged from taking their children out of school during term time. The Headteacher will not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Headteacher is required to determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted. Exceptional circumstances will be decided by the Headteacher.

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/school
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances

Parents wishing to apply for leave of absence for exceptional circumstances must complete an application form and submit it to the Headteacher. The forms are available from the school office. (See Appendix 3)

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' such as a one off special family celebration for example a wedding, or for attending a funeral. The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

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.

We ask that any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

The role of the School's Attendance Service (SAS)

The Schools Attendance Service is part of the Local Education Authority which has responsibility for promoting, encouraging and enforcing regular school attendance. The SAS visits the school to note absence patterns and lateness.

Monitoring/support

Children whose attendance is a concern will be referred to the SAS. The Attendance Officer and SAS work closely with these families developing relations and actions to improve their child's attendance. This is monitored and reviewed every half term.

Persistent Absence

For pupils who are persistently absent (at 90% or below), attendances are tracked by the SAS and the school's persistent absence reported to the Local Governing Board Committee and the Trustees on a termly basis. Formal meetings are scheduled to discuss the barriers families may be experiencing and to set targets for improvement.

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

Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN)

The Surrey Attendance Service, acting on behalf of Surrey County Council may issue a Penalty Notice as an alternative to the prosecution of a parent/carer for their child's unauthorised absence from school and require the recipient to pay a fixed amount.

Circumstances when a Penalty Notices may be issued

1. Pupils identified by police and Surrey Attendance Advice Officers engaged on Truancy Patrols and who have incurred unauthorised absences.
2. The Education (Pupil Registration)(England)(Amendment) Regulations 2013, state that Head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Head teacher is required to determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted.

Where a child is taken out of school for 10 sessions or more and the 'leave of absence' is without the authority of the head teacher, each parent is liable to receive a penalty notice for each child who is absent. In these circumstances, a warning will not be given where it can be shown that parents had previously been warned that such absences would not be authorised and that they will be liable to receive a Penalty Notice if the leave of absence is taken.

3. The issue of a Penalty Notice will also be considered where a pupil has incurred 10 or more unauthorised sessions during the preceding 10 school weeks. The parents' failure to engage with supportive measures proposed by the school will be a factor when considering the issue of a Penalty Notice. Unauthorised absence will include late arrival after the close of registration without good reason.
4. Section 103 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 places a duty on parents to ensure that their child is not in a public place without justifiable cause during school hours when they are excluded from school. This duty applies to the first five days of each exclusion. Failure to do so will render the parent liable to a Penalty Notice. If the Penalty Notice is not paid, the recipient will be prosecuted for the offence under Section 103. Alternative education provision will be made from the sixth day of any exclusion and failure to attend such provision without good reason will be treated as unauthorised absence.

With the exception of unauthorised leave of absence taken in term time (Paragraph 2 above) parents will be sent a 'Notice To Improve' their child's attendance, warning them of their liability to receive such a notice before it is issued.

Amount Payable Under a Penalty Notice: The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024

1. If a parent/carer has not incurred a penalty notice relating to the relevant child/children since 19 August 2024, then the penalty notice will be charged at the rate of £160.00, **per parent/carer per child**, if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80.00 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice will result in Surrey County Council considering legal proceedings against you in the Magistrates Court.

2. If you have incurred a penalty notice relating to this child/children since 19 August 2024, the rolling 3 year period will be activated from the date of the first penalty notice and the second penalty notice will be charged at the flat rate of £160.00, **per parent/carer per child**, if paid within 28 days.

There will be no reduction for payment within 21 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice will result in Surrey County Council considering legal proceedings against you in the Magistrates Court.

3. If you have incurred 2 penalty notices relating to this child/children in the rolling 3 year period since the first penalty notice was issued, then you will NOT receive a third penalty notice – Surrey County Council will have no option but to consider a prosecution, **per parent/carer per child**, in the Magistrates Court under s 444 Education Act 1996.

The issue of a Penalty Notice will also be considered where attendance has fallen below 90% and there are no less than 7 unauthorised sessions during the preceding 6 school weeks. The parents' failure to engage with supportive measures proposed by the school or Inclusion Officer will be a factor when considering the issue of a Penalty Notice. Unauthorised absence will include late arrival after the close of registration without good reason.

