



The Olympus Academy Trust Attendance Policy

Document Summary

Model Document Owner:	Trust Director for SEND, Inclusion and Safeguarding
Version:	4.0
Document Status:	Awaiting SIC approval
Date of approval by Trust Committee:	2 nd September 2026
Date of approval by SIC	
Date of Next Review:	September 2027
Review Frequency:	Every 2 Years
Owner: (Olympus or School)	Model Policy – Olympus Final Policy - School
Governing Committee:	Model Policy – Trust Improvement Committee Final Policy – School Improvement Committee
Statutory or Optional policy:	Optional
Appendices:	Appendix 1: Trust Attendance Phases 2026 Appendix 2: Trust Attendance Principles Appendix 3: Trust Exceptional Circumstances
On Trust Website?	No
On School Websites?	Yes

*This policy has initially been created by the document owner and approved as a model by the Trust Improvement Committee. Schools have then adapted relevant sections to reflect their own individual settings and final

approval for this has been provided by the School Improvement Committee as the table above.

Amendment History

Version	Amendment Date	Author	Amendment Summary
1.0	29 th November 2022	Trust Director for SEND, Inclusion and Safeguarding	- New model policy to be reviewed by Board of Trustees - Further review to be done by SIC once updates made.
1.1	3 rd February 2023	Policy Coordinator	Following amendments requested by the Trustees and further work by the Trust Director for SEND, Inclusion and Safeguarding and the CEO. Main change is the addition of section 3.9 re the Trust Director for SEND, Inclusion and Safeguarding's role and changes to nomenclature.
1.1	9 th February 2023	Policy Coordinator	Policy approved by Trust Board.
2.0	22 nd January 2024	Trust Director for SEND, Inclusion and Safeguarding	Policy updated as per latest guidance (see v2.0 for full details).
2.1	23 rd January 2024	Policy Coordinator	Final updates made for approval process. Change approval committee to Trust Improvement Committee. Sent for approval.
2.2	15 th February 2024	Policy Coordinator	Approved by Trust Improvement Committee. Sent to schools to make their updates to highlighted sections. These sections need to be approved by the School Improvement Committee.
3.0	June 2024	Trust Director for SEND, Inclusion and Safeguarding	Substantial changes to guidance from August mean that SBw needed to review the policy to include the greater emphasis on school leaders, family support, changes to fines and the need to provide training to staff/induction.
3.1	July 2024	Policy Coordinator	Approved by ARC
4.0	July 2026	Trust Director for SEND, Inclusion and Safeguarding	- Is in line with the statutory Working together to improve school attendance guidance, as well as relevant requirements and good practice. - Strengthened the roles and responsibility section requirements for parents including regarding absence procedures and medical evidence where absence due to illness is taken before or after a planned unauthorised holiday, daily reporting requirements, referenced the NHS guidance, communication with the school regarding lateness and requirement to provide a letter/text confirming medical/dental appointments during the school day for them to be authorised. Attending school before or after the appointment is included. - Strengthened the section on following up unexplained absence - Added target setting requirements for the

			Headteacher for the whole school and disadvantaged learners - Referenced the Trust attendance principles and Trust attendance phases with the attendance lead role as well as the need for an attendance communication plan - Referenced the use of VYED and Trust data insights to drive improvement - Referenced the new relational and recognition approach for attendance across the Trust
5.0	2 nd September 2026	Director of Governance	Approved by the Board of Trustees

1. Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory [Working together to improve school attendance](#) through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

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

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [Working together to improve school attendance](#) and [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of the [Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of the [Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- It also refers to:
- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)
- Ofsted's 2025 framework toolkit

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The School Improvement Committee

The School Improvement Committee is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, learners and parents, making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:

- Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
- Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific learners, where appropriate
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for learners who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all learners, but adapts processes and support to learners' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual learners or cohorts who need it most
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
- Working with school leaders to reduce the absence levels of PP eligible learners and monitoring the specific strategies to achieve this and targets school leaders set for PP attendance
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting learners' needs
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
 - The importance of good attendance
 - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
 - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
 - The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific learners, where appropriate
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

3.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school

- Setting targets for whole school attendance improvement and disadvantaged attendance improvement
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to the School Improvement Committee
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual learners
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising the **Attendance Administrator** to be able to do so
- Working with the parents of learners with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for learners with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where learners with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a learner with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the learner's needs
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to learners and parents through all available channels
- Sharing information from the school register with the local authority, including:
 - Notifying the local authority when a learner's name is added to or deleted from the school admission register outside of standard transition times
 - Providing the local authority with the details of learners who fail to attend school regularly, or who have been marked with an unauthorised absence for a continuous period of 10 school days
 - Providing the local authority with the details of learners who the school believes will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness

3.3 The designated **senior leader (Headteacher) responsible for attendance**

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Writing the schools attendance improvement plan, using KPI and data to inform areas for improvement
- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school linking attendance improvement to our focus on belonging and inclusion
- Proving staff with training throughout the year and ensuring roles and responsibilities are clearly understood
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Using the targets set for whole school and disadvantaged attendance growth to drive improvement across roles within the school
- Creating a clear attendance communication strategy for staff, learners and parents
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis, including the DfE VYED local and national comparisons, PA days tracker, code analysis and PP absence

- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaising with learners, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with learners and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to learners and families
- Working with the education welfare officer to tackle persistent absence
- Implementing the Trust Attendance Phases
- Implementing the Trust Attendance Principles
- Ensuring the schools attendance tracker is used effectively to drive forward early intervention and attendance improvement

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is **the Headteacher** who can be contacted through the school office.

