

OAKWOOD INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL

Attendance (Pupil) Policy



Review Date	September 2025
Reviewed by	Governing Body
Review Cycle	2 years
Next review due	September 2027

Signed :.....

Name :.....
on behalf of the Governing Body of Oakwood Infant and Nursery School

Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education
- acting early to address patterns of absence
- building strong relationships with families to make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending school on time.

Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) and [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- ✓ Part 6 of the [Education Act 1996](#)
- ✓ Part 3 of the [Education Act 2002](#)
- ✓ Part 7 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- ✓ [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments\)](#)
- ✓ [The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- ✓ [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment](#)

It also refers to:

- ✓ [School census guidance](#)
- ✓ [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- ✓ [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

We recognise that good attendance and punctuality are key to raising achievement.

We want our children to build the foundations for their future whilst we are with us, and along with this come expectations around commitments, attendance and following expectations.

We seek to work in partnership with our parents and carers to ensure the best possible start for each pupil and regular attendance and punctuality are an essential part of this partnership.

For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education, it is important they attend school regularly and on time. We use the tagline: **"Ten to nine is learning time"** to promote punctuality with our children.

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

Objectives

At Oakwood Infant and Nursery School, we aim to raise achievement through promoting attendance and punctuality levels of 96% and above. Our aims are:

- to foster a high expectation of attendance in school on a regular basis
- to raise family awareness of the importance of a child's regular attendance at school
- to assist parents, carers and children through clear procedures and expectations for staff, parents, carers and children regarding attendance and punctuality

- to regularly inform parents/carers of their child's attendance levels at school
- to safeguard vulnerable children through clear measures for dealing with absence and lateness

Under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, parents of a pupil of compulsory school age are under a legal duty to ensure the regular attendance of a pupil where he or she is a registered pupil. Failure to discharge this duty may result in the Local Authority prosecuting the parents and each parent may be fined.

In school, the register is taken twice a day, each day consists of two sessions. Each pupil is marked / \ (present) or O (absent). If a pupil is marked absent, a code indicating the reason for the absence is recorded against the child's name. *(see appendix 3)*

The Headteacher and the Safeguarding Lead has responsibility for deciding if an absence is authorised or un-authorised. School staff do not need to accept a parental explanation for a child's absence, whether written, telephoned or given in person, if they doubt the explanation.

Absences should be reported to the school office before 9.00 a.m. on the first day of absence and each day thereafter. This can be done by telephone message, verbal, email or by letter. If this is not done, school will make a call home to seek an explanation for the absence, where possible.

Attendance at school is monitored on a regular basis by the Attendance Team. Should a child's attendance fall below 95% parents/carers will be informed to make them aware. Should attendance fall below 90% parents/carers will be contacted to discuss their child's attendance. Attendance below 90% is classed as 'Persistent Absenteeism' and these children are discussed on a regular basis with the Education Welfare Officer.

If poor attendance continues, school will liaise further with the Education Welfare Officer, who may contact the parents/carers and/or arrange a joint meeting with parents/carers and school to try to resolve the issue by agreement. If ways of trying to improve the child's attendance fail, the Education Welfare Service may issue a Penalty Notice or use Court proceedings to prosecute parents/carers.

Roles and Responsibilities

The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- ✓ Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents/carers
- ✓ Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
 - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
 - Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- ✓ Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- ✓ Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- ✓ Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs

- ✓ Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- ✓ Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
- ✓ Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils' needs
- ✓ Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
- ✓ Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
 - The importance of good attendance
 - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
 - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
 - The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- ✓ Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data

The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

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

The designated Attendance Leader

The Attendance leader is responsible for:

- ✓ Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- ✓ Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- ✓ Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- ✓ Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- ✓ Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- ✓ Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- ✓ Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- ✓ Building close and productive relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- ✓ Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- ✓ Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- ✓ Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- ✓ Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement

- ✓ Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the Headteacher
- ✓ Working with Education Welfare Officers to tackle persistent absence
- ✓ Advising the Headteacher when to issue penalty notices

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Lynda Lloyd.

Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 3) and submitting this information onto intregris.

School office staff

Will take calls from parents/carers about absence and record it on the school system.

