



North Leamington School

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

JUNE 2024

Approval and Review

This Policy is reviewed in discussion with staff and governors.

Effective from: June 2024

Approved by: Governing Body

Review Date: June 2025

Review Leader: Deputy Head Teacher

Introduction

- We are committed to working in partnership with parents and carers to ensure that all of our students have the best possible attendance at school. A high level of attendance is essential for students to reach their full educational achievement, future aspirations, and to assist their social development.

Any absence from school means that a learner is missing vital education; research shows that this has a negative impact on attainment.

Where parents have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly.

This principles outlined in this policy are applicable for learners in all year groups at North Leamington School.

Core Purpose

- **Commitment:** We are committed to supporting all children in achieving 100% attendance
- **Opportunity:** Attendance is crucial to learning. It ensures that students receive the full benefit of teacher explanations and individual guidance and support.
- **Respect:** Attendance helps students form good relationships with members of their class and teachers. When absent, students miss out on shared experiences with other students and can feel isolated and lack confidence because of this.
- **Excellence:** Attendance develops good habits of organisation and self-discipline, which are essential in the adult world of work, and attendance and punctuality are always important features of any reference for a prospective employer.

Legal Requirements

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE). This document is 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](#)

It also refers to:

[School census guidance](#)

[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)

[Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66bf301e253aee7aafdbdfea/Summary_table_of_responsibilities_for_school_attendance_-_August_2024.pdf

Aim

- North Leamington School seeks to ensure that all its students receive a full time education, which maximises opportunities for each student to realise his/her true potential.
- To meet this aim:
 - The school has an 'attendance champion' at Senior Leadership level to ensure that the importance of excellent attendance is shared with all stakeholders in our school community
 - The school will provide a welcoming, caring and safe environment, whereby each member of the school community feels wanted and secure.
 - The school will work collaboratively and build strong relationships with parents, carers and other agencies to reduce barriers to good attendance
 - The school will develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance
 - Governors will support school leaders in implementing this policy
 - Leadership will work with other members of expert staff who work with students and their families to support each student to attend school regularly and on time.
 - The school will employ an effective system of incentives and rewards which acknowledges the effort of students to improve their attendance and timekeeping and will challenge the behaviour of those students and parents/carers who give low priority to attendance and punctuality.
 - The school will establish an effective system of communication with students, parents and appropriate agencies, to provide mutual information, advice and support.

Safeguarding

- North Leamington School is committed to its statutory responsibilities, as outlined in *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024*. We recognise the links between poor attendance and contextual vulnerabilities and work collaboratively with both internal and external agencies to support children and families to achieve good attendance. We recognise that children missing education can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues.

1. Roles and Responsibilities

The governing board

The governing board 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 Leadership Team

The school's Leadership Team are 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

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader (Attendance Champion) 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
- Building relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention re-integration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- 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 designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the Head Teacher
- Administering Leave of Absence requests

Teaching Staff

All teaching staff are responsible for recording lesson attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information on their class registers within the first 10 minutes of a lesson.

Administrative staff

Administrative staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system

- Inform Form Tutors or Year Leaders calls from parents/carers of any concerns in the event that parents, carers or students requiring additional support.
- Make records of any communication using our recording systems (G4S / CPOMS) as required

Parents/carers

- Parents must telephone (01926 338711) or email (attendance@northleamingtonschool.co.uk) the school **before 8.30am on each day of any absence**, with the reason for absence and if possible how long the absence is likely to last
- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Where possible, appointments should be made **outside of school hours** or in school holidays. We realise that sometimes this is not always possible. Students should come into school before and/or after their appointments where possible to ensure they miss as little learning time as possible.