3.4 The school attendance administrator

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Ensuring that unexplained absences are responded to through truancy call processes as a matter of urgency each day. These calls/text messages will be made within an hour of the register closing by the attendance administrator.
- Ensuring that the reasons for absence are recorded accurately
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- Taking calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and recording it on the school system
- Transferring calls from parents/carers to **a member of the Senior Leadership Team** where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance
- Liaising with the pastoral and safeguarding staff where vulnerable learners are absent without a reason and maintaining the vulnerable learner list for such purposes
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance, and the headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers
- Organising meetings and referrals in response to absence

- Overseeing requests for term time absence
- Advising the headteacher/**Attendance Administrator** (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer can be contacted via the main school phone number

3.5 Parents/carers

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

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

Parents are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every **day** on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before **09.00** on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence and advise when they are expected to return.
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child. **If the child is in the Early Years Foundation Stage, provide more than 2 emergency contact numbers, where possible**
- Ensure that, where possible, non -urgent medical and dental appointments are made outside of the school day. Where this is not possible, parents are required to provide evidence of the appointment (letter/text) for the absence to be authorised
- Only request absences during term time in exceptional circumstances, which are explained further in this policy. The following are examples of reasons for absence which will not be authorised- birthdays, looking after younger siblings, day trips or leaving early for a holiday
- Contact the school if their child is going to be late to school, explaining the reason why and their expected time of arrival
- Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or local authority
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting **the Headteacher**, who can be contacted via **the school office**.

Parents should consult the NHS guidance [Is my child too ill for school?](#) when deciding whether to keep their child home due to illness. We will share this guidance with parents, and provide support in understanding it, in order to promote school attendance wherever appropriate

3.6 Learners

Learners are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time. Learners should arrive in school at 08.45.

3.7 The Olympus Trust Executive Team and Trust Director for SEND, Inclusion and Safeguarding

Reducing absence levels in Trust schools is a priority for all senior leaders. The Trust Director for SEND, Inclusion and Safeguarding and the Executive Team have a role in responding to absence levels and to improve attendance for all learners in our schools, through:

- Sharing effective practice on attendance management and improvement across schools
- Providing support to attendance leaders to analyse data and respond to patterns and concerns
- Providing advice on whole school, strategic change to improve attendance
- Providing challenge to attendance leaders where levels of absence remain a concern
- Working collaboratively with attendance leaders and produce attendance improvement plans
- Leading the attendance network across the Trust
- Updating the Improving attendance Olympus Handbook to provide schools with the latest research and approaches to reduce absence
- Providing support with training staff who work directly with families and learners or who are new to the role of attendance champion
- Ensuring that the Trust's attendance phases are implemented within each school
- Working with school leaders to implement the Trust Attendance Principles
- Monitoring attendance improvement through regular visits
- Regularly reviewing school and Trust data against national data

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

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

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session.

It will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, whether every learner 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

For learners of compulsory school age

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity, where a learner is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances, where a learner is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

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

The school day starts at 08.45 and ends at 15.15 in EYFS, 15.20 in KS1 and 15.25 in KS2

Learners must arrive in school by 08.45 on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 08.55 and will be kept open until 09.00. The register for the second session will be taken at 13.00 and will be kept open until 13.05.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The learner's parent must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 09.00 or as soon as practically possible and for all subsequent days, by calling the school office, who can be contacted via 01454 867220.

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

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Planned absence

- Attending a medical or dental appointment may be counted as authorised as long as the learner's parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment.
- Non-urgent medical and dental appointments should be made after school. Absences for medical appointments and dental appointments during the school day will require the parent to show the appointment letter or text before it will be authorised.
- In the case of medical appointments and dental appointments, the learner should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary, and attend school before/after their appointment. They should wear school uniform to their appointment, to make it easier to return to school afterwards.

To notify the school of a planned absences, the learner's parent needs to complete and return the Planned Absence Request form, available from the office. This will be reviewed by the Headteacher who will advise whether the absence will be authorised or not.

The parent must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A learner who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code (L)
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code (U)

The register closes at 09.00.

Lateness is reviewed on a regular basis by the Headteacher, along with attendance. Where lateness is a concern, the learner's parent may be notified by letter or invited to a School Attendance Meeting and a planned made to improve the issue. Should the concern continue, the school may engage the services of the EWO.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

The school will follow its first day of absence response process when learners do not attend, and no message is received from the parent or carer. Our reasonable enquires will include:

- Parents can expect contact every morning where we have no reason provided for absence. These calls/text messages will be made within an hour of the register closing by the attendance administrator.
- If we cannot make contact with parents, we will use the emergency contacts' names and numbers.
- We will 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 learner was absent
- We will call the parent on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure appropriate safeguarding action is taken where necessary
- If after 3 days , in the case of a non-vulnerable learner, we have not had contact from parents to explain the reason for absence we will complete an unannounced home visit following Trust home visit guidance or request our Education Welfare Officer to do so. Wherever possible, we would want to see and speak to the child as well as the parent.

If this is not possible (for example, if the parent says the child is too unwell to come to the door), where considered necessary and appropriate, we will follow up with a further home visit or a Teams video call to see and speak to the child. If any safeguarding concerns are identified, school staff will refer the concerns to the school DSL as soon as possible on return to school.

- If there is more than one child in our school in the family, school staff will ensure they see and speak to each child.
- Where appropriate we will offer support to the learners and/or their parents to improve attendance
- We will identify whether the learner and their parents need support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with we will use the processes available to us, for example, issuing a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention

Vulnerable learners and unexplained absence

- If we are unable to make contact with parents and the child is on our “vulnerable” list (see below) in terms of safeguarding and child protection, we will carry out a home visit following the Trust home visit guidance.
- If we remain unable to establish contact, a Police welfare check may be requested and contact made with Children’s Social Care/Social worker to report the absence

If immediate safeguarding concerns are identified, school staff will follow the school's usual safeguarding process, which may include contacting 999 if a staff member considers a child or family member to be at Immediate Risk of Significant Harm.

If a reason for absence cannot be established and a learner’s whereabouts cannot be confirmed despite reasonable enquiries, the Child Missing Education (CME) processes will be followed. Details of South Gloucestershire CME process can be found here: [Children missing education | South Gloucestershire \(southglos.gov.uk\)](https://www.southglos.gov.uk/children-missing-education)

Records of our actions will be made in CPOMS

Vulnerable learner List

All learners who the school deem vulnerable are recorded on the school’s **Vulnerable List**. This list is overseen by the DSL and Attendance Lead and is reviewed regularly. Learners on this list would include:

- Children on a Child Protection Plan
- Children on a Child in Need Plan
- Children in Care
- Children previously reported as missing
- Children where there are domestic abuse concerns
- Children where there are significant mental health concerns
- Children where there are exploitation concerns

These learners have a priority status for calls when they are absent from school without reason. In primary schools, first priority calls should also be made for learners who walk to school on their own who are absent and no reason for absence has been provided.

