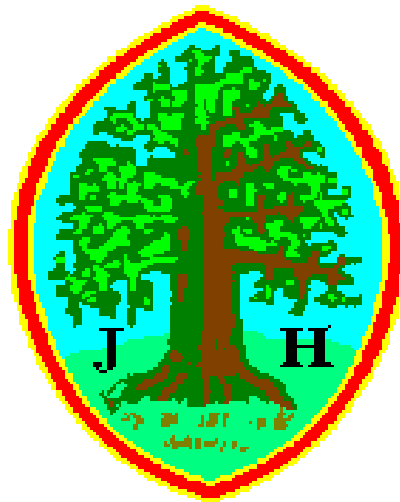


Attendance Policy

The John Harrox Primary School



Approved by:	[Governing Body]	Date: [22/05/2023]
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1. Aims

The John Harrox Primary School is committed to providing a full and efficient education for all pupils. The school sincerely believes that all pupils benefit from the education it provides and therefore from regular school attendance. To this end the school will do as much as it can to ensure that all pupils achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems affecting attendance will be dealt with as quickly as possible.

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- In the first instance, it is the responsibility of pupils and their parents/carers to ensure attendance at school as required by law.
- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, particularly persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil 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 ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school
- Situations beyond the control of children and/or parents/carers may impact on attendance. We will, with the agreement and support of parents, work in partnership with external agencies to resolve these.

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting 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 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing body

The governing body is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the head teacher to account for the implementation of this policy

The named link governor (Mrs I Slator) will carry out monitoring duties to ensure the above is taking place. These may include:

- Checking over all attendance figures for the school
- Tracking attendance of vulnerable groups (not individual children)
- Seeking reassurance that monitoring and timely following up of attendance issues are taking place – for example: 1st day contact, attendance meetings.

3.2 The head teacher

The head teacher is responsible for:

- 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 fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance (Ms K. Wilson)

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Facilitating calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Facilitating targeted intervention and support to pupils and families Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Ms. Wilson and can be contacted via 01406 370426 and/or FAO attendance lead via email address: enquiries@johnharrox.lincs.sch.uk

3.4 The attendance officer (Mrs. S Colmer)

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7).
- Raising attendance causes for concern for consideration based on attendance data.
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the head teacher.
- Advising the head teacher or in the absence of the head teacher the deputy head teacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices.
- To keep all evidence of absence on the register system and relevant written evidence to be filed in the child's personal file.

The attendance officer is Mrs. S. Colmer and can be contacted via 01406 370426 telephone number and/or email address enquiries@johnharrox.lincs.sch.uk.

3.5 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for:

- Recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office. Registers are taken twice a day at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions. Registers are returned completed to the office within 30minutes of the start of each session. Notes of any unnotified absence will be attached to the register.
- Completing registers accurately using the correct codes (indicating all authorised/unauthorised absence) and those on time. Registers are then to be returned to the school office by 9:10am (AM session) and within 25mins of the start of the PM session. Late 'L' code to be used for arrivals between 8.50am and 9.10am. The 'L' code denotes a present mark. Late 'U' code will be used for arrivals after 9.10am by the school office staff where no other code is appropriate. The 'U' code denotes an unauthorised absence.
- To challenge suspicious or inappropriate reasons for absence and inform the SLT Attendance Lead / Head teacher/DSL immediately of any serious concerns.
- To inform senior staff of concerns in a timely manner.

3.6 School office staff

School office staff will:

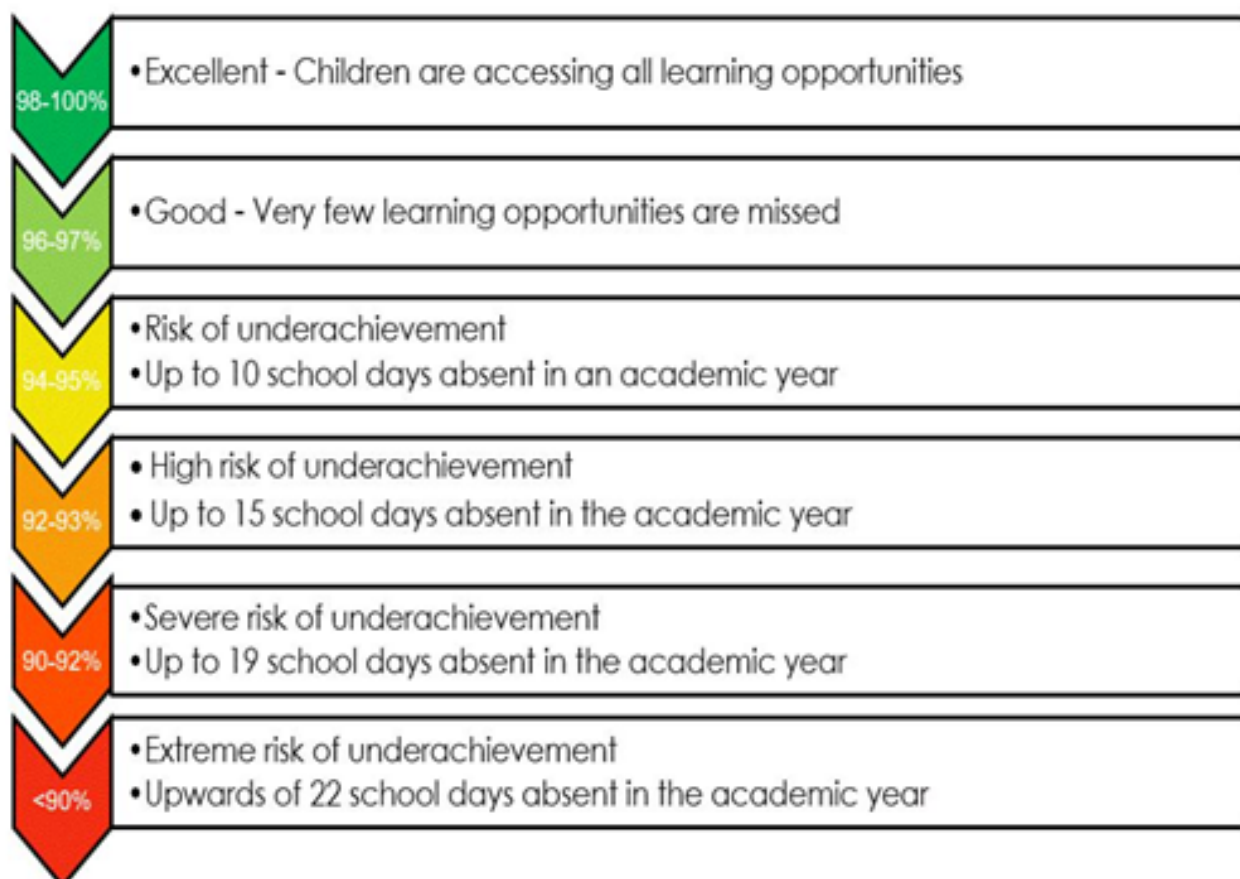
- Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system.
- Transfer calls/emails from parents to the head teacher or attendance lead in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance where relevant.
- To input attendance data onto the Integrus system using the correct codes as recommended by the DFE in their publication '**School Attendance**'. www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance
- Produce updates from weekly registers and weekly % information.
- To keep all evidence of absence on the register system and written evidence to be filed in the child's personal file, register folder or Integrus
- Maintain a late book to record late arrivals after 9.10am. Late 'U' code is to be used for arrivals after 9.10am where no other code is appropriate. The 'U' code denotes an unauthorized absence.
- Follow up immediately any unexplained absence by contacting parents/carers. Staff to ring if the pupil has not arrived by 9.15am after the register has been returned to the office.
- To challenge suspicious or inappropriate reasons for absence and inform the SMT Attendance Lead / Head teacher (Safeguarding Person) immediately of any serious concerns.
- Inform the Attendance Lead / officer if there is no response to attempted contact.
- Send letters out to request that reasons for absence are provided.
- Send out letters to parents / carers at the request of the Attendance Lead

3.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time (i.e. between 8:35 and 8.45 am each morning)
- Call the school to report their child's absence before the start of the school day on the day [e.g. 8:45am] of the absence, and advise when they are expected to return.
- Provide the school with at least 2 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- To ensure that their children arrive in school well prepared for the school day and to check that they have done their homework.
- To contact the school in confidence whenever any problem occurs that may affect their child's performance/attendance in school.
- Leave of absence forms are to be requested and completed in advance. Please note leave of absence will only be granted under exceptional circumstances and is at the discretion of the head teacher.
- All planned absences/appointments must be notified before the absence is taken. Proof of appointments such as copies of appointment cards / letters will be requested.
- Parents may be invited to meetings to discuss attendance concerns (where necessary).
- Attend parents' consultation meetings to discuss progress or problems.
- Not to book holidays, leave of absence, during term time. Term time absences, especially during SATs and assessment periods, may seriously affect the progress of your child.

The following chart summarises the effects of missed school days:



3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time 8:45am-3:15pm
- Arrive on time and be appropriately prepared for the day.
- Tell a member of staff about any problem or reason that may prevent them from attending school.