Students

Students are expected to:

- Attend every timetabled session on time
- Attend regularly

2. Registration Procedures

- The school keeps an attendance register and all children on roll at the school will be registered at each lesson throughout the day
- Registers are taken within the first 10 minutes of every lesson. Attendance is recorded each morning and afternoon, as it is with every lesson. Non attendance is identified both at the start of the day and at the start of each lesson within the school day. Morning registration closes at 09:10am.
- Lesson attendance of all students is monitored throughout the day in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

To support effective and prompt communication with home, we will:

- a. Contact parents, carers or those with parental responsibility for first day absences, to fulfil our safeguarding responsibilities
- b. Provide regular messaging of our expectations: students and those with parental responsibility will be made aware of our procedures – absence explanation is compulsory
- c. Use a letter system to inform parents and carers to inform parents and carers about concerns and to celebrate excellent attendance

Responding to lateness:

- a. The school tries to deter lateness without deterring attendance
- b. Students' punctuality is monitored in line with our 'Late Gate' procedures and addressed in line with our Behaviour and Engagement Policy
- c. We will build strong relationships with parents/carers to support in maintaining excellent punctuality, and will listen, plan and review the impact of support to address any concerns.

3. Attendance Communication Procedures

- The school uses Groupcall communication system in the event that a student does not attend school. The system will contact parents directly if a student is marked absent at registration and school has not been informed of a reason for the absence
- This system will ensure that both parents and school are aware of student absences and that students are absent and safe with their parents' knowledge and permission
- If the school is not able to contact parents and there has been no message from home, then a phone call will be made to parents/carers
- The school will also use phone calls to confirm reasons for absence with parents/carers.
- Authorisation of a child's absence is at the discretion of the school and parents/carers may be asked to provide medical evidence in order to support any absence
- The school may visit the child's home address to complete 'safe and well' checks in the event of continuous absence or in the event that communication has not been received from parents/carers.
- The school will monitor all students' attendance daily and report on children's attendance at each data cycle
- The school will initiate a Home Visit in the event that a student has had 5 continuous days' absence (10 sessions).

4. Promoting Good Attendance

- An ethos where all staff and students understand and role model the importance of excellent attendance
- Regular reflection of students' individual attendance with their form tutors during Tutor Time
- Information on the school attendance included in the School Prospectus, website and School Newsletters
- Recognition of excellent and improved attendance in line with our rewards system
- Rewarding students who have made considerable improvement in their attendance
- Educating students on the importance of good attendance through our Tutor Time curriculum, assemblies and PSHE messages

- Workshops and information sharing sessions to empower parents and carers to address barriers of good attendance
- **Excellent and improved attendance is incentivised by:**
 - Regular analysis of data with staff and students to highlight improved and excellent attendance
 - Communicating regularly with parents and carers
 - Effective use of our Go4Schools platform
 - Celebration assemblies and other rewards events
 - Day to day celebration through tutor time
 - Supporting students in understanding the correlation between excellent attendance and their achievement
 - Competitions to promote and incentivise excellent attendance

Reducing Absences

- The school will present a positive and proactive message concerning the importance of attendance
- The school has clear lines of responsibility and a consistent response to attendance issues:
 - d. Information sharing with Governors where applicable
 - e. Lines of communication and agreed action between Leadership, Year Leaders, Form Tutors and the Attendance Officer
 - f. Regular meetings between Leadership, Attendance Officer and Support Services

If a student is not attending school because of **curriculum concerns** the school will offer some/all of the following support:

- a. Individual Educational Needs Faculty Support or in-class/individual support
- b. Regular meetings with Form Tutor or Year Leader to discuss progress
- c. Allocation of a key adult in school
- d. Meeting between school, student and parents to monitor situation
- e. After-school support sessions – to catch up missing work and/or to give additional help and support
- f. Modification of timetable where deemed necessary
- g. Liaison with external partners and professionals

5. Consideration of Individual Educational Needs

The Equality Act of 2010 enshrines in law the rights of students with Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND), having replaced the Disability Discrimination Act. Our Equal Opportunities Policy outlines our response, and should be read alongside this policy.

