



## Nursery Attendance Policy

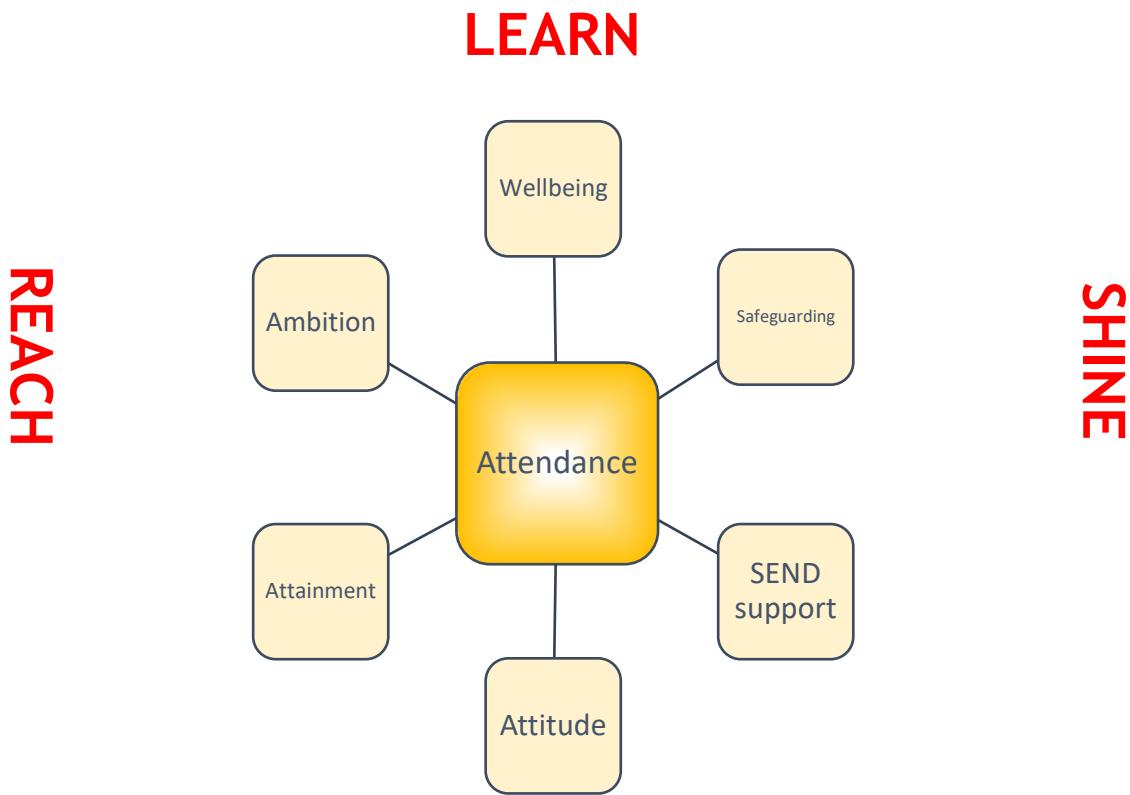
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**Abstract:** This policy lays out the school's expectations of attendance of nursery children and the procedures for monitoring attendance and absence. It should be read alongside the School Attendance Policy which has more details about school roles and responsibilities.

Approved by:	Mrs M Young Chair of Governors	
Approved by:	Mrs J Watson Headteacher	
Last reviewed on:	24/07/2023	
Next review due by:	23/07/2026	
Policy number:	LRS0008	

## Aim

We recognise the intrinsic value of good school attendance and punctuality to obtaining a good education and ultimately to children's life chances and we are committed to embedding a whole-school community culture of good attendance and punctuality as we work to enable children to Learn Reach and Shine:



The foundations of good attendance and punctuality are built from children's earliest experiences of school and fostering good attendance habits is vital at the stage for both children and parents. Regular attendance at nursery has a profound impact on children's social development and inclusion. Good attendance and punctuality are essential if children are to be settled and take full advantage of the learning and development opportunities available to them at Nursery. At a young age, continuity and consistency are important contributors to a child's well-being and progress.