In addition, The Education (Pupil Registration England Amendment) Regulations 2013, which became law on 1st September 2013 state that Head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Head teacher is required to determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted.

Where a child is taken out of school for 5 days or more and the 'leave of absence' is without the authority of the Headteacher, **each parent** is liable to receive a penalty notice for **each child** who is absent. In these circumstances, a warning will not be given where it can be shown that parents had previously been warned that such absences would not be authorised and that they will be liable to receive a Penalty Notice if the leave of absence is taken.

If a pupil is identified by police and Inclusion officers engaged on Truancy Patrols and who have incurred unauthorised absences a FPN may also be issued.

The Schools's Attendance Service, acting on behalf of Surrey County Council, may issue a Penalty Notice as an alternative to the prosecution of a parent/carer for their child's unauthorised absence from school and this requires the recipient to pay a fixed amount. The amount payable on issue of a Penalty Notice is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. If the Penalty Notice is not paid within 28 days, the Local Authority must consider a prosecution of the parent/carer in the magistrate's courts for failing to ensure regular school attendance under Section 444 Education Act 1996.

This information is shared with parents termly, is on the school website and when requests are sent in to the school. With the exception of authorised leave of absence taken in term time, parents will be sent a formal warning of their liability to receive such a notice before it is issued.

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.

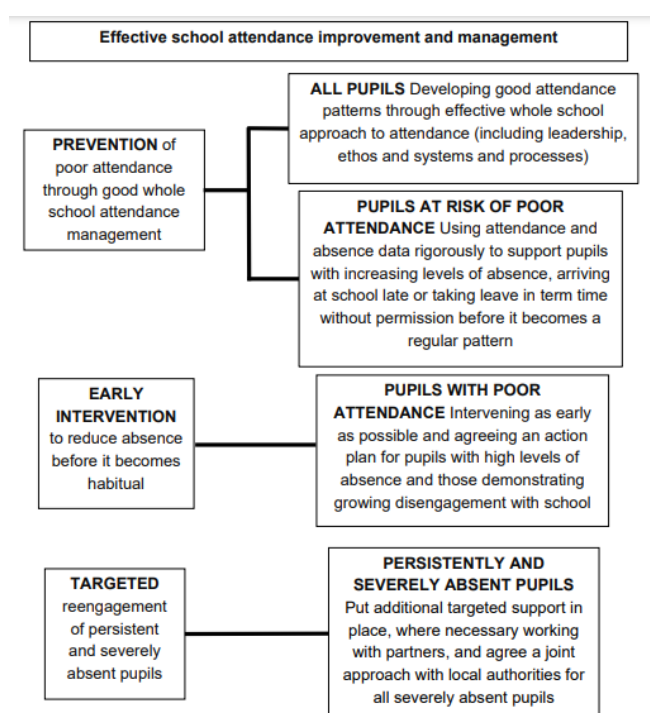
Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

They will include:

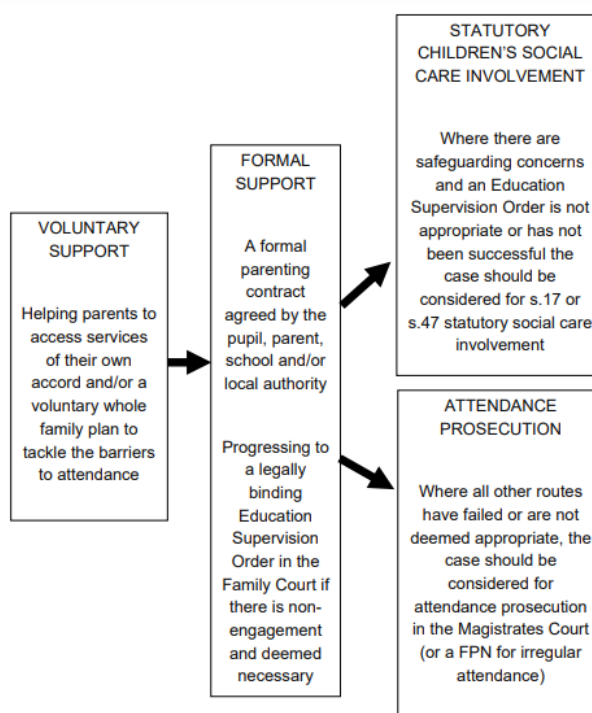
- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences

- 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

Pupils with medical conditions or special educational needs and disabilities



We understand that 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. Their right to an education is the same as any other pupil and, therefore, the attendance ambition for these pupils should be the same as they are for any other pupil. That said, in working with parents to improve attendance, school will be mindful of the barriers these pupils face and we will put additional support in place where necessary to help them access their full-time education.

This will/could include:

- Having sensitive conversations and developing good support for pupils with physical or mental health conditions. For example, making reasonable adjustments where a pupil has a disability or

putting in place an individual healthcare plan where needed. Considering whether additional support from external partners (including the local authority or health services) would be appropriate, making referrals in a timely manner and working together with those services to deliver any subsequent support.

- Working with parents to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities, including where applicable ensuring the provision outlined in the pupil's education, health and care plan is accessed. In addition, school should work with families to help support routines where school transport is regularly being missed and work with other partners to encourage the scheduling of additional support interventions or medical appointments outside of the main school day. Please see further details on our SEN offer
- Establish strategies for removing the in-school barriers these pupils face, including considering support or reasonable adjustments for uniform, transport, routines, access to support in school and lunchtime arrangements.
- Ensure joined up pastoral care is in place where needed and consider whether a time-limited phased return to school would be appropriate, for example for those affected by anxiety about school attendance.
- Ensure data is regularly monitored for these groups including at board and governing body meetings and in Targeting Support Meetings with the local authority so that additional support from other partners is accessed where necessary.

Pupils with long term illnesses or other health needs may need additional support to continue their education, such as alternative provision provided by the local authority. Local authorities are responsible for arranging suitable education for children of compulsory school age who, because of health reasons, would otherwise not receive suitable education. Please see further information on our Policy on Supporting Pupils With Medical Conditions at school.

We will in all cases, be sensitive and avoid stigmatising pupils and parents and will talk to pupils and parents to understand how they feel and what they think would help improve their attendance to develop individual approaches that meet an individual pupil's specific needs.

Please note that a part-time timetable must only be in place for the shortest time necessary and not be treated as a long-term solution. Any pastoral support programme or other agreement should have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend fulltime, either at school or alternative provision. There should also be formal arrangements in place for regularly reviewing it with the pupil and their parents. In agreeing to a part time timetable, a school has agreed to a pupil being absent from school for part of the week or day and therefore this will be treated as authorised absence.

Where a pupil has an education health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that related to the pupil's needs, the school will inform the local authority.

Monitoring and Reporting

The Head Teacher, SLT and the SAO tracks and analyses the attendance data on a bi-weekly basis or minimum half termly looking at both percentages and patterns/trends to absence. Interventions and support will be put in place at all levels. These interventions will be monitored and the intervention adjusted if and where necessary. 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.

Schools will track attendance using Arbor, Insight and <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/pupil-attendance-in-schools>

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

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 severed absence, and their families
- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers], to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinators, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads)
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

The Headteacher reports attendance this termly to the Local Governing Board Committee and the Trustees. This includes reporting on data for pupils in receipt of Pupil Premium Funding and SEND. Weekly attendance data is shared with stakeholders in the newsletter.

Sharing Information and working collaboratively with other schools/partners

We work with other local schools and partners to support parents overcome barriers and have regular Target Support Meetings at least termly.

If we are not aware of a reason why a child does not attend school for 10 days, they will be reported as a Child Missing Out On Education.