Parents

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

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

Parents are expected to:

- ✓ Make sure their child attends every day on time
- ✓ Call the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- ✓ Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- ✓ Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or local authority
- ✓ Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting the Attendance team who can be contacted via telephone or email: admin@oakwoodi.derby.sch.uk

Registration:

Children must attend school on time to be given a mark for that session 8:50 *[see appendix 3 for codes]*

- Children arriving between 9:00 - 9:30 (after registration) will be marked as 'L'
- Children arriving in school after 9.30 will be marked as 'U' – Un-authorized late. This will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

All children arriving late, and missing registration must sign in at the School Office to comply with evacuation procedures in the event of fire or other emergency.

A pupil arriving late may seriously disrupt not only his or her continuity of learning but also that of others.

Staff input attendance and punctuality on to the School's Information Management System (Arbor), *(See appendix 3 for codes)*. This also analyses the attendance for individuals, groups, classes and year groups. The Attendance Team is responsible for completing reports that are generated from the system. These reports give the name of each pupil and the dates of the absence and non-attendance reasons.

It is also a daily requirement that staff input attendance on the class 'Fire Register' (the red laminated class register). In the event of the alarm sounding and an evacuation of the building, the Fire Register should be taken outside so that all children can be safely accounted for.

A child's attendance record is monitored and any absence or continuous late arrival in school will be checked and actioned, this is the responsibility of the teacher. This may also involve the Education Welfare Service if school considers it necessary.

Recording Attendance

Attendance register

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

We will take our attendance register at the start of the 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 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: (See Appendix 3 for the DfE attendance codes)

We will also record:

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

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

Following up unexplained absence

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

- ✓ Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, **the school may contact social care or the police**
- ✓ Identify whether the absence is authorised or not
- ✓ Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session(s) for which the pupil was absent
- ✓ Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an Education Welfare Officer
- ✓ Where appropriate, offer support to their parents to improve attendance
- ✓ Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals
- ✓ Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with: we may issue a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention as appropriate

Authorised Absence or Lateness

For the purpose of this policy, the school defines:

Absence as:

- Arrival at school after the register has closed.
- Not attending at school for any reason.

An authorised absence as:

- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave.
- Medical or dental appointments, which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave.
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave.
- An absence due to a family emergency.

Attendance and Absence will be recorded in End of Year individual school reports

Unauthorised Absence

An unauthorised absence as:

- No satisfactory explanation has been given to explain the lateness or absence.
- There is reason to doubt the accuracy of the reasons given for the lateness or absence.

- Parent/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily or without an acceptable reason.
- Absences, which have not been properly explained.
- Arrival at school after the register has closed with no acceptable reason.
- Unauthorised holiday taken.

Unsuccessful attempts to contact the home via telephone call, email or text messaging stating a phone call back will be recorded.

Doorstop Visit Procedure

Doorstop visits allow schools to learn about the underlying reasons behind poor attendance by opening a dialogue with parent/carers. The Educational Welfare Officer may be able to offer this support when required.

Absence Procedure

Attendance and Lateness is tracked on a weekly basis by the Attendance Team.

Last Academic Year	
Letter A	Attendance below 90% last academic year. Letter A sent.
Letter B	Attendance below 80% last academic year with Educational Welfare Officer involvement.

Absence Procedure	
Initial Absence	First day calling – phone call if no contact has been made with school.
Stage 1	Phone call and letter to parents/carers - awareness of decline in attendance – monitoring Below 95% -- Attendance Team to send letter 1 home expressing our initial concerns – monitor. Attendance Team to use discretion as necessary.
Stage 2	Phone call to parents/carers - awareness of continuous decline in attendance – monitoring Below 90% - Attendance Team to send letter 2 home if there is no improvement after sending Letter 1. Weekly well-being calls made - meeting to discuss ways we can support child's attendance. Attendance Team to use discretion as necessary.
Stage 3	Phone call to parents/carers - awareness of continuous decline in attendance – monitor. Support families as necessary Below 90% - CONTINUE TO DECLINE - Arrangement of a formal meeting/telephone consultation with EWO. Support families as necessary. Parents/Carers may be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice, a parenting order or told that formal proceedings for prosecution (court warning letter) will be taken resulting in a fine of up to £2,500 and a criminal record. Attendance Team to use discretion as necessary.
Stage 4	Phone call to parents/carers - awareness of continuous decline in attendance – monitor. Support families as necessary Below 90% Meeting to discuss possibility of a contract. A formal written, signed agreement between parents/carers and the local authority (LA) to support irregular attendance. A parenting contract will be offered to parents/carers where their child/ren has/have failed to attend school regularly. It will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A statement by the parents that they agree to comply for a specified period with the requirements set out in the contract; and ▪ A statement by the LA or governing board agreeing to provide support to the parents for the purpose of complying with the contract.