The register will be marked with the holding code **N** until the reason for absence is ascertained. Once the reason for absence is known, the code will be changed to the relevant absence code. A comment will be entered in ARBOR in the usual way.

The attendance administrator will consult the DSL/Safeguarding Team as soon as possible where a vulnerable child is missing without a reason.

Children Missing From Education

Children missing education can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect such as sexual abuse or exploitation and can also be a sign of child criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation, so called 'honour'-based abuse or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is essential to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future

There are many circumstances where a child may become missing from education, but some children are particularly at risk. These include children who:

- Are at risk of harm or neglect
- Are at risk of forced marriage or FGM
- Come from Gypsy, Roma, or Traveller families
- Come from the families of service personnel
- Go missing or run away from home or care
- Are supervised by the youth justice system
- Cease to attend a school
- Come from new migrant families

We will follow our procedures for unauthorised absence (making reasonable enquires) and for dealing with children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of going missing in future. This includes informing the local authority if a child leaves the school without a new school being named, and adhering to requirements with respect to sharing information with the local authority, when applicable, when removing a child's name from the admission register at non-standard transition points. We will always complete a CME referral when we have concerns about a learner's non-attendance and/or have not been able to establish contact

[Children missing education | South Gloucestershire \(southglos.gov.uk\)](https://www.southglos.gov.uk/children-missing-education)

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

We will communicate with parents regularly on their child's attendance and absence levels.

We will use a variety of approaches and will personalise messages to parents. framing absence messages in days and sessions missed rather than percentages.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

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

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

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

Appendix 4 provides examples of exceptional circumstances.

Leave of absence will not be granted for a learner 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.

Any learner who has taken a term time holiday will be required to provide medical evidence if they are ill in the period directly before or after the advised holiday dates.

We will also make contact with parents where anything arises suspicion (for example international dialling codes which would indicate a child is abroad). Failure to provide medical evidence or suspicion that a child is abroad outside of the advised holiday dates may lead to these sessions being classed as unauthorised automatically.

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

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least **6 weeks** before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via **the school office**. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence. [Insert if relevant to your setting] If a learner is over compulsory school age (e.g. sixth form), leave can be requested or agreed by the learner or a parent they normally live with.

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

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the learner'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 for religious observance Learners should attend school on the days surrounding those set apart for religious observance

- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes -- a learner is a mobile child if their parent is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the learner is travelling with them. In these circumstances a learner will be considered as a mobile child, provided they are of compulsory school age and have no fixed abode and whose parent is in a trade or business that requires them to travel from place to place
- If the learner is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

5.3 Other reasons the school may allow a learner to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
- Attending another school at which the learner is also registered (dual registration)
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority
- Attending work experience
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the learner 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

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

We want our learners to succeed and develop their skills. To do this, learners need to avoid missing lessons and days of school as much as possible. As a school, we want to recognise good levels of attendance.

At school we focus on a relational and recognition approach to supporting attendance. Our staff will recognise improvement, outstanding attendance, excellent attendance, good attendance and communicate with parents using our Trust framework.

We also promote the importance of attendance through assemblies, PSHE and tutor/class discussions.

7. Supporting learners with poor attendance

Our school will make use of the full range of support and 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.

7.1 Attendance contract

We use attendance contracts as a form of attendance support.

An attendance contract is a formal written agreement between a parent and the school to address irregular attendance at school. An attendance contract is not legally binding, but it provides a more formal route where previous support has not worked or would not have been appropriate.

Parents cannot be compelled to enter an attendance contract, and the school cannot agree an attendance contract in a parent's absence.

Where an attendance contract would be an appropriate form of support, the school will arrange a meeting with the parent (and learner if they are old enough to understand) to discuss how we can work in partnership to improve the learner's attendance.

Where parents fail to comply with an agreed attendance contract, the school may seek an alternative course of action. In the first instance, this will include discussions with the parents to seek explanations and determine whether the attendance contract remains useful. Where there is further non-compliance following these discussions, the school may take further action.

7.2 Education supervision order

In cases where voluntary early help plans and attendance contracts have been unsuccessful, we may work with the local authority to issue an education supervision order. If an education supervision order is considered, the local authority will inform the parent(s) in writing and will set up a meeting.

An education supervision order is a formal intervention but **not** criminal prosecution.

An education supervision order initially lasts for 1 year, but it can be extended within the last 3 months for a period of up to 3 years at a time.

In cases where parents persistently fail to meet the directions given under the education supervision order, they may be liable to a fine of up to £1,000 upon conviction.

7.3 Notice 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.

A notice to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority.

It will include:

- Details of the learner'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, or prosecution considered, 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

7.4 Penalty notices

The headteacher (or a deputy or assistant headteacher, authorised by the headteacher), 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, we will check with the local authority before doing so and send the local authority 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 learner
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

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

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

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

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

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

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day). These penalty notices are not included in the National Framework, not subject to the same considerations about support being provided, and do not count towards the limit as part of the escalation process.

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

8. Supporting learners who are absent or returning to school

8.1 Learners absent due to complex barriers to attendance

If a learner is absent due to complex barriers to attendance, we will create a bespoke plan with them, their parent and any other agencies involved to support them to reintegrate into school. This may include a phased return, part time timetable or alternative, in school provision. The goal of the plan is to support the learner back into school as quickly as possible and will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure the plan meets the needs of the individual.

8.2 Learners absent due to mental or physical ill health or

If a learner is absent due to mental or physical ill health, we will create a bespoke plan with them, their parent and any other agencies involved to support them to reintegrate into school. This may include a phased return, part time timetable or alternative, in school provision. The goal of the plan is to support the learner back into school as quickly as possible and will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure the plan meets the needs of the individual.