PARENTS, please note that:

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)

Appendix 1

All pupils

| Pupils are expected to: | Parents are expected to: | Bletchingley Village Primary School is expected to: | Tandridge Learning Trustees and governing bodies are expected to: | Local authorities are expected to: |
|----------------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| Attend school every day, on time | <p>Ensure their child attends on time every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies.</p> <p>Notify the school as soon as possible on the day, when their child has to be unexpectedly absent (e.g. sickness) and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return</p> <p>Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child</p> <p>Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance.</p> <p>Book any medical appointments around the school day where possible.</p> | <p>Have a clear school attendance policy on the school website which all staff, pupils and parents understand.</p> <p>Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance. We do this through a weekly attendance assembly and rewards.</p> <p>Accurately complete admission and attendance registers twice daily.</p> <p>Have and use robust daily processes to follow up absence through the office and Arbor.</p> | <p>Take an active role in setting high expectations in attendance for all school leaders, pupils and parents, in improvement, support their school(s) to prioritise attendance, and work together with leaders to set whole school ethos and cultures.</p> <p>Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, shares data with the DfE and LA and local partners.</p> <p>Ensure school staff receive training on attendance,</p> | <p>Have a strategic approach to improving attendance for the whole area and make it a key focus of all frontline council services.</p> <p>Have a School Attendance Support Team that works with all schools in their area to remove area-wide barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Provide each school with a named point of contact in the School Attendance Support Team</p> |

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| | <p>Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting the school office, who can be contacted absence@Bletchingleytlf.co.uk 01883 743337</p> | <p>Have a dedicated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance.</p> <p>This is the Headteacher and Attendance Officer. They will monitor school-level absence data and reporting it to governors</p> <p>Issue fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising the Local Authority to be able to do so</p> | <p>including in interpreting and analysing attendance data</p> <p>Regularly review and challenge attendance data and help school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most</p> <p>Work with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and provide support and challenge</p> | <p>who can support with queries and advice.</p> <p>Offer opportunities for all schools in the area to share effective practice.</p> |
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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: |
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| <p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance. Help develop actions to overcome these barriers with the class teacher and Attendance Officer through written support/reminders and these are put in place, targets are then set, monitored and reviewed.</p> <p>Consider voluntary referral to Early Help Assessment</p> | <p>Proactively use data to identify pupils at risk of poor attendance. This is monitored by the class teacher at first to develop relationships with families. If nothing improves, this is discussed with the school Attendance Officer to arrange to meet with the families and monitor improvements.</p> <p>Class teacher and SLT/AHT will continue to listen, understand and work with each identified pupil and their parents to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-school barriers to attendance.</p> <p>They will clearly explain the help that is available, potential consequences and sanctions of persistent and severe absence to the pupil and family and the potential need for legal intervention in the future.</p> | <p>Attendance Officer regularly reviews attendance data and help school Class teachers/ leaders/Headteacher focus support on the pupils who need it.</p> <p>Attendance data is reported to the Governors and Trustees termly and the DFE weekly.</p> <p>At Bletchingley Village, we have a Governor who focuses on attendance for whole school, PP and SEND.</p> | <p>Hold a termly 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.</p> <p>Where there are out of school barriers, provide each identified pupil and their family with access to services they need in the first instance.</p> |

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| <p>Proactively engage with the support offered to prevent the need for more formal support.</p> | <p>Review any existing actions or interventions</p> <p>Where out of school barriers are identified, SLT/SENDCO signpost and support access to any required services in the first instance. 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.</p> <p>If the issue persists, Attendance Officer and Headteacher could provide additional support such as mentoring, home learning, additional tuition, or where appropriate an educational health care plan or alternative provision. They could also start to take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the local authority and other partners. Act 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.</p> | | <p>If the issue persists, facilitate a voluntary early help assessment where appropriate. Take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the school and other partners. Provide the lead practitioner where 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.</p> |
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Persistently absent pupils

| Parents are expected to: | Schools are expected to: | Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to: | Local authorities are expected to: |
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| <p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.</p> | <p>Continue support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent and:</p> <p>Where absence becomes persistent, Headteacher/SLT to put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers with the Attendance Officer/SLT/ and where necessary this includes working with partners e.g. Schools Attendance Service.</p> <p>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 with the Schools Attendance Service /Social Care.</p> <p>Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, work</p> | <p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it. This is undertaken half termly and forms part of the Safeguarding Governor's discussions</p> | <p>Continued support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent and:</p> <p>Work jointly with the school to provide formal support options including parenting contracts and education supervision orders.</p> <p>Where there are safeguarding concerns, ensure joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners.</p> |