Late arrival and collection from school procedures

It is the responsibility of parents/carers to drop and collect their child(ren) on time at the beginning and the end of each school day.

Oakwood Infant and Nursery School recognises that it has a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils therefore:

- ✓ All late arrival and collection of children will be recorded and this information may be passed onto the Local Authority for further investigation.
- ✓ Where a pupil has 3 recorded late arrivals and/or collections in one half term a letter may be sent home to the parents.
- ✓ Where there is no improvement, in late and/or collections, a referral may be made to the Local Authority.

Late Arrival Procedure	
Stage 1	Late on 3 occasions – phone call made. Late on 6 occasions – support plan may be offered with expectation to improve
Stage 2	Further decline will result in a referral to the Local Authority.
Late Collection Procedure	
Stage 1	Late collection on 3 occasions – phone call made. Late collection on 6 occasions - initial concern (Monitor collection)
Stage 2	Further decline will result in a referral to the Local Authority.
Improvement in Attendance	
	Improvement in attendance letter sent. Monitor termly.

(See Appendix 1 for letter templates).

Safeguarding at Oakwood Infant and Nursery School

We believe in supporting the whole family; our first duty of care, however, is to the child. Where there is any doubt regarding the safety and wellbeing of a child, we will follow our Safeguarding Policy and Children missing from education guidance.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66bf57a4dcb0757928e5bd39/Children_missing_education_guidance_-_August_2024.pdf

We value an open and honest relationship with our parents and carers with regular communication and support where necessary.

Attendance of Looked after Children and Children with a Social Worker

Looked After Children and Children with a social worker are the priority for first day response calls. Class Teachers will always complete registers in a prompt and accurate manner, in order to ensure checks can be completed by the Attendance Team in a timely manner. The Attendance Team in partnership with social workers will intervene if there is evidence of unauthorised absences from school in order to ascertain any difficulties and remove barriers.

Removal from Roll

As a school we are now required to:

- Inform the local authority in **every** circumstance when deleting a pupil's name from the admission register
- Inform the local authority of the pupil's destination school and home address if the pupil is moving to a new school.
- Provide information to the local authority when registering new pupils, including the pupil's address and previous school.

If a pupil is leaving our school, parents are asked to:

- Give the school comprehensive information about their plans, including any date of a move and your new address and telephone numbers, the child's new school and the start date when known.
- If pupils leave and we do not have the above information, then a pupil is considered a '**pupil missing in education**'. (see

below) This requires schools and local authorities to then carry out investigations in accordance to 'Derby City Council Children Missing from Education, which may involve liaising with Children's Services, the Police and other agencies.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66bf57a4dcb0757928e5bd39/Children_missing_education_guidance_-_August_2024.pdf

Children Missing Education (CME)

A Child Missing from Education (CME) is defined by the Department for Education (DfE) as "a child of compulsory school age who is not on a school roll, nor being educated otherwise". This is in line with CME Guidelines.

Children Missing from Education are:

- not on a school roll
- not being educated in a school or anywhere else
- identified as being out of education for over 20 school days.

Children Missing from Education are not:

- children who are on roll of a school but are not in regular attendance. If a child is not attending their registered school or education provider, the school's attendance policy should be followed
- children who are being Electively Home Educated (EHE)
- children whose parent/carer has applied for a school place, and the application is being dealt with by the admissions procedure.

How to refer a CME?

Contact details:

- Email: cme@derby.gov.uk
- Telephone: 01332 641448
- Address: The Council House, Corporation Street, Derby, DE1 2FS you are a professional working in an external authority and believe this child has moved into the city, complete an online referral.