Parents should consult the NHS guidance [Is my child too ill for school?](#) when deciding whether to keep their child home due to illness. We will share this guidance with parents, and provide support in understanding it, in order to promote school attendance wherever appropriate

8.3 Learners absent due to other barriers to attendance

Set out your approach towards learners absent from school due to:

- Having SEND

The school recognises that some pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) may experience additional barriers to attending school regularly. We are committed to working proactively with children, parents/carers and external agencies to identify and address any attendance difficulties at the earliest opportunity.

Where absence is related to a pupil's SEND, medical needs, emotional wellbeing, anxiety, or other identified barriers, we will adopt a supportive and individualised approach. This may include:

- Working in partnership with parents/carers, the SENDCo and relevant professionals to understand the reasons for absence.
- Making reasonable adjustments to support attendance and ensure the pupil can access education safely and successfully.
- Reviewing provision, support plans, risk assessments, pastoral interventions and, where appropriate, Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs).
- Considering adaptations to routines, timetables, transition arrangements, classroom environments or learning programmes where these may help the pupil engage successfully with school.
- Developing an agreed attendance support plan with clear actions, responsibilities and review dates.
- Seeking advice from external services, including Educational Psychology, health professionals, Local Authority attendance teams or other specialist agencies where appropriate.

The school will always seek to understand and remove barriers to attendance before considering enforcement measures. We recognise that poor attendance may sometimes be a symptom of unmet needs and will ensure that decisions are made in the best interests of the child. Attendance expectations and support will be tailored to individual circumstances while maintaining the principle that every child is entitled to the fullest possible access to education.

Through our graduated and inclusive approach, we aim to ensure that all pupils, including those with SEND, feel safe, valued, supported and able to attend school regularly and achieve their full potential.

• Being disadvantaged

The school recognises that some pupils may face barriers to regular attendance as a result of disadvantage, including financial hardship, housing instability, family circumstances, caring responsibilities, mental health needs or other social and economic challenges. We are committed to identifying and removing these barriers so that every child can access their entitlement to a full-time education.

Where attendance concerns are linked to disadvantage, we will work proactively with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies to understand the underlying causes and provide appropriate support. This may include:

- Building positive relationships with families through regular communication and early intervention.
- Identifying barriers to attendance at the earliest opportunity and implementing targeted support.
- Providing pastoral support, mentoring or wellbeing interventions where appropriate.
- Signposting families to financial, housing, food, welfare or family support services.
- Working with the Local Authority, Early Help services and other agencies to coordinate support where needed.

- Considering how the use of Pupil Premium funding and other resources can help remove barriers to engagement and attendance.
- Developing an individual attendance support plan with agreed actions, timescales and review points.

The school will adopt a supportive, child-centred approach and will seek to understand and address the root causes of absence before considering legal intervention. We recognise that disadvantaged pupils may be disproportionately affected by factors beyond their control and that improving attendance often requires coordinated support from a range of professionals and services.

Through our inclusive approach, we aim to ensure that disadvantaged pupils feel safe, welcomed and valued, enabling them to attend school regularly, engage fully in learning and achieve their potential. Attendance data for disadvantaged pupils will be monitored carefully to identify patterns, evaluate the effectiveness of support and ensure that any gaps between disadvantaged pupils and their peers are reduced over time.

- Being known (or previously known) to children's social care

The school recognises that children who are currently known to, or have previously been known to, Children's Social Care may face additional challenges which can affect their attendance at school. These children may include those subject to Child Protection Plans, Child in Need Plans, those who are looked after by a local authority, previously looked after children, or those who have received support from social care services in the past.

Where attendance concerns arise for a child known to or previously known to Children's Social Care, the school will act promptly to understand the reasons for absence and ensure appropriate support is in place. Attendance concerns will be considered within the wider context of the child's welfare, safeguarding needs and family circumstances.

- The school will:
- Work closely with parents/carers, social workers, virtual school professionals and other relevant agencies to identify and address barriers to attendance.
- Ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is informed of emerging attendance concerns and involved in planning appropriate support where necessary.
- Take a trauma-informed and relationship-based approach, recognising the impact that adverse childhood experiences may have on attendance, wellbeing and engagement with school.
- Provide pastoral support, emotional wellbeing interventions and additional nurture where appropriate.
- Develop an individual attendance support plan, with clear actions, responsibilities and review arrangements, where attendance causes concern.
- Consider whether wider safeguarding, welfare or family support is required and make referrals to appropriate services where necessary.
- Monitor attendance closely and review the effectiveness of support regularly with all relevant professionals.

The school recognises that persistent or prolonged absence may be an indicator that a child requires additional help or protection. For this reason, attendance concerns relating to children known to or previously known to Children's Social Care will be considered as a safeguarding matter and responded to accordingly.

Our priority will always be to work collaboratively with families and professionals to secure the child's safety, wellbeing and regular attendance at school. We will seek to remove barriers to attendance and provide timely, targeted support before considering enforcement measures, except where statutory guidance requires otherwise.

- Having other barriers to attendance (e.g. young carers)

For children whose attendance may be affected by wider vulnerabilities, including those who are young carers, the school will adopt a supportive and individualised approach that prioritises the child's welfare, educational progress, and emotional wellbeing. We recognise that some pupils may experience barriers to attendance beyond their control and will work proactively with families, external agencies, and local support services to identify and address these barriers. In line with the Department for Education's Working Together to Improve School Attendance guidance, we will seek to understand the reasons for absence and provide appropriate support rather than applying punitive measures where attendance concerns are linked to an identified vulnerability.

Where a pupil is identified as a young carer, or where other family circumstances impact their ability to attend regularly, the school may implement reasonable adjustments and targeted support which could include pastoral support, attendance mentoring, flexible arrangements around exceptional circumstances, signposting to specialist services, and regular review meetings with parents or carers. We will ensure that attendance processes take account of the child's individual needs and that any interventions are proportionate, compassionate, and focused on enabling the pupil to access their education successfully. Attendance concerns related to a pupil's vulnerability will be considered within the school's wider safeguarding and inclusion responsibilities.