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| | <p>with the local authority on legal intervention. If necessary, notify the SAS to issue a fixed penalty notice and intensify support.</p> <p>Where there are safeguarding concerns, intensify support through statutory children’s social care. The Office notifies the Head Teacher of children whose absence is of extreme concern and the Headteacher/DSL will undertake a home visit and/or notify social care team. This activates when a pupils attendance drops below 50%. Social care to clarify to parents there is no improvement or engagement and all other routes are deemed not appropriate or have failed, the LA may choose to prosecute parents.</p> <p>Work with other schools in the local area, such as schools previously attended and the schools of any siblings.</p> | | <p>Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, enforce attendance through legal intervention (including prosecution as a last resort).</p> |
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Severely absent pupils

| Parents are expected to: | Schools are expected to: | Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to: | Local authorities are expected to: |
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| <p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child’s barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract (in agreement with the child if older enough) or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.</p> <p>Work with the Education Supervision Order, if issued.</p> | <p>Continued support as for persistently absent pupils and:</p> <p>Headteacher/SLT/Sendco agree a joint approach for all severely absent pupils with the local authority/SAS (BELOW 50%)</p> <p>Formally explain the consequences of persistent absence and severe absence to the pupil and family and the potential need for legal intervention in future. Also use this meeting listen and understand the barriers to attendance and explain that help is available to avoid these consequences.</p> <p>Issue an Education Supervision Order or fixed Penalty Notice if disagreement continues.</p> | <p>As above: Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it through termly discussions with the Safeguarding Governor who focuses on attendance for whole school, PP and SEND.</p> | <p>Continued support as for persistently absent pupils and:</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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</p> |

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| | Intensify support through statutory children's social care involvement if change is not evident. | | children's social care assessment and building attendance into children in need and child protection plans. Prosecute parents where all other routes have failed or deemed not appropriate or issue a community or parenting order. Where the parent is convicted, secure engagement with support. |
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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: |
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| Not applicable. | Proactively use data to identify cohorts with, or at risk of, low attendance and develop strategies to support them. The Headteacher analyses the whole school and class/year group data half termly through the MIS -Arbor . Pupils, groups and cohorts are identified and targeted through class intervention during Pupil Progress Meetings 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 poor attendance due to medical conditions or SEND/ mental health difficulties such as anxiety

| Parents are expected to: | Schools are expected to: | Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to: | Local authorities are expected to: |
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| <p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered.</p> | <p>Maintain the same ambition for attendance and work with pupils and parents to maximise attendance.</p> <p>The SENDCo tracks SEND attendance is tracked half termly.</p> <p>Ensure pastoral support/mental health support/staggered starts/phased return/ELSA/EBSNA strategies are put in place 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.</p> <p>Communicate 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</p> <p>Consider additional support from wider services and external partners, making timely referrals and working with other services to deliver support.</p> <p>Consider reasonable adjustments such as uniform, transport- especially where this is being missed regularly, routines, home learning, different entrances and lunchtime arrangements to support pupil needs</p> <p>Ensure pastoral care is in place for pupils e.g. suffering from anxiety.</p> <p>Regularly monitor data for such groups, including at board and governing body meetings and with local authorities.</p> | <p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p> | <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> |
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Support for pupils with a social worker

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| <p>Parents are expected to:</p> | <p>Schools are expected to:</p> | <p>Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:</p> | <p>Local authorities are expected to:</p> |
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| <p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered.</p> | <p>Headteacher/SLT/DSL informs the pupil's social worker if there are any unexplained absences and if their name is to be deleted from the register.</p> <p>Designated Lead to report to the Virtual School pupil attendance on a termly basis for Looked after Children in their PEPs.</p> <p>To report attendance through the DSL to Core Group meetings and Child Protection Conferences</p> | <p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p> | <p>Regularly monitor the attendance of children with a social worker in their area.</p> <p>Put in place personal education plans for looked-after children.</p> <p>Secure regular attendance of looked-after children as their corporate parent and provide advice and guidance about the importance of attendance to those services supporting pupils previously looked after.</p> |
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Monitoring