[Referral to Children Missing Education \(CME\) Officer](#)

Pupils with medical conditions or special educational needs and disabilities

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 their parents/carers to improve attendance, schools should be mindful of the barriers these pupils face and put additional support in place where necessary to help them access their full-time education. This should include:

- ✓ making reasonable adjustments
- ✓ working with parents/carers to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities.
- ✓ establish strategies for removing the in-school barriers these pupils face, including considering support or reasonable adjustments for uniform, routines.
- ✓ develop individual approaches that meet an individual pupil's specific needs.

Part-time timetables

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs.

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 must treat absence as authorised.

Approval for term-time absence

We have adopted a zero tolerance approach with regards to holidays during term time; this is in line with Local Authority and Government guidelines.

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

A leave of absence is granted at the Headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for. We define 'exceptional circumstances' as

- Significant family bereavement, i.e. Mother (step), Father (step) principal carer or sibling.
- Significant family illness to Mother (step), Father (step), sibling or principal carer.
- Involvement in court proceedings, either in the family courts or in criminal proceedings.

The process for requesting leave of absence will be communicated by completing 'Application for Leave of Absence' form that can be collected from the school office or downloaded from the website *[see appendix 2 Application for Leave of Absence]*.

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

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

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via our website or from the school office. [Application for Leave of absence](#). The Attendance Team may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence. *(see appendix 1)*

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

The school applies the following procedures in deciding how to deal with individual absences:

Illness - (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments. Parents are requested to inform school by phone or email by 9.00 a.m. on the first day of absence and each day thereafter explaining the reason for the absence.

If a pupil has been sick **and the sickness is considered viral**, they should stay at home for 48 hours to avoid passing the illness on to others.

Recurring Illnesses - Through our attendance monitoring procedures, should we identify children with recurring periods of illness, we may request supporting medical evidence for our records. E.g., Appointment cards/letters, second part of prescriptions or prescribed medicines (including labels) can be shown. This in turn will allow us to authorise the absence.

Appointments – School should be given prior notification of medical appointments by email/phone call, verbal or a letter. Wherever possible, all appointments should be made outside of school time either before or after school or during the school holidays. Should an appointment be necessary during the school day, please provide an appointment card/letter/text notification confirming this.

Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent(s)/carers belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.

If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made).

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

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

Reducing Persistent and Severe Absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school. (Equivalent to 1 day or more a fortnight across a full school year). Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's strategy for improving attendance.

We will:

- ✓ Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education.
- ✓ Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence.
- ✓ Have regular meetings and communicate regularly with the parents/carers of children who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school.
- ✓ Explain the help that is available.
- ✓ Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence.
- ✓ Review any existing actions or interventions.
- ✓ Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant.
- ✓ Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence.
- ✓ Implement sanctions, where necessary.
- ✓ Build strong relationships with families, listen to and understand barriers to attendance and work with families to help remove them.
- ✓ Work together to put additional targeted support in place and re-engage children.

Particular focus will be given to pupils who are absent from school more than they are present (those missing 50% or more of school). We will work together to make this group the top priority for support – this may include specific support with attendance or a whole family plan, but it may also include consideration for an education, health and care plan or an alternative form of educational provision where necessary to overcome the barriers to being in school.

If all avenues of support have been facilitated by schools, local authorities, and other partners, and the appropriate educational support or placements (e.g. an education, health and care plan) have been provided but severe absence for unauthorised reasons continues, it is likely to constitute neglect and potential safeguarding issues.

Child not collected from school.

In the event that a child is not collected by a parent/carer, this will be brought to the attention of the Headteacher or the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately. The Headteacher or the DSL will then make every effort to contact the parent, carer or named alternative carer. The Headteacher or DSL should also inform the Derby City duty Social Care Team in Derby of the current situation. If the parent/carer arrives at school to collect the child, the Headteacher/DSL should inform the duty team that no further action is necessary unless there are grounds for concern about the child's safety. If the parent of the child resides outside of the city, then the respective social care department should be informed of the current situation.

If the child has not been collected after 30 minutes past the end of the school day, the Headteacher/ DSL should alert the social care duty team and have this information available:

- Brief circumstances of the incident
- Child's details
- Name(s)
- Date of birth
- Address
- Details of parents/carers contact arrangements
- Details of alternative carers contact arrangements
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Religion
- Language spoken
- SEN/behavioural needs/medical issues
- Special dietary needs
- Other agency involvement
- Previous or current social care involvement
- Any previous incidents of not being collected from school.