- To recognise the needs of the individual student when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence, ill health or SEND, the school will take into consideration:
 - Building strong relationships with families
 - Being adaptive to the individual needs and circumstances of students
 - Involving/informing all staff of reintegration process to listen, plan and review
 - Providing opportunities for counselling and other support strategies
 - Involving parents/carers and peers as far as possible
 - Agreeing timescale for review of reintegration plan
 - Including WAS, Year Leader, parents/carers and student in the reintegration
 - Using relevant trained staff to support students involved in a reintegration programme
 - Liaising with the SENCO as necessary to support individual needs
 - Acting on feedback from other professional assessments

6. Supporting children who are Persistently or Severely Absent

Supporting children who are persistently absent (below 90% attendance):

- The school will use data to target children or groups of children who are at risk of persistent absence
- The school will listen to and understand students' barriers to school 'in school' attendance
- The school will allocate professionals within school to support students and parents/carers
- The school will work with the Local Authority and other local partners to identify and reduce 'out of school' barriers
- The school will intensify support where absence does not improve or earlier support is not engaged with

Supporting children who are severely absent (below 50% attendance):

- The school will offer parents access to wider support services and family support including the offer of NLS Family Support or an Early Help Assessment.
- The school will follow a graduated response to evaluate the needs of the child and their family

- The school may offer alternative learning spaces within the IEN faculty or curriculum programmes to support with reintegration into school such as our 'Re-Set' space alongside a dedicated staff member to support with reducing barriers to attendance.
- The school will review the impact of individual plans and intensify support if initial support is not successful or not engaged with

7. Monitoring and Evaluation

- The Attendance and Punctuality Policy processes will be reviewed as necessary and at least annually in order to ensure that the policy objectives continue to be met. The review will be informed by DfE Guidance and Local Authority procedures, including the Warwickshire Attendance Service (WAS) protocols.
- The school has clear and high expectations on attendance – students are expected to achieve above 97%. Monitoring of performance against this target will identify different types of absence, including persistent absence, and outcomes reported to Governors through the relevant committees.

8. Leave of Absence

- The law states a leave of absence may only be granted by a school if an application is made in advance and if it considers there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application.

Expectations

- A leave of absence is granted entirely at the school's discretion. Permission for a Leave of Absence from a school may only be given by a person who the school's proprietor has authorised to do so (an authorised person).
- Schools must judge each application individually considering the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind each request.
- Generally, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance.
- Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days a pupil can be absent from school.
- When making an application for Leave of Absence parents are advised to give sufficient information and time to allow the Head teacher the opportunity to consider all the exceptional circumstances and to notify the parents of their decision. The school may also request further information on the application and supporting documentation where appropriate.
- It is advised that if the resident parent has not received notification or a response regarding the leave of absence application, it is their responsibility to ascertain if the leave is authorised prior to the start of the leave.

- The school can only consider applications for Leave of Absence which are made by the resident parent. i.e the parent with whom the child normally resides.
- Where applications for Leave of Absences are made in advance and refused, the child is expected to be in school on the dates set out in the application. If the child is absent during that period, it will be recorded as an “unauthorised” absence. Where a leave of absence is requested but additional days take either prior to or after the request, they may be considered as part of the leave of absence.
- Leave of Absences which are not made in advance cannot be authorised in line with legislation. This will result in the absence being recorded as ‘unauthorised’.
- All matters of unauthorised absence relating to a Leave of Absence will be referred to the Warwickshire Attendance Service of Warwickshire County Council. Penalty notices are issued in accordance with Warwickshire County Council’s Code of Conduct for Penalty Notices and in the first instance, as an alternative to prosecution proceedings.
- Where a Penalty Notice is not paid within the timeframe set out in that Notice, the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council’s Legal Services to consider instigating criminal prosecution proceedings under S444 of Education Act 1996.

Leave of Absence taken in the academic year 2024-25

The law relating to Penalty Notices changed with effect from 19 August 2024. Therefore, Penalty Notices issued for Leave of Absence taken from September 2024 will be issued in accordance with the updated legislation.

Penalty Notices are issued to each parent of each absent child, (for example 2 children and 2 parents, means each parent will receive 2 invoices – 4 in total).