The school will maintain high expectations for attendance for all pupils while recognising that equity may require different levels of support for different children. Decisions will be evidence-based, regularly reviewed, and made in the best interests of the child, ensuring compliance with safeguarding duties, equality legislation, and Ofsted expectations regarding inclusion, attendance, and the support of vulnerable pupils

Where a learner has an education health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, the school will inform the local authority.

8.4 Learners returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence

If a learner has been out of school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence, we will create a bespoke plan with them and their parent to support them to reintegrate into school. This may include a phased return, part time timetable or alternative, in school provision. The goal of the plan is to support the learner back into school as quickly as possible and will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure the plan meets the needs of the individual.

In cases of prolonged absence, or when a child is absent without notification, we will attempt to contact the child's parents and alternative emergency contacts as stated in section 4.5

When deciding whether a child's absence should be considered prolonged, we will consider the:

- Patterns and trends in the learner's absences and their personal circumstances
- Vulnerability of the learner and their parents, as well as the circumstances of their home life

We will also implement our safeguarding procedures (see our [child protection/safeguarding policy](#)) and refer any concerns to local children's social care and/or request a police welfare check.

9. Attendance monitoring

- The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) weekly, half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual learner year group and cohort level.
- Specific learner information will be shared with the DfE on request.
- The school has granted the DfE access to its management information system so the data can be accessed regularly and securely.
- Data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics.
- The school will benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement, and share this with the school improvement committee and Trust Director for Safeguarding, SEND and Inclusion.
- The Trust publishes attendance data weekly to all schools and monitors this closely

9.1 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify learners, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and
- Identify learners 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

9.2 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual learners, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
- Provide targeted support to the learners it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence, and their families (see section 8.4 below)
- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers, tutors and staff, to facilitate discussions with learners and families, and to the SIC and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinator, designated safeguarding lead and pupil premium lead)
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a learner's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific learners, where appropriate

9.3 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a learner misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a learner misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of learners who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
 - Discuss attendance and engagement at school
 - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
 - Explain the help that is available
 - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
- Review any existing actions or interventions
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these learners. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
- Implement sanctions, where necessary

10. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum **every two years** by **the Trust Director for SEND, Inclusion and Safeguarding**. At every review, the policy will be approved by the School Improvement Committee following approval by the Olympus Trust Improvement Committee.

11. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- Exclusion Policy
- SEND Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Secondary Mental Health Policy
- Supporting pupils who cannot attend school due to health needs
- EYFS policy

ATTENDANCE PHASES AND INTERVENTION MENU

At all of our Olympus Academy Trust schools, we are passionate about attendance because being in school regularly really does matter!

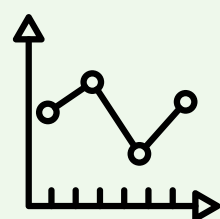
Regular attendance is crucial for every learner to enjoy all of the many benefits that school brings. Being in school every day provides the best opportunity for learning, making progress and having a strong sense of belonging. Research shows that feeling a sense of belonging is linked to good attendance.

Attendance Principle 1 TEAM ATTENDANCE- every member of staff has a vital role in creating an inclusive attendance culture and Attendance Leads should ensure that roles and responsibilities are clearly defined across the staff team.

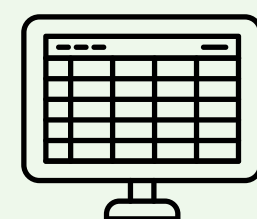
The Olympus Academy Trust prioritises the monitoring, support and robust action needed to secure high levels of attendance. We work with Parents/Carers to ensure that their child attends school regularly and punctually and will seek support for our families from external agencies when appropriate.

Our **Attendance Phases** and **Intervention Menu** inform the support offered at every stage of the attendance process. Understanding barriers to attendance, implementing support and working with parent/carers sit at the heart of our approach to improving attendance.

The Attendance Phases work in collaboration with our EWS (SG Education Services) and alongside the LA published processes.



TUTOR/CLASSTEACHER PHASE | 95-93%



Tutors and classteachers are fundamental in building belonging in our school because they are the consistent, daily adult who knows each learner best and creates the immediate relational climate of the tutor/class group. Through regular check-ins, inclusive routines, and recognition of individual strengths and challenges, tutors ensure every learner feels seen, heard, and valued within the group

Learners are **added to the school's Attendance Tracker** and appropriate **action and intervention** should take place from the menu guided by the Attendance Lead.

Absence is likely due to medical appointments or illness. Unauthorised absences (O or U) may be recorded on the attendance record. Broken weeks could be a concern.

Review the learner's attendance on Arbor to **identify any patterns or concerns**.
Are there specific days of the week being missed? Does this relate to lesson avoidance?



ATTENDANCE PRINCIPLE 3: UNDERSTANDING CAUSES FOR ABSENCE AND EARLY INTERVENTION



Our priority at this phase is **understanding the reasons for absence** and **identifying the first steps to remove any barriers**.

At Secondary age, a discussion with the learner by the tutor is a first step. A **Root Causes Checklist** should be completed either 1:1 or emailed to the learner for future discussion.

At Primary age, the class teacher should check-in with the child about their time off school- is there anything worrying them? Learners who feel a sense of **belonging** to their school, often feel positively about their relationships with their teachers and their peers. [Do you know how this learner feels about those aspects?](#)

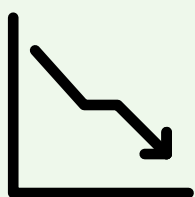
A **supportive discussion** with parent/carers **over the phone** identifying reasons for absence and barriers to attendance should also take place. Where unauthorised absences are on the record, it will be important to discuss communication to the school for future absences. Use the Root Cause Checklist to inform this conversation at Secondary. Share any relevant feedback with staff.

If attendance doesn't improve, an **Early Support Letter** should be sent, outlining any concerns and support on offer.
Record this on the **Attendance Tracker**.

It is important to set a **SMART target** for the learner to **work towards** in the **next 4 weeks**.
When **attendance improves**, ensure you provide recognition for this to the learner and the parent/carer.

