Archers Brook SEMH School
Attendance Policy

Approved by:	Pupil Inclusion Sub Committee	**Date:**	October 2026
Last reviewed by:	Jim Hilditch	**Date:**	September 2026
New review due:	September 2027		

Introduction and Aim
Archers Brook SEMH School recognises the importance of good attendance and the impact it has on children's progress, attainment, enjoyment of learning and relationships within school. Good attendance helps a child to realise their potential and ensure they are motivated, confident and enjoy a diverse range of curricular opportunities and experiences. Our school policy and prospectus promote good attendance, which is recognised and rewarded as an achievement. The school monitors attendance and ensures quick and early intervention if a problem is identified. We recognise that whole school preventative and proactive approaches are key to promoting children wellbeing and attendance. A child must attend school every day that they are required to do so unless an exceptional circumstance applies.

Our policy is accessible to leaders, staff, pupils, and parents, and is published on our school website. It will be sent to Parents with any initial information when pupils join the school and reminded of it at the beginning of each school year and when it is updated. As the barriers to attendance evolve quickly, the policy should be reviewed and updated as necessary. In doing so, we will seek the views of pupils and parents. The Attendance & Punctuality Policy is based on the premise of equal opportunities for all.

DfE updates September 2026
The DfE describes this edition as technical clarifications, and that's a fair summary. The main updates for schools are that registers should be taken at the same time for all pupils; monitoring should identify key cohorts more clearly, with young carers now named explicitly; medical evidence for absence should only be needed in a minority of cases; remote education should only be used as a last resort and within a reintegration plan; and schools shouldn't operate blanket policies that grant leave of absence automatically. There are also clarifications to absence codes and some legal technicalities.
None of that changes the direction of the guidance. Which is the point worth taking a moment to reflect on.

1. Legislation

Regular and punctual attendance at school is a legal requirement. Regular attendance is essential to enable children to maximise their educational attainment, opportunities and further development.

- Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that "The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full-time education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise".
- Section 444 (1) of the Education Act 1996 states that "if a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school his parent is guilty of an offence".
- Section 576 Education Act 1996 - Meaning of "parent"

For the purposes of Education Law, the definition of a 'parent' and who is responsible for ensuring regular attendance to school is:

- all biological parents, whether they are married or not

- any person who, although not a biological parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person - this could be an adoptive parent, a step-parent, guardian or other relative
- any person who, although not a biological parent and does not have parental responsibility, has care of a child or young person. This could be one parent, both parents and/or carer/s.

2. Registers

Registers provide the daily record of attendance of all pupils. They are legal documents and the register may be required in a court of law, for example as evidence in prosecutions for non-attendance in school.
'Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006' (section 6)
Schools must take the attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day, morning (a.m.) and once during the second session, afternoon (p.m.).

On each occasion they must record whether every pupil is:

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

The school should follow up any absences to:

- Ascertain the reason
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not; and,
- Identify the correct code to use before entering it on to the school's electronic register, or management information system as a priority and returned to the school office in a timely manner. This is used to download data to the School Census.
- Consider early identification, assessment, intervention and support processes that may need to be implemented.

The register should be marked using the codes as advised by the Department for Education (DfE) 'Working together to improve School Attendance Guidance' (for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities) Working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) (publishing.service.gov.uk) (See appendix 3.)

3. Procedure

Children are expected to attend school regularly, unless there is good reason for absence.

There are two types of absence:

- Authorised (where the school approves a pupil absence)
- Unauthorised (where school will not approve the absence)

The school has a duty to safeguard all its pupils. If a child is absent, the parents/carers should inform the school on the first day of absence and each following day of absence, stating the reason.

This can be done in variety of ways:

School Office telephone 0151 832 6600
School Office email admin@archersbrook.cheshire.sch.uk
School Office via School Spider App
Form tutor through the DOJO App.
Mel Bool – Family Support worker
Jim Hilditch – Attendance lead
Chris Teese – SENCO

The name and contact details of the senior leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in school is Jim Hilditch.

The school office will make contact with home when a child is absent, and the parent/carer has not notified the school of the absence. If no contact can be achieved or the reason for absence is not accepted the absence will be unauthorised.