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an 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 whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if 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 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8:45am on each school day. The school gates open from 8:35am every morning to allow for an orderly and calm start to the school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8:45am and will be kept open until 9:10am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1pm and will be kept open until 1:25pm.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carers must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8:45am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office on 01406 370426.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness (see also section 7).

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carers to provide 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 with the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carers notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

Parents should inform the school of planned medical appointments for their children in writing, this could be by providing a copy of the appointment letter.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer 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.

Other planned absences must be notified through the school by the completion of the leave of absence request form. This can be collected on request via the school office.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil 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

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a child misses the start of the school day they can miss work and vital information relating to the day ahead. Late arrivals also disrupt lessons, which can be embarrassing for the child. Good timekeeping is a vital life skill which will help children as they progress through their school life and out into the wider world.

Class teachers will monitor the punctuality of children and in the first instance raise their concerns with the parent/carer. The attendance lead, head teacher, DSL may also be informed if lateness persists. Where punctuality continues to be a concern then further strategies may need to be considered.

This could include:

- Meeting with parents to discuss the impact of late arrival and possible solutions/required support.
- Making reasonable adjustments for the child such as sticker reward chart, alternative entrance, being met by a familiar adult.
- Learning mentor intervention (ELSA).
- Seeking further assistance through Early Help Assessment process.

4.5 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 pupils' emergency contacts, the school may take further measures it feels are appropriate such as contacting the police or children's services where concerns for a child's safety are raised.
- Identify whether the absence is approved 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.
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer.
- Where absences persist and contact cannot be made the school will follow the county's Child Missing In Education (CME) Policy and report the child as CME. This usually occurs, but is not limited to occurring, within 5 days of an unexplained absence with no contact.

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels for example during the twice annual parents evening consultation with the class teacher and with a written attendance report in the annual child's school report.

Where absences become a concern then this will be raised at an appropriate time with parents. Letters raising the school's concern to parents may be sent and or attendance meetings planned.

Where our monitoring exercises identify attendance concerns, section 7 outlines possible actions and ways of communicating and working with parents.

5. Understanding types of absence

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily.
- Truancy before or during the school day.
- Absences which have never been properly explained.
- Children who arrive at school too late to get a mark.
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
- Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.

Absence due to prolonged illness/medical grounds may require referral to The Pilgrim Hospital School <http://www.pilgrim.lincs.sch.uk/> The responsibility for determining whether or not any absence is to be authorised rests ultimately with the Head Teacher.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions>

Persistent Absence

The DFE's definition of Persistent Absence is:

"any pupil who at any point in the year has accumulated absence of 10% or more of the available sessions regardless of whether or not any of it is authorised"

The DFE use the school census data to identify individual schools that have high rates of persistent absence. The Education Welfare Service can provide casework and strategic support to schools to address Persistent Absence.

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The head teacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the head teacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

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

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 2 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school office. The head teacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- 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 pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.

Holidays during term time are actively discouraged. Due to the link between attendance and attainment, the government has put a priority on reducing all forms of absence.

As a result, a request for leave of absence during term time will only be granted where an application is made in advance to the school and the school consider that the leave of absence should be granted due to exceptional circumstances relating to that application. Any application must be submitted in writing to the Head Teacher at least two weeks in advance of the period of absence. They should only then remove their child if the absence has been authorised, and once they have been notified in writing.

If you then choose to take your child out of school during term time and it is **not** deemed to be exceptional circumstances and/or has not been approved by the School, then this will be coded as an unauthorised absence and a **Fixed Penalty Notice** can be issued for the period of absence, failure to pay the Fixed Penalty may result in further legal action being taken against you.

The head teacher can authorise absence during term time for exceptional circumstances. Example of exceptional circumstances could include the following which may be considered on a case-by-case basis:

- If a parent is service personnel and is returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the individual will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays.
- Where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue.
- The death or terminal illness of a close relative, only if Headteacher is satisfied that the circumstances are truly exceptional.
- Out of school programmes such as music, arts or sport operating at a high standard of achievement. Documentary evidence of this event will be required.
- Religious observance – The Education Act 1996 S444(3) (c), states "on any day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which his/her parent belongs".
- To attend a wedding or funeral of a close relative if the Headteacher is satisfied that the circumstances are truly exceptional; 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 and there will be an onus on parents to show clear evidence that this absence is absolutely an exceptional circumstance. In difficult family situations the Headteacher may use his/her discretion in granting leave and each case should be addressed on its individual merits, taking into account the overall welfare of the child.