REVIEW

Attendance should be **reviewed fortnightly** to monitor that it is moving towards the target you set..
Where attendance does not improve, learners will be moved to **Phase 1**.



PHASE 1 | 93%



Heads of Year/SEND teams/DSLs or Family Liaison Workers will typically lead within Phase 1 and the Attendance Lead will assess who is the person who knows this family best. Attendance levels continue to fall and are at 93%. Unauthorised absences may be on the attendance record. There will be patterns of broken weeks of attendance. There may be regular absence due to minor illness.

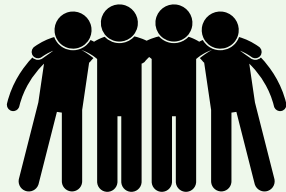
At **93%** parents/carers should be **invited to attend a School Attendance Meeting in school (SAM)**. Where possible the **Tutor/classteacher should attend** as they have led the support up until this stage. If they are unable to attend, a copy of the SAM should be shared with them so that they remain informed and part of the support plan.

Any concerns will be discussed and **any support required** will be put in place. This may be parent support, academic support or pastoral support. Any professionals working with the family or learner should be invited to attend.

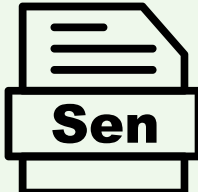
Learners who feel a sense of **belonging** to their school have a key adult they can trust to talk to - they feel listened to and understood. [Does this learner have that key adult?](#)

The school will **consider any obstacles or barriers** presented in the meeting that impact on positive levels of school attendance and will **seek to support learners and families** in finding a positive way forward. Consideration will be given to opening an EHAP (if other agencies are involved), writing an Integrated Learner Support Plan, Medical Support Plan or an Individual Health Care Plan as appropriate.

Medical evidence should only be requested in the minority of cases where the school believes medical evidence is required or it would be helpful to explore and access further support.



INTERVENTION MENU



Any intervention at this stage should include further **learner voice** and the meeting with parents/carers helps to establish a partnership to support improvement.

Ideally, this meeting takes place in person but can be done over the phone or on Teams.

This meeting should be **supportive** in nature and **explore strategies** to **remove any barriers** to regular attendance.

School could consider:

Mentoring, counselling, School Nurse support, recognition and relational approaches, weekly communication, tutor/teacher support, a review of SEN, meetings with teaching staff, an academic review, peer support, slow start, MHST or support with friendships.

Remember our Parent/Carer Support Helpline

Pupil Assistance Programme



24/7 Confidential Caregiver Helpline
0800 012 1571
wisdom.healthassured.org/login
Download WISDOM now

GET IT ON
Google Play

Download on the
App Store

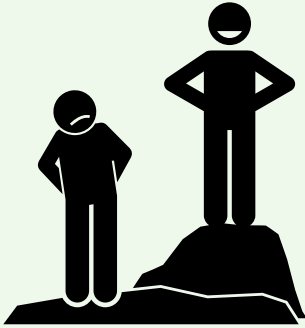


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Olympus
Academy Trust

Attendance Principle 4: Intentionally Inclusive

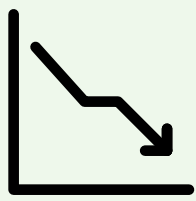
Is this learner from a **low-income family**?
What is their participation in aspects of wider school life like?
Do they have a good friendship network?



REVIEW

Attendance will be **monitored fortnightly** on the **Attendance Tracker**.
A **call home** will take place so that progress is recognised.
Where concerns persist, the learner will be moved to **Phase 2**.





PHASE 2 | 91– 90% | PERSISTENT ABSENCE RISK



Attendance levels continue to fall towards persistent absence, which is anything below 90%.

Unauthorised absences remain on the attendance record. **The PA tracker** will also help you to identify learners at risk of being **locked into PA**.

Parent/Carers should be **invited to attend a School Attendance Review meeting in school**. This discussion will **review** what was discussed in the SAM meeting. Exploring any **success** and further **concerns or barriers** to improving attendance.

Learners who feel a sense of **belonging** in their school feel safe in lessons, corridors and classrooms and don't experience bullying.
[Do you know how this learner feels?](#)

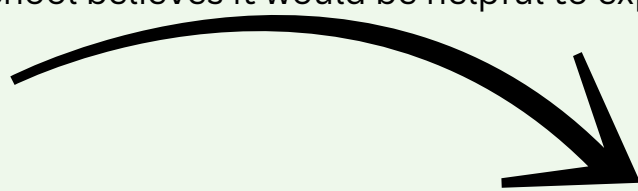
Any **professionals working with the family** or learner should be **included in this meeting**.

A **detailed review of attendance** should take place, exploring the **pattern of absence**, **reason/s for absence** and any **unauthorised absence** (O, U or G codes). **Broken weeks** should also be reviewed. If you haven't done so already, **historical school attendance/absence** should also be considered.

Medical evidence should only be requested where the school believes it would be helpful to explore and access further support.



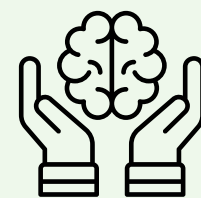
Have you signposted the parent/carer to the NHS "Is my Child Too ill to Attend School? Advice"



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



INTERVENTION MENU



A School Attendance Meeting or Review should work alongside other established or required support.

Any meeting with Parent/Carer (ILSP, EHAP, SEN Review, IHCP, Medical Support Plan) should **include a discussion around attendance**. If Persistently Absent, attendance barriers and support should be discussed in detail.

Consider whether an EHAP should be opened to coordinate support with other agencies such as Families Plus.
For medical absence, consider further support from the School Health Nurse.

Your **SEND Cluster** may also be able to support funding for learners with SEND for interventions.

EBSA

Emotional Health should be considered as much as **Physical Health**.
Use the Trust's **EBSA resources** to support learners and their families.

REMEMBER! → **Attendance Principle 2: Strong Starts Planning Every Term**

If **persistent absence** continues, a **discussion** with SG Education Services, our **Education Welfare Service** should take place.