It is also important that schools inform the duty officers what steps have already been taken to contact parents/carers and alternative carers.

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.

The Education Welfare Service is in place to support school with the monitoring of attendance and punctuality, to ensure that all children of compulsory school age are in school. Part of the role is to carry out official register checks and highlight any attendance concerns. Once a pupil's attendance falls below 90% the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) may make a home visit or require parents/carers to attend a meeting to discuss any concerns. Referrals may be made to other agencies for further support.

Penalty Notices

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Notices to improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school/ Local Authority may issue 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 for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

Strategies for Monitoring Good Attendance

At Oakwood Infant and Nursery School, we will encourage punctuality and good attendance through:

Monitoring attendance and absence data (including punctuality) half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level.

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

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 (see section 8.4 below)

- ✓ 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

Appendix 1 – templates

1. Format of Support Plan meeting:



Attendance Improvement Plan
Oakwood Infant and Nursery School

Date/time of meeting:

Who attended meeting:

Name of child:

DoB:

Year Group:

Agency involvement:

Attendance: Current Year: Previous Year:

What is working well?

Plan to improve attendance:

Any further support needed:

2. Notice to improve template:

Team	Education Welfare Service
Contact	██████████
Our ref	Notice to improve
Email	██████████
Tel	01332 64xxxx
Deaf people can text	07774 333 412
Date	██████████

Name
Address

Dear xxx

School Attendance – Notice to Improve

As parent/carer of «Students_Name», who is a registered pupil at «School_Name», you will be aware that school attendance is hugely important for your child in order for them to gain the full benefit from their education, for their learning, wellbeing, and wider development.

If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, the child’s parent may be guilty of an offence under s.444 Education Act 1996.

The school have advised that support has been offered to you and your family to try and help improve «Students_Name»’s attendance. Unfortunately, despite these efforts your child’s, attendance remains a cause for concern.

Enclosed with this letter is a summary of the support that has been provided to help address and overcome the barriers that may be preventing school attendance. These offers of support are still available to support you and your child to attend school.

From «START_DATE», your child has failed to attend regularly at «School_Name» which has resulted in 10 sessions (half days) or more of unauthorised absences being recorded within a rolling 10 school week period. Please see the attached registration certificate for details.

Your child must show significant improvements in attendance and avoid having any unauthorised absences from school. Your child’s attendance will now be monitored for a further 6 week from the date of this letter.

If the reasons given for your child’s irregular school attendance are not satisfactory, then the Education Welfare Service may take legal proceedings against you for failure to comply with the Law. This may result in:

- A Penalty Notice payable up to £160
- Prosecution under s444 (l) Education Act 1996, where if convicted you may be fined up to £1000
- Prosecution under s444 (l)(a) Education Act 1996, where if convicted you may be fined up to £2500 and/or 12 weeks imprisonment

If you wish to discuss this notice, or discuss what further support is available, please contact our team as soon as possible:

**School contact details -
Education Welfare Service – 01332 641448**

Yours sincerely

Name Name
School contact Education Welfare Officer

Appendix 2

Application for Leave of Absence



Derby City Council

APPLICATION FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Important Information For Parents/~~Carers~~

Please refer to the School Attendance Policy when requesting Leave of Absence – Head teachers are no longer able to grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances.

I wish to apply for leave of absence from school to be granted to:

Name of child: Class:

Dates of proposed absence: From: To:

Reason for Proposed Exceptional Circumstances:

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Total days requested:

Parent(s) full names(s) Date of birth

..... Date of birth

Address:

Signature of Parent/Carer:

Signature of Parent/Carer:

Consequences for parents taking children on Leave of Absence during term time which are ~~NOT~~ NOT authorised by the school MAY result in a Penalty Notice of £130 per parent per child being issued by the Local Authority.

For School Use Only

Attendance %

Interview offered to Parent/Carer? Yes/No Date:

~~Authorised?~~ Yes/No Head Teacher Date:

Parent(s) informed by letter Yes/No Date:

Appendix 3

Codes for Register

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
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

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)
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