## Expectations

### Pupils

Attend their allocated nursery sessions every day, on time.

### Parents

- Ensure your child attends every allocated nursery sessions unless they are too unwell to do so.

- Ensure your child is on time to nursery every day - this means they go through the nursery entrance on time and are ready to start their sessions.
- Collect children at their designated time. Children should not be collected early without good reason.
- Take family holidays and other leave of absences in school holiday time.
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day.
- Inform the school by 9am if your child will be absent that day and again on every proceeding day of absence, providing a reason for all absences and advising when they are expected to return.
- Provide the school with at least two emergency contact numbers for their child.
- Be positive about nursery and school.
- Communicate openly and honestly with us. We want to support families to ensure every child can access the full-time education they are entitled to.

## **Staff**

- Log attendance in the register accurately.
- Monitor attendance to identify families in need of additional support.
- Act quickly to identify individual barriers to attendance and build strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school without tolerating further poor punctuality or low attendance.
- Apply attendance rules fairly and consistently in line with the school's policy on equal opportunities.

## **Roles and responsibilities in school**

Parents wishing to discuss attendance and punctuality including leave of absence requests should in the first instance contact Wellbeing Ambassador Miss Hannah Slade on 01628 662913 or by emailing [wellbeing@lrschoool.co.uk](mailto:wellbeing@lrschoool.co.uk). Miss Slade will liaise with a child's Key Worker to discuss attendance issues.

## **Daily routines**

### **Morning session**

The school gate opens at 8.40am.

- The register for the morning session is taken at 8.55am.
- The register closes at 9.15 am.

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed at 9.15am will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed at 9.15am will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

The morning sessions ends at 11.45am and children not remaining for lunch should be collected at this time.

### **Afternoon session**

- The register for the afternoon session is taken at 12.15pm.
- The register closes at 12.30pm

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed at 12.15pm will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed at 12.30pm will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

The afternoon session ends at 3.15pm.

### **Recording attendance**

#### **Attendance register**

- We will keep an admissions register, and place all pupils on roll onto this register.
- We will take our attendance register at the start of the morning session of and at the start of the afternoon session. It will mark whether every pupil is:
  - Present
  - Attending an approved off-site educational activity
  - Absent
  - The appropriate code to describe their attendance or absence in line with DfE attendance code descriptions.
  - A comment to provide further information about absences where required
- Any amendment to the attendance register will include:
- The original entry
  - The amended entry
  - The reason for the amendment
  - The date on which the amendment was made
  - The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 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.

### **Unplanned absence**

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9am or as soon as practically possible using the Parentmail app or by calling the school office on 01628 662913. Parents / carers should provide the name, class and reason for absence including the nature of any illness. Office staff will follow up where the information provided has not been detailed enough to provide an accurate record of the absence.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

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

We understand that children with mild illness such as a cough or cold may still be well enough to attend school and this should be considered where possible. The NHS provides guidance on parents as to when they should keep their child home with specific illnesses or symptoms:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1070910/UKHSA-should-I-keep-my\\_child\\_off\\_school\\_guidance-A3-poster.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1070910/UKHSA-should-I-keep-my_child_off_school_guidance-A3-poster.pdf)

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

A good general rule for parents is 'if I had the same thing would I go to work?'

### **Planned absence**

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

Parents should request leave through the school office.

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.

### **Approval for term-time absence**

The Headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time in '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.

The school may request evidence to support leave of absence requests.

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 four weeks before the absence. Parents can obtain a leave of absence from the school office or download a form from the school website [www.lrschool.co.uk](http://www.lrschool.co.uk). The school will send a letter via the parentmail app to confirm if the leave of absence will be authorised.

Parents who would like to discuss a leave of absence request in more detail should speak to Mrs Barnard, Office Manager by emailing [office@lrschool.co.uk](mailto:office@lrschool.co.uk) or by telephoning 01628 662913.