A joined up and collaborative effort should be made to continue to support the learner and their family.

A **referral** will be considered and a **home visit** is likely to take place to **further explore barriers** to attendance and what **support** could help.

Use the **Attendance Tracker** to continue to regularly review (fortnightly) attendance.
The **Attendance Champion** and **Education Welfare Officer** will oversee and coordinate a **plan**.
At the forefront of this plan should be **support**.



Education  Services
A VALUABLE RESOURCE



Recognise Improvement





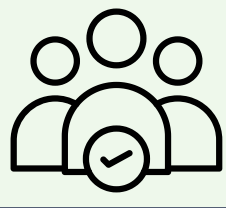
PHASE 3 | ATTENDANCE LEVELS CONTINUE TO FALL



Learners at this Phase will continue to be overseen by the **Attendance Lead** who will work with other attendance **team members and external partners** to coordinate support to lead to attendance improvement. These learners are at risk of becoming severely absent.



The EWS will work with school to monitor, support and take action to improve attendance



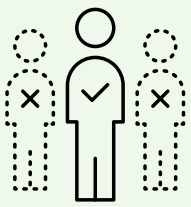
Notice to Improve

Where despite letters, calls, SAM and other interventions absence remains a concern, the school can use the template letter and send a NTI letter. This gives parents/carers 6 school weeks to improve attendance levels.



Tracking and Responses to Unauthorised Absences are Important
O code, G code and U codes should be responded to as these are unauthorised absences.
A **Fixed Penalty Notice** can be considered for **unauthorised absence** with either **U or O codes**.
Please follow the **Local Authority** guidance to **request** a FPN.
Note - G Code Holiday Fixed Penalty Notices sit outside our Attendance Phase guidance.

**Fixed
Penalty
Notice**

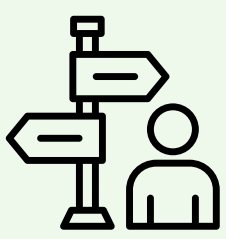


Attendance Principle 5: Working in Partnership



Remember to involve **Social Workers**, especially where there are unexplained absences. Speak to the **Virtual School Head** who can offer support where learners are known to Social Care, Looked After or Previously Looked After.

FURTHER INTERVENTION



Careers Advice
KS4 learners should have access to a careers advice meeting.



Policies and Practice

Adjustments to practice should be made for learners with mental health issues and reasonable adjustments made. Time limited phased returns are an example.

Attendance Contract & Review

At this Phase, consideration will be given to further intervention in the form of the legal **non-attendance process**. An **Attendance Contract** is a formal written agreement between a Parent/Carer and the school to address **significant absence** from school.

Legal Attendance Intervention Meeting

Following an Attendance Contract and Review, Parent/Carers should be invited to a formal **Legal Attendance Intervention Meeting** if attendance levels continue to be a concern. Further agreements will be made and expectations clearly shared. This meeting will be led by the senior attendance lead in the school and the SAM action plan and attendance contract will be reviewed.
If Parent/Carers do not engage with the support of offer and/or fail to attend meetings, a record should be made of this and discussed with the EWS and LA representative. A copy of the meeting record will be sent to parents/carers.

PLEASE REFER TO THE LOCAL AUTHORITY, SCHOOL POLICY AND NATIONAL GUIDANCE FOR FURTHER DETAIL

REVIEW

Weekly attendance reviews show that absence levels remain a concern. The attendance Lead will move the learner to Phase 4



Phase 4 Legal Intervention and Severe Absence

Legal Attendance Intervention Review Meeting

Parents and carers may be invited to attend an **Attendance Intervention Review** by the **Local Authority**. This meeting will be held in the school, supported by SG EWS. However, the meeting will be chaired by the Local Education Authority.

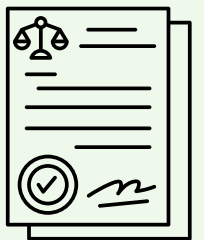
School will complete an **Intervention Review Checklist** prior to a AIR Meeting.

The attendance lead will present their concerns regarding the attendance record for the learner and parent/carers will have the opportunity to respond to these concerns. A **review of the support offered** will form part of this meeting.

Where the Local Authority feel that there is sufficient evidence that an offence has been committed under the Education Act, section 444, the case will be recommended to be placed before the court.



Your EWO will complete any required court paperwork

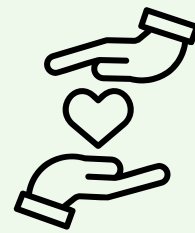


Severe Absence | Below 50%

Learners at severe absence levels may be discussed with the **Local Authority** at a **Targeted Support Meeting**.



Intervention



Sometimes schools can use a **part-time (reduced) timetable** to temporarily support a learner to access as much education as possible and meet their individual needs. This is explained in paragraph 66 of the DfE's statutory attendance guidance. Planning a phased return to school will involve establishing key adults, safe places for play/break time and social support. Use the Trust reduced timetable paperwork to record agreements with parents and reviews.

Missing School Can be a Safeguarding Issue

Where learners on your vulnerable learner list have unexplained absence, they are a priority for urgent follow-up. If despite your reasonable enquiries the reasons for absence remain unknown, you should consider a home visit (school policy).

Support should be intensified through **Social Care** where there are safeguarding issues, especially where absence becomes severe. (*DfE Working Together to Improve Attendance Statutory guidance*).



Children with Health Needs Who Cannot Attend School

Attendance Principle 5: Working in Partnership



Follow the **Trust Policy** where learners with health needs, including mental health, are unable to attend school.

The LA has a duty to provide education where absence levels persist. This is called the **Section 19 Duty**.