- First Leave of Absence Offence: The amount of £160 to be paid within 28 days, this is reduced to £80 each child if paid within 21 days.
- Second Leave of Absence Offence within a 3 year period (from the date of issue of the first penalty notice): The amount of £160 paid within 28 days. No reduced amount.
- Third Leave of Absence offence within a 3 year period (from the date of issue of the first penalty notice). A Penalty Notice will not be issued and the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council’s Legal Services to consider instigating criminal prosecution proceedings under S444 of Education Act 1996.

Further information about Warwickshire’s Code of Conduct can be found using the following link:

[Pupils non-attendance and fixed penalty notices – Warwickshire County Council](#)

Local Authority Roles and Responsibilities

Warwickshire County Council's (WCC) Support for School Attendance:

1. If the reason for the student absence is a support need which is outside of the school's control, the starting point is to consider whether support through the Early Help Pathway is most appropriate.
2. Warwickshire County Council will offer support and guidance on how a multi agency partnership can work together to provide intensive voluntary or formal support for the individual students and families.
3. Access to services for students who are identified as persistently or severely absent or at risk of becoming so.
4. Additional support can be provided through the Targeted Attendance Support pathway, taking forward formalised support and legal interventions where appropriate.
5. Where there are out of school barriers, the Local Authority will provide students and their family with access to services they need in the first instance.

Please refer to Annex 1 for further guidance published by Warwickshire County Council and North Leamington School

Links to other Policies

- Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour and Engagement Policy
- Accessibility Plan
- Students with Medical Needs Policy
- SEND Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy

Annex 1

Warwickshire County Council Children and Young People Directorate	
APPLICATION FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE FOR A SCHOOL PUPIL IN TERM TIME IN EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES ONLY	
Important Information for Parents/Carers	
<p>Generally, the DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exceptional circumstances: All schools can grant a leave of absence for other exceptional circumstances at their discretion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It must be requested in advance by a parent who the pupil normally lives with. ○ Schools are then expected to consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. ○ If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the school to determine the length of the time the pupil can be away from school. • When making an application for Leave of Absence the resident parent is advised to give sufficient information and time to allow the Head teacher the opportunity to consider all the exceptional circumstances and to notify of their decision. • Requests for leave of absence should be made before any arrangements confirmed or money committed. • It is advised if you have not received notification from the school regarding the leave of absence request, it is your responsibility to ascertain if the leave is authorised prior to the start of leave. • Failure to make a request for a leave of absence in advance will result in the absence being recorded as unauthorised. • Any additional days taken either side of a leave of absence period, which has not been applied for, may be considered as part of the leave of absence period and be unauthorised. • Unauthorised Leave of Absences will be referred to the Warwickshire Attendance Service upon the child's return to school for consideration of a Penalty Notice. <p>Please see over for important information relating to the changes in relation to Penalty Notices</p>	
<p>I wish to apply for Leave of Absence from school to be granted to:</p> <p>Name of Child: _____ Form Group: _____</p> <p>First Date of Proposed Absence: _____ Last date of Proposed Absence: _____</p> <p>Expected date of return to school: _____</p> <p>Reason for Proposed Absence – please provide reasons to support the application including evidence (see overleaf before completing):</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Total Days Requested on this occasion. <input style="width: 50px; height: 20px;" type="text"/></p> <p>(For siblings) I have also applied to _____ School/Academy for leave of absence for <small>(Insert child/children's name)</small></p> <p>Signature of resident Parent/Carer: _____</p> <p>Print Name: _____ Date: _____</p>	
<p>For school use only: NAME OF CHILD: _____ Date received by school: _____</p> <p>1st date of absence requested by parents: Last date of absence requested by parents:</p> <p>Expected date of return to school (as advised by parents):</p> <p style="text-align: center;">*****</p> <p>Absence: Authorised / Unauthorised / Split (please delete as appropriate)</p> <p>The reasons for this decision are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LOA record sheet to be completed by school and submitted where verbal requests made/ for other relevant information <p>Head teacher/Attendance Lead: Date:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of this completed section should be sent back to parent with letter 	

- Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full-time education through regular attendance at a school or otherwise (ie home education) (Section 7 Education Act 1996). If a child who is of compulsory school age, who is registered at school and fails to attend regularly, it is the parent that will be guilty of an offence (Section 444 (1) Education Act 1996).
- Section 576 Education Act 1996 defines 'parent' as:
 - Any natural parent, whether married or not;
 - Any parent who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility as defined in the Children Act (1989) for a child or young person;
 - Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person.
- The National threshold is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks. If the local authority believes a penalty notice would be appropriate, they retain the discretion to issue one before the national threshold is met. This might apply for example, where parents are deliberately avoiding the national threshold by taking several term time holidays below threshold, or for repeated absence for birthdays or other family events. Please refer to Warwickshire County Council's Code of Conduct for non-school attendance and penalty notices for further information.

Leave of Absence taken after 1 September 2024:

The law relating to Penalty Notices has been amended and Penalty Notices issued for Leave of Absences taken after 1 September 2024 will be issued in accordance with the updated legislation.

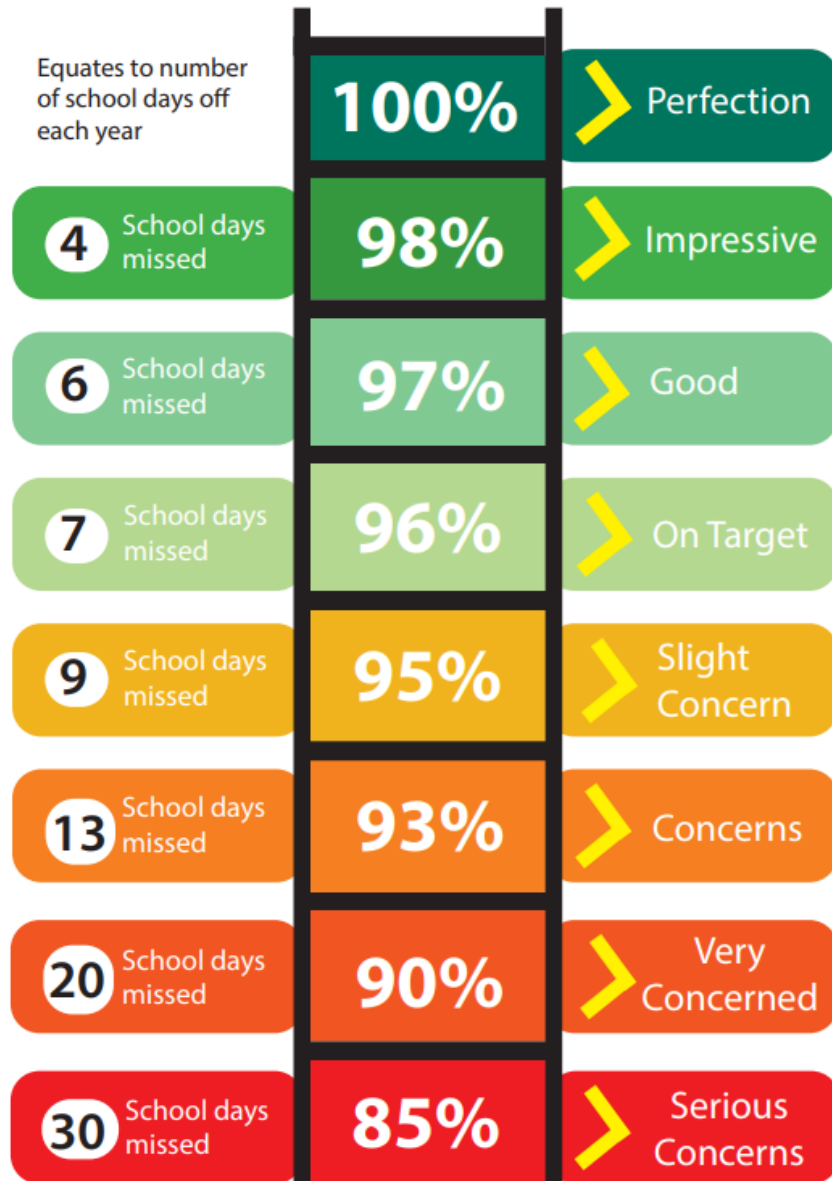
- **First Leave of Absence offence:** The Penalty Notice amount of £160 to be paid within 28 days, this is reduced to £80 each child if paid within 21 days.
- **Second Leave of Absence offence within a 3 year period (from the date of issue of the first penalty notice):** The amount of £160 paid within 28 days. No reduced amount.
- **Third Leave of Absence offence within a 3 year period (from the date of issue of the first penalty notice).** *A penalty notice will not be issued, and the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council's Legal Services to consider instigating criminal prosecution proceedings under S444 of Education Act 1996.*