### **Lateness and punctuality**

Persistent lateness is determined as three or more lates within a half term period. Persistent lateness can often be an indicator of future issues with attendance. Arriving late is disruptive to children's routines, the nursery day and other staff who must sign children in and take them to nursery

Persistent lateness will be identified in monitoring using the same process as absence (detailed later in this policy) and the school will work with families to identify the barriers to attending on time.

Persistent lateness in children in nursery is treated as seriously as persistent lateness in children higher up the school. It is vital to foster positive habits at this early stage in children's educational career and there is a strong correlation between children who are persistently late at nursery and poor attendance at school.

### **Following up unexplained absence**

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

- Text the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. This will be followed up by a telephone call if no response has been received by 12pm to all numbers including emergency contacts if necessary. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may use emergency measures, e.g. contact local children's services or contact Police. This is particularly important where a child has previously been identified as vulnerable. A list of children who fall into this category is provided by the DSL and kept securely in the school office. See appendix ii for the absence monitoring process for vulnerable children.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised.
- 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. The absence will be risk assessed and staff may take additional measures

such as a home-visit or contact the Police or Social Care for a welfare check.

### Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels, highlighting cause for concern and monitoring arrangements.

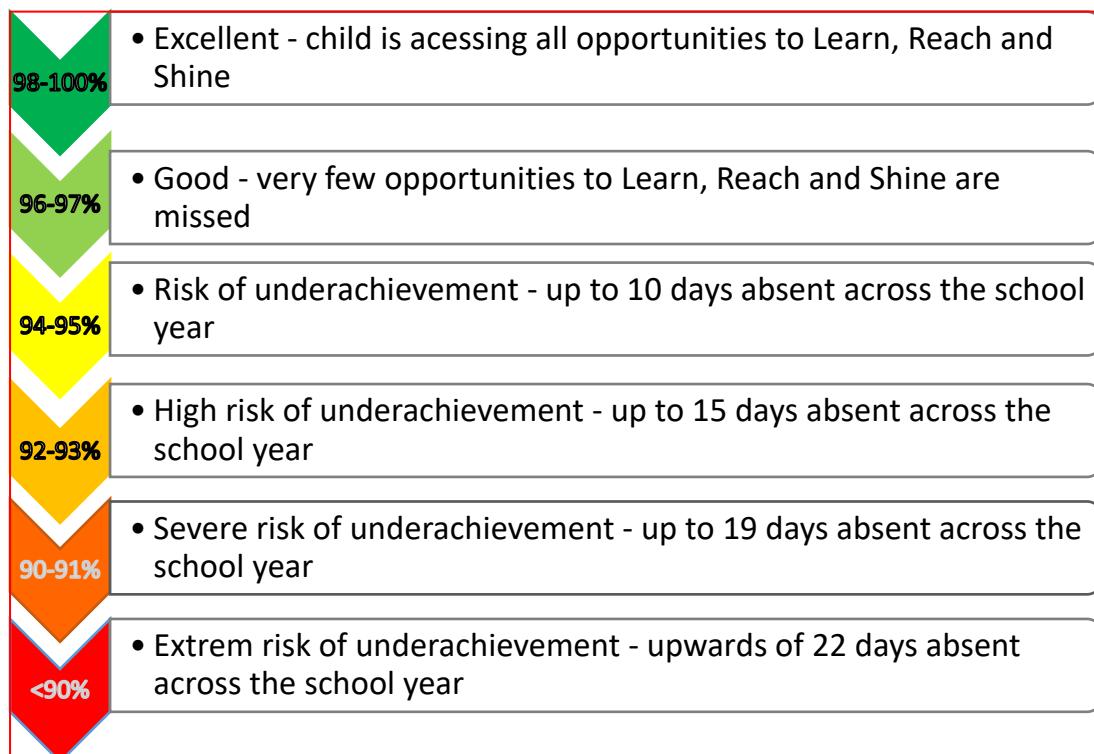
**Attendance will be documented in each school report and discussed at each parent consultation evening.**