4. What can parents/carers do to help and working in partnership with Parents/ Carers?

Let the school know straight away why your child is absent. Home/school communication is extremely important in supporting your child to achieve and feel settled in school. Try to make any dental/GP appointments outside of school time.

It is important that school and parents/carers work together with a shared plan and outcomes when supporting a child/young person's attendance and wellbeing. If despite persistent attempts to work with parents, there continues to be a lack of engagement, then legal procedures may be followed to secure engagement and school attendance.

As a school we recognise that building respectful relationships with families and working in collaboration is essential to ensuring the best outcomes for children / young people. We require all parents to actively support the work of the school, including promoting attendance and engagement. We are committed to ensuring that systems and processes are in place with regards to promoting attendance and would encourage parents to make contact if they have concerns about their child.

We will provide parents / carers with information about Emotionally Based School Non-attendance to discuss needs and strategies to support their child, as appropriate.

5. Absence Monitoring

School robustly monitor and analyse attendance data to promptly identify and address possible concerns and allow for early interventions to support the child/family's underlying needs. This will include –

- Weekly attendance code analysis
- Specific cohort and group monitoring – particularly for vulnerable groups
- Monitoring of lesson attendance across all subjects
- 'Welcome back' meeting for all pupils that have been absent for 5 days – to check wellbeing and ensure there are no ongoing needs that will impact on attendance.
- The school's strategy for using data to target attendance improvement efforts to the pupils or pupil cohorts who need it most.
- The school's strategy for reducing persistent and severe absence, including how access to wider support services will be provided to remove the barriers to attendance and when support will be formalised in conjunction with the local authority.

6. Early Identification and Intervention: assess, plan, do and review

Every pupil has a right to a full-time education and Archers Brook SEMH School sets high attendance expectations for all pupils. Archers Brook SEMH School will consider the individual needs of pupils and their families who have specific barriers to attendance and will consider our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

For any child / child person who is absent from school it is essential to fully understand the reasons for this so that targeted, evidence-based interventions and support can be put into place. All staff have a part to play in promoting attendance. We recognise the importance of ensuring that key members of staff from across the school, including Form Tutors, attendance, pastoral and SEND staff work in collaboration to consider and identify the holistic needs of the child/young person and to overcome barriers to attendance. In accordance with the principles of early intervention, a graduated approach of assess, plan, do and review will be followed utilising a arrange of school-based resources, evidence-based interventions and seeking advice and support from external services at an appropriate stage, when needed.

Appropriate assessments will be important to help understand the underlying reasons that may be contributing to attendance difficulties. This may be an assessment that focuses on the individual child's needs such as an SDQ, SEND assessments and wellbeing assessments or may include the holistic needs of the family, such as a TAF assessment. Assessments will include the views of the child/young person as well as parents/carers, and identify strengths (what is working well) and needs (what is working less well).

Assessments undertaken may identify that a child/young person is experiencing underlying emotional based needs that are contributing to non-attendance. Cheshire West and Chester Council has developed guidance for schools - Emotionally Based School Non-attendance: Good practice guidance for schools. This is a whole school

framework with a graduated approach to support the early identification and intervention of children/young people who may struggle to cope in school/attend school.

Information from assessments will inform a SMART action plan with focussed targets developed in partnership with families, and other services as appropriate. For example, Early Help and Prevention and Social Care may have a part to play in the delivery of support and intervention to promote engagement and attendance. SMART plans should be personalised to effectively meet a child / young person's needs and improve attendance and wellbeing outcomes.

Regular reviews of support and attendance plans are essential to monitor the impact of interventions and to adjust these accordingly. If, despite targeted support and intervention, attendance and wellbeing concerns persist, we may seek further advice and support from external services including mental health services, specialist teaching and education services.

7. Medical Absence

Absence due to illness should be reported to the school by phone or using the DOJO App on the first day of absence and any subsequent days. School will contact parents during the first day if no satisfactory reason for absence has been received. The school will ask about the child's symptoms in order to record their absence accurately.