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- Any Penalty Notices issued and/or prosecution will apply to each parent for each child who fails to attend school (e.g 2 absent children is 2 offences under section 444 Education Act 1996).
 - A Penalty Notice is an alternative to prosecution, however if the Penalty Notice expires and is not paid Warwickshire County Council will consider instigating a criminal prosecution under the Education Act 1996.
 - Payment plans will not be offered and/or payments received outside of the 28 day period will not be accepted.

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- Where criminal proceedings are issued and a parent is found guilty, the court could issue a sentence of a fine of up to £1,000 for a Section 444(1) conviction; or £2,500, a community sentence period or a custodial period of up to 3 months for a Section 444(1A) conviction.

Annex 3: NLS Attendance Ladder and examples of strategies to promote excellent attendance

Attendance Ladder



<p>Communication home / Celebration and Recognition / Form Tutor praise and reward / Prize draws</p>
<p>Communication home / Celebration and Recognition / Form Tutor praise and reward / Prize draws</p>
<p>Communication home / Celebration and Recognition / Form Tutor praise and reward / Prize draws</p>
<p>Communication Home Celebration and Recognition Form Tutor monitoring, praise and reward Prize draws</p>
<p>Stage 1 concern letter sent home Form Tutor monitoring to improve Form Tutor phone call with parents/carers Attendance targets set for 3 weeks Celebration of improvements following review</p>
<p>Year Leader monitoring to improve Form tutor monitoring/communication home of concerns 100% attendance target set for 3 weeks monitoring</p>
<p>Support is intensified to remove barriers. Year Leader monitoring and meeting set up with parents / carers 100% attendance target Request for medical evidence to authorise absences Home visits Parental contract to support improvements Internal and external support to remove barriers, Referral to family support team, graduated response to students' needs and referral to professionals internal and external.</p>

Annex 3: Summary Table of Responsibilities for School Attendance (Updated August 2024)

All pupils

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Ensure their child attends every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies.</p> <p>Notify the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent (e.g. sickness).</p> <p>Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance.</p> <p>Book any medical appointments around the school day where possible.</p>	<p>Have a clear school attendance policy on the school website which all staff, pupils and parents understand.</p> <p>Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance.</p> <p>Accurately complete admission and attendance registers.</p> <p>Have robust daily processes to follow up absence.</p> <p>Regularly monitor data to identify patterns and trends and understand which pupils and pupil cohorts to focus on.</p> <p>Have a dedicated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance.</p>	<p>Take an active role in attendance improvement, support their school(s) to prioritise attendance, and work together with leaders to set whole school cultures.</p> <p>Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.</p> <p>Use data to understand patterns of attendance, compare with other local schools, identify areas of progress and where greater focus is needed.</p> <p>Ensure school staff receive training on attendance.</p>	<p>Have a strategic approach to improving attendance for the whole area and make it a key focus of all frontline council services.</p> <p>Have a School Attendance Support Team that works with all schools in their area to remove area-wide barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Provide each school with a named point of contact in the School Attendance Support Team who can support with queries and advice.</p> <p>Offer opportunities for all schools in the area to share effective practice.</p>