| Parents: | Schools: | Academy trustees and governing bodies: | Local authorities: |
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| <p>Schools regularly update parents on their child's attendance.</p> <p>This is report on a half termly basis- in terms of percentage which is colour coded as to whether this is outstanding, expected/good, cause for concern or below expectation</p> | <p>Ofsted considers schools' efforts to improve or sustain high attendance as part of inspections. Multi-academy trusts regularly review attendance data and support schools.</p> <p>Pupils who achieve 99% and above termly receive a termly certificate in while school Assembly. Children who achieve 99%+ for the whole year also receive a reward.</p> <p>Pupils in assembly are informed of the whole school attendance percentage and the class with the highest percentage looks after the Attendance Mascot, Sammy Squirrel, for the week. The top three classes attendance and the whole school attendance is published in the school newsletter weekly.</p> | <p>DfE Regions Group considers multi academy trusts' efforts on attendance as part of decision making. Ofsted considers governing bodies' efforts as part of inspections.</p> | <p>DfE Regions Group monitors local authority efforts as part of regular interaction.</p> |

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| | Class Teachers and SLT to discuss pupils and cohorts attendance in pupil Progress Meetings termly. | | |
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Appendix 2: 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 |

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| 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 | | |
| M | Medical/dental appointment | Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment |
| J1 | Interview | Pupil has an interview with an educational establishment |
| 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 |

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| 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 3



Bletchingley Village Primary School

Application for leave of absence for exceptional circumstances

Please read the following guidance carefully.

As parents, you have a legal responsibility to ensure your child's attendance at school. During the academic year, pupils are at school for 190 days and at home for 175 days.

Please be aware that The Education (Pupil Registration)(England)(Amendment) Regulations 2013, state that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Headteacher is also required to determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted.

Please complete and submit this form if you want the Headteacher to consider your request for your child’s leave of absence for exceptional circumstances. We may ask for proof to validate your request.

Unauthorised absence of 5 days or more will result in the following action being taken:

If you have not incurred a penalty notice relating to this child/children since 19 August 2024, then the penalty notice will be charged at the rate of £160.00, **per parent/carer per child**, if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80.00 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice will result in Surrey County Council considering legal proceedings against you in the Magistrates Court.

If you have incurred a penalty notice relating to this child/children since 19 August 2024, the rolling 3 year period will be activated from the date of the first penalty notice and the second penalty notice will be charged at the flat rate of £160.00, **per parent/carer per child**, if paid within 28 days. There will be no reduction for payment within 21 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice will result in Surrey County Council considering legal proceedings against you in the Magistrates Court.

If you have incurred 2 penalty notices relating to this child/children in the rolling 3 year period since the first penalty notice was issued, then you will NOT receive a third penalty notice – Surrey County Council will have no option but to consider a prosecution, **per parent/carer per child**, in the Magistrates Court under s 444 Education Act 1996.

The Headteacher will consider the reasons for the request carefully and will notify you of the decision. In the absence of a decision, parents/carers cannot assume that permission for the absence has been given.

For further information, please refer to our School Attendance Policy.

| | |
|--|---------------|
| Name of child: | Class: |
| I am applying for leave of absence for my child for | |
| from:, | |
| To:..... | |
| ... | |
| Number of school days: | |
| The exceptional circumstances for which leave is requested (attach relevant supporting evidence if required): | |
| Has your child/children already had any leave of absence since 01 September 2024 resulting in a penalty notice being issued to you (applicant) or any other parent/carer? YES / NO | |
| If YES, please give dates and details: | |
| I also have children in Year | |

| | | |
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| Signed: (Parent/Carer) | | Date: |
| To be completed by the Headteacher | | |
| Having considered your request carefully, my decision is that leave of absence is: | | |
| Approved | | The absence will be recorded as authorised. |
| Not approved | | The absence will be recorded as unauthorised and we will be requesting the Surrey County Council to issue a penalty notice per parent/carer per child. |
| Child's attendance to date | | |
| Explanatory notes: | | |
| Signed: | | (Headteacher) |
| | | Date: |