LINKS & SCHOOL SPECIFIC INFORMATION



[Intervention Review Checklist](#)

[School Attendance Review Meeting Form](#)

[Root Causes Checklist](#)

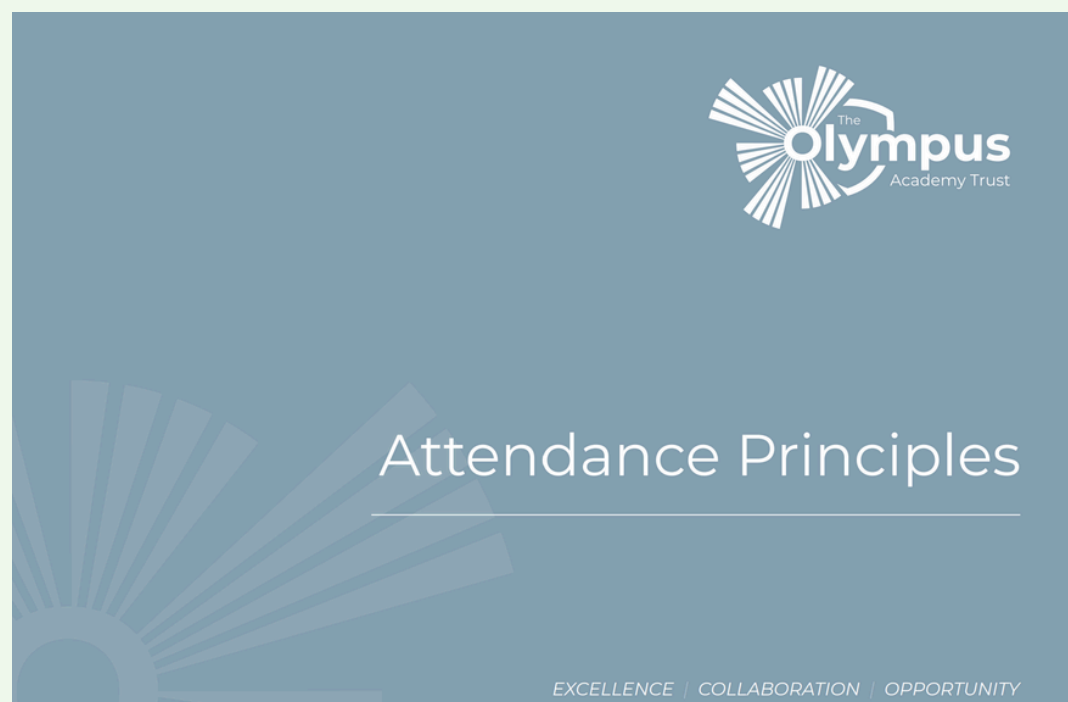
[Attendance Contract and Review](#)

[Home Visit Request Form and Visit Notes](#)

[Trust Attendance Handbook](#)

[School Attendance Meeting Form](#)

These Attendance Phases work alongside our Attendance Principles



Appendix 3 - Guidance for Granting Absence during Term Time due to Exceptional Circumstances

You should only grant a leave of absence during term-time for:

- Learners taking part in a regulated performance or employment abroad
- Attending an interview for another school, college, or for employment
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Other exceptional circumstances.

Exceptional circumstances

Any requests for term-time absence must be made in advance. If the parents didn't apply for the leave of absence in advance, you must record the absence as unauthorised. This is set out in the DfE's Statutory advice on school attendance.

You must decide whether an absence request constitutes an 'exceptional circumstance' based on the individual circumstances and the relevant context behind the request.

You will still need to respond to requests on a case-by-case basis.

The Trust have issued guidance on what exceptional circumstances are and these are shown below.

Trust recommended exceptional circumstances

- When a family needs to spend time together because of an immediate family members bereavement, crisis or serious illness and the Headteacher is satisfied as to the circumstances
- Funeral of immediate family member. Discretion will be used to consider travel requirements.
- Religious observance
- Sudden loss of housing through eviction or domestic violence - up to a maximum of 3 days.
- Transport was not provided by the LA when it should have been
- Children of service personnel about to go on deployment (permission would be considered as long as the request is accompanied by a letter from the Commanding Officer)
- Time-off relating to Child Entertainment Performances, subject to a license being issued and seen by the Headteacher
- One off sporting events, if the child is participating and is at county standard or above and a letter has been provided from the sports regional governing body as evidence
- One day of absence could be authorised for an immediate family members graduation ceremony/passing out parade
- Medical appointments (parents/carers should be encouraged to arrange non-urgent medical appointments outside of school hours when possible and it is advisable to share this section of the July 2026 policy with parents as part of your attendance communication. If the medical appointment is during the school day, evidence must be provided. Schools should not authorise a whole days absence for a medical appointment that occurs in the morning – the child would be expected to return to school in the afternoon, and vice versa

- Weddings of parents and siblings – weddings can be arranged at weekends or during school holidays; however we acknowledge that there are times when the dates are dependent on other factors, such as the needs of the couple getting married. Leave should only be authorised for this purpose when a Headteacher is satisfied that there is a persuasive reason for holding the wedding during term time.

Decide on the length of the leave of absence

You'll need to use your judgement to decide how many days to authorise the absence for, based on the individual circumstances.

To make this decision, speak to the family to gather as much context as possible. For example, you'll want to find out:

- Why the learner needs to be absent – such as, in the case of a bereavement, how close the learner was to the family member
- Whether the absence would include a long journey – consider reasonable timescales for completing the journey
- The anticipated day of return, and whether any circumstances (such as travel complications) may lead to the learner not returning to school on that day

You should also consider any possible safeguarding risks to the learner – for example, if the learner would be travelling abroad to a potentially dangerous location.

Absence will not be authorised for reasons such as the following:

- Family holidays
- To care for other family members
- Holidays abroad for the purpose of visiting a sick relative, excepting where that person is seriously ill. Medical evidence may be requested.
- Holidays taken in term time due to lower cost/parental work commitment.
- Pilgrimages by parents (e.g. Hajj). These are rare but can result in children being away from school for significant periods of time (at least 5 days). They are not regarded as exceptional as children themselves do not perform Hajj, but tend to travel with their parents when they go
- Birthdays
- Taking part in a protest activity
- To interpret for other family members
- No school uniform/shoes
- Bullying
- Friendship problems
- Head lice
- Learning difficulties
- Weddings for extended family members (beyond parent and sibling)
- Family Anniversaries
- Death of a pet
- Travel problems
- School refusal.