In the majority of cases, a parent's notification that their child is ill can be accepted without question or concern. Schools should not routinely request that parents provide medical evidence to support illness. Schools are advised not to request medical evidence unnecessarily as it places additional pressure on health professionals.

Only where the school has a genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness should medical evidence be requested to support the absence. In instances of long-term or repeated absences for the same reason, however, seeking medical evidence may be appropriate to assist in assessing whether the child requires additional support to help them to attend more regularly, and whether the illness is likely to prevent the child from attending for extended periods. If a parent proactively seeks out a note from a GP, it does not imply a need for absence unless this is explicit in their letter.

If a medical absence is likely to be ongoing or long term, then we will offer support in accordance with the school's policies and statutory guidance relating to Children with health needs. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions--3. As a school we need to plan how children can access Education and how and when the child will return to school. In accordance with the Equality Act 2010 the school must also demonstrate that reasonable adjustments are made to meet child's Educational Needs.
For children who have a medical condition and cannot attend school, the school will refer to the Cheshire West and Chester Council's Medical Needs Team.

https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/documents/education-and-learning/medical-needs-service/medical-needs-policy-latest.pdf

Their policy states that referrals must come directly from the child's school and must be supported by medical evidence from one of the following health professionals:

- consultant paediatrician or adolescent psychiatrist
- consultant child psychiatrist
- hospital consultant

Supporting evidence from a General Practitioner alone cannot be accepted.

As from 19 August 2024 schools must make a sickness return to the Local Authority and provide the full name and address of all pupils who have been recorded with the code I (Illness) and who the school has reasonable grounds to believe they will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness. This is to help the school and Local Authority to agree any provisions needed to ensure continuity of education of pupils who cannot attend because of health needs, in line with the statutory guidance on Education for Children with health needs: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-for-children-with-health-needs-who-cannot-attend-school

8. Lateness and Punctuality

At Archers Brook SEMH school we will apply a robust day to day process to track and follow up on absence and poor punctuality. We will ensure registers are completed accurately and on time, twice per day, in accordance with the timings set out below. This will indicate which pupils are absent from or are late for school.

- Our gates open at 8.30am and classroom doors open at 8.40am.
- We expect all pupils to be in their classroom by 9.00am ready for registration. If your child is in class at this time, they will be marked as present.
- Registers close at 9.30am. If your child arrives at school after 9.00am but before 9.30am, they will need to enter the school by the main entrance and sign in. They will be marked as late and will receive the L code.
- If your child arrives at school after the registers have closed 9.30am, they will be marked as late and will receive the U code. This is an unauthorised absence for that session.
- Afternoon registers will be taken at 1.10pm.

In accordance with the 'Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006', if your child arrives after the registers close, they will receive a mark, code U, that shows them to be on site, but this will not count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. This may mean that you could face the possibility of a Fixed Penalty Notice or other legal action if the problem persists.

Children who are consistently late for school are disrupting not only their own education, but also that of other children. Where persistent lateness gives cause for concern, you will be invited to a meeting to resolve the issues. If there is no improvement following this meeting, further action will be taken which may include referral to external agencies.

You may approach the school at any time for support and advice if you are having difficulty getting your child to school on time or maintaining regular attendance.

9. Unauthorised Absence and Fixed Penalty Notice

An absence may be coded as 'unauthorised' if:

i. no reason for absence has been given
ii. medical evidence is not received when requested
iii. a request for a leave of absence has been unauthorised
iv. a pupil arrives at school after registration has closed at 9.30am.

Parents/carers should be aware that Archers Brook SEMH school may contact the Local Authority if a pupil has 10 or more unauthorised absences in the current term with a view to issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice or other legal action.

The first penalty notice issued to the parent for that pupil will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days reducing to £80 if paid within 21 days. Where it is deemed appropriate to issue a second penalty notice to the same parent for the same pupil within 3 years of the first notice, the second notice is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days. A third penalty notice must not be issued within a 3 year period. Therefore, in cases where the threshold is met for a third (or subsequent) times within those 3 years, a penalty notice cannot be issued and alternative action should be taken instead. This will often include considering prosecution, but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions. (see Appendix 1 for CW&C Code of Conduct).