### Authorised and unauthorised absence

Valid reasons for authorised absence include:

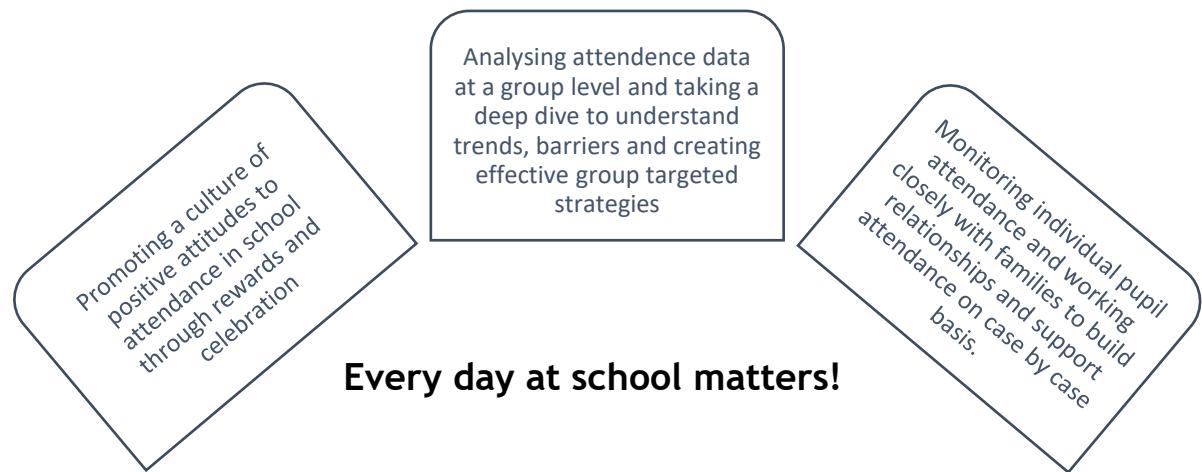
- Illness and medical/dental appointments
- Religious observance - where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes - this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

### Attendance monitoring



## Strategies for improving attendance

The school will take a three pronged approach to improving attendance:

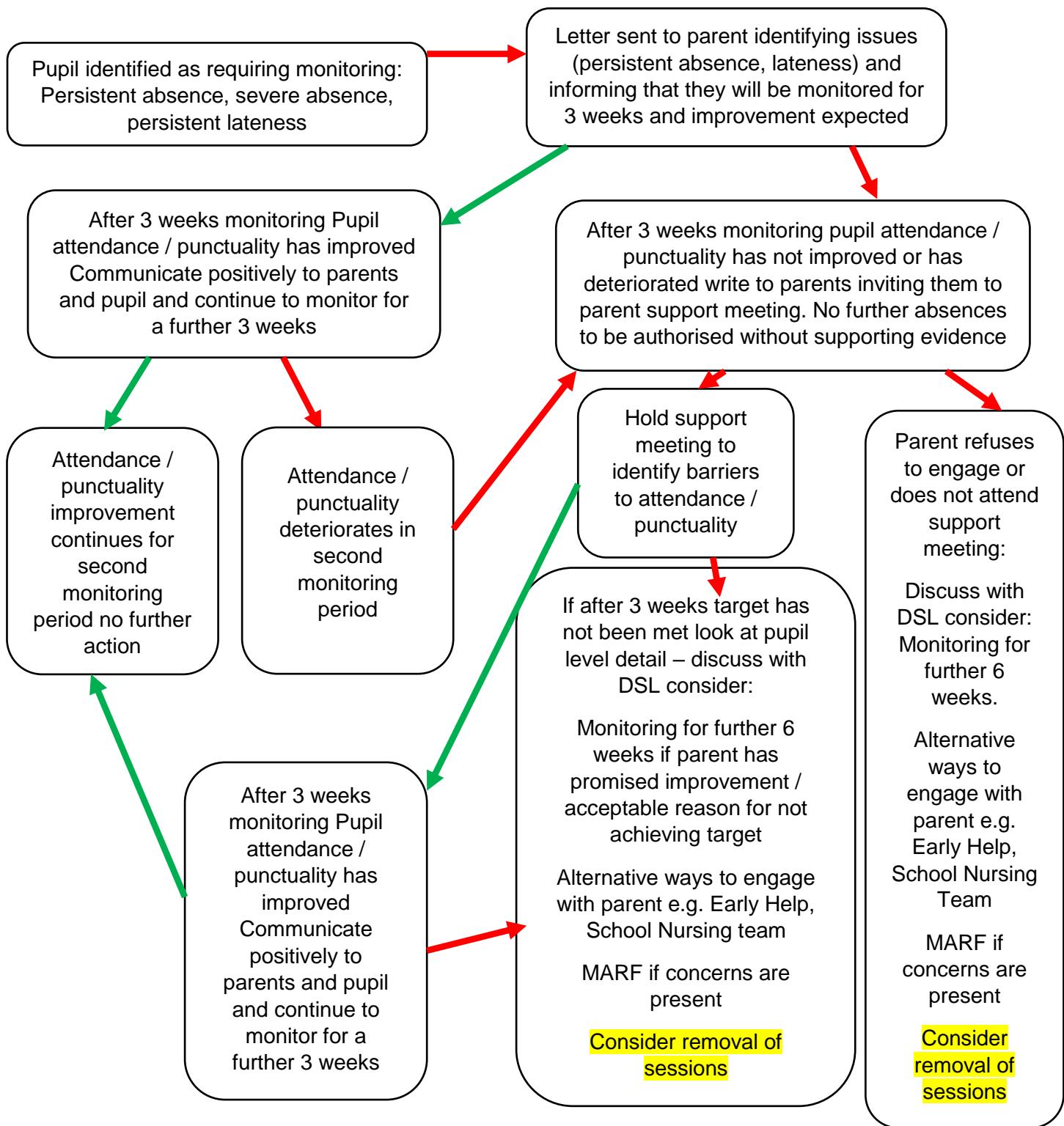


## Celebrating positive attendance

- Children who have an increase in attendance are celebrated with a postcard to their home address.
- Children with an attendance support plan who have achieved 100% attendance in a week will receive an improvement attendance reward.
- The school celebrates termly and end of year 100% attendance with certificates and an attendance reward.
- Children who have significantly improved and sustained good attendance will also receive certificates at the end of the year.
- The half-termly newsletter celebrates the classes who have the highest attendance and the biggest improvement in attendance, as well as offering advice on staying positive about school and encouraging good attendance.

## Reducing persistent and severe absence in nursery children

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.



## Understanding barriers to good attendance and punctuality

Open communication without bias or judgement is key to understanding the barriers that families face to achieving good attendance and punctuality. These should be explored on an individual level through Attendance Support Meetings.

The barriers to nursery attendance can be very different for nursery aged children and key-workers should be involved at all stages of absence monitoring to ensure staff have an awareness of children's developmental needs.

If a child is reluctant to attend, we can work with the parents to support the child to attend. Cooperation between home and school is the best way to support children's well-being.

Strategies to support attendance may include:

- a meeting to discuss issues concerning all involved parties
- changing times of sessions to avoid congested times
- support for reintroducing child to sessions.

#### **Additional sessions**

No refund or reduction in fees is available for any pre-booked additional sessions or lunch club places that are missed or not used, either planned or unplanned, and places are not transferable. If any parents are having difficulties with payments, they are encouraged to contact the Executive Headteacher (see Charging and Remissions Policy).

#### **Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every 2 years by the Headteacher.

#### **Links with other policies**

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

#### **Legislation and guidance**

This policy meets the requirements of working together to improve school attendance from the Department for Education (DfE)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>, 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.

## 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
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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

## Appendix 2

### Procedure for vulnerable children with unexplained absence