5.2 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

A Fixed Penalty Notice is a strategy used by schools to address the unacceptable levels of attendance of children at their school under the following legislation:

- Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 places upon parents a duty to ensure that their child receives efficient full-time education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- Where a child is a registered pupil at a school and the parent fails to ensure that child's regular attendance at school the parent is liable to be prosecuted for a criminal offence under Section 444 of the Education Act
- In cases where this duty is not being fulfilled Section 444B of the same Act empowers the Local Authority to issue a Fixed Penalty of either £60.00 or £120.00.

Please note: A Fixed Penalty Notice can also be issued if your child is seen in a public place within the first 5 days of an exclusion from their school.

- Section 103 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 makes it a duty for parents in relation to pupils subject to a fixed period or permanent exclusion to ensure that their child is not present in a public place during school hours, without reasonable justification, during the first five days of any such exclusion. If a child is present in a public place during the first five days of an exclusion during school hours the parent may be guilty of an offence for which they can be prosecuted by the LA before a magistrates' court or issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice for £60.00 or £120.00.
- Penalty Notices issued for non-school attendance

The Local Education Authority will be responsible for deciding whether a Penalty Notice is issued.

In law an offence occurs if a parent/carer fails to secure a child's attendance at a school at which they are a registered pupil and that absence is not authorised by the school. Penalty notices supplement the existing sanctions currently available under Section 444 Education Act 1966 (prosecution of parents) or Section 36 of The Childrens Act 1989 (Education Supervision Order) to enforce attendance at school where necessary.

Circumstances where a Penalty Notice may be issued:

A Penalty Notice may only be issued in cases of unauthorised absence. The issue of a Penalty Notice may be considered appropriate in the following circumstances:

- Poor or consistently late attendance.
- Excessive holidays in term time.
- Excessive delayed return from extended holidays without prior school agreement.
- Persistent late arrival at school (after the Register has closed).

The amount payable on issue of a penalty notice is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days of receipt of the notice. Full details of the Code of Conduct relating to Penalty Notices are available from Lincolnshire County Council.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

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

To help us all focus on this we will:

- Head teacher certificate for any individual that achieves 100% attendance during the Autumn, Spring and Summer terms.
- An 'improved attendance' certificate for children who have made additional effort to improve their attendance.
- Identifying and supporting pupils who have attendance problems in advance of transition into or out of the school. Such opportunities could be between Pre School & Reception, KS1/KS2, KS2/KS3, Mainstream/Specialist, new to the Country/County. This should include the sharing of relevant information with the educational establishments involved.
- Working with parents who are concerned that their children may be experiencing difficulty in attending school.
- Sending parents/carers absence reports three times per year, together with targets for improvement as appropriate.
- Display boards / Website updates.
- Supporting families through Early Help Assessments (EHA).
- Accessing resources such as the EBSA programme.
- Accessing support from outside agencies such as early help.

7. Attendance monitoring

7.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data weekly half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level.
- Where attendance falls below 95% then considerations are made regarding the nature of the absence – for example if absences have patterns, are due to genuine illness or not and decisions are made as to the nature of the follow up action relating to the absence.
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-level absence 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 compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing body.

7.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families.
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns.

7.3 Using data to improve attendance

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers, and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families.
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies.

The following table summarises possible trigger points for action:

Possible Trigger Points	Actions
Expected 100-95%	The whole school community is informed of our attendance policy and expectations at the beginning of the school year. Children with an attendance of 100% each term are celebrated.
At risk of persistent absence 94-91%	Monitoring considers the reasons for absence and attendance is starting to become a concern. Where attendance is causing concern, a letter informing parents of their child's absence rate and our attendance expectations may be sent. Alternatively, a medical letter may be sent.
Persistent absence 90-80%	Monitoring considers the reasons for absence and attendance is a concern. Reasons for absence will be analysed and if a concern remains following the initial letter a further letter will be sent informing parents of the concern and an invite to a attendance panel meeting will be sent in order to discuss reasons and strategies for improvement. Alternatively, a medical letter may be sent.
At risk of severe absence 79-51%	Monitoring considers the reasons for absence and attendance is a concern. Reasons for absence will be analysed and if a concern remains following the above procedures a further letter will be sent informing parents of the concern and attendance at further panel meetings will be required in order to discuss reasons and strategies for improvement. Possible issuing of a fixed penalty notice by the Local Authority.
Severe absence 50-0%	Monitoring considers the reasons for absence and attendance is a concern. Reasons for absence will be analysed and if a concern remains following the above procedures a further letter will be sent informing parents of the concern and attendance at further panel meetings will be required in order to discuss reasons and strategies for improvement. Possible issuing of a fixed penalty notice by the Local Authority.

7.4 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.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, or annually by the head teacher . At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing body.

9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- SEND Policy
- Child Missing In Education Procedures

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment

R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day