10. Promoting and Incentivising Attendance (Rewards and Incentives)

At Archers Brook SEMH school rewards, incentives and competitions play an important part when working to improve attendance. The most effective schools consistently promote the benefits of good attendance. Rewards and incentives should be devised with the Childrens and families' views at the heart. This will mean that our incentives and rewards are purposeful and meaningful. At Archers Brook SEMH school the School Council will play an important part in this to ensure that we improve attendance in the most effective way. Schools that have good attendance recognise that it is not a discrete piece of work but rather it is an integral part of the school's ethos and culture.

At Archers Brook SEMH school we understand that some pupils find it harder than others to attend school. Therefore, it is important that attendance is recognised, celebrated and held in high regard, no matter how small the improvements might be. Improved attendance or improved punctuality should be recognised and praised, not just 'perfect' attendance. Every child has the right to feel they can achieve and be successful, so any reward/incentive system must be inclusive of those with children with additional needs. It is important that pupils see the attendance incentives and competitions as a team effort and not to blame individuals. At Archers Brook SEMH school pupils will be taught about the positive link between attendance and high achievement through assemblies and dedicated PSHE sessions.

Attendance information should be readily available for both children and parents. At Archers Brook SEMH school we will share attendance information in the form of website, assemblies and information being sent home. Barriers affecting attendance in our school will be explored, taking both the children and parents views into account, so that every staff member is clear about how they can help to improve attendance and/or punctuality. This will be reflected in our rewards and incentives and time will be dedicated to such barriers in order to try to remove them. Consequences might be used alongside our rewards and incentives.
We are proud to be a Trauma Informed school, and as such, all pupils will be welcomed back to school by their form team and reasons for their lateness or absence will be explored sensitively with barriers established and the necessary support provided. At Archers Brook SEMH School we recognise that some pupils will require their own individual systems.

11. Suspension and Permanent Exclusions

Here at Archers Brook we ensure that the:

- The exclusions process is applied fairly and consistently
- The exclusions process is understood by governors, staff, parents and pupils
- Pupils in school are safe and happy
- Pupils do not become NEET (not in education, employment or training)

Only the Headteacher, or acting Headteacher, can exclude a pupil from School. A permanent exclusion will be taken as a last resort.
A decision to exclude a pupil will be taken only:

- In response to serious or persistent breaches of the School's Behaviour Policy, **and**
- If allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of others

A pupil's name will be removed from the school admissions register if:

- 15 school days have passed since the parents were notified of the exclusion panel's decision to not reinstate the pupil and no application has been made for an independent review panel, or
- The parents have stated in writing that they will not be applying for an independent review panel

Where alternative provision has been made for an excluded pupil and they attend it, code B (education off-site) or code D (dual registration) will be used on the attendance register.

Where excluded pupils are not attending alternative provision, code E (absent) will be used.
Following a fixed-term exclusion, a re-integration meeting will be held involving the pupil, parents, a member of senior staff and other staff, where appropriate.

12. Application for Exceptional Circumstances

As of 19 August 2024, the law ceases to include a leave of absence for a family holiday. A leave of absence should not be granted unless there are exceptional circumstances. Generally, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance. Head Teachers are only empowered to approve a leave of absence when it is requested in advance by the parent or carer with whom the child resides and when circumstances of the requested leave are 'exceptional'.

The Headteacher and the Governing Body will determine what constitutes an exceptional circumstance on an individual basis. If parents/carers need to request Exceptional Leave of Absence, they must complete an 'Exceptional Leave of Absence' form available from the school office. It should be noted that if any application is declined and absence occurs of a consecutive 5 or more unauthorised days, then school may apply to the Local Authority for a Fixed Penalty Notice to be issued to each parent/carer.

The following will not be deemed to be exceptional circumstances:

- Family holiday
- Availability of less expensive holiday
- Availability of holiday accommodation
- Parent/carer's working commitments
- Holiday pre-booked by another family member

A child's absence during term time seriously disrupts their continuity of learning. Not only do they miss the teaching on the days they are away but are less prepared for the lessons building on that teaching when they return to school. There is a consequent risk of under achievement, which we must seek to avoid.
The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring any attendance issues are dealt with in line with school policy.

Religious Observance
We recognise that some pupils may need to participate in days of religious observance.

Where a day of religious observance;

- falls during school time and
- has been exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil belongs

We ask that parents/carers notify Archers Brook SEMH school in writing in advance where absence is required due to a religious observance.

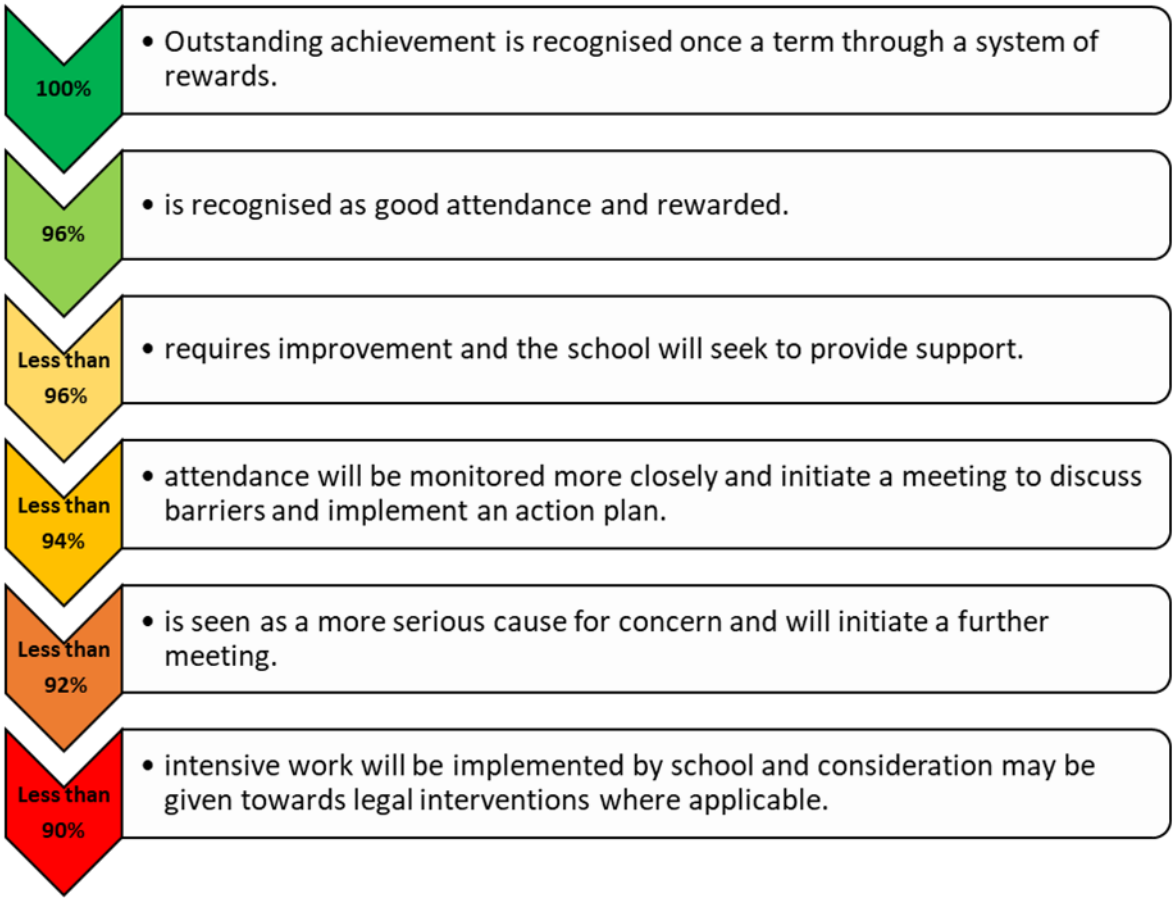
13. Enforced School Closure

If Archers Brook SEMH school was forced to close for a period of time, we have the facility to operate an online virtual school. The expectation is children will still engage with ALL activities when work is set. Procedures for online learning will be sent to parents as and when required.

14. Impact

All pupils will achieve well by developing knowledge and skills on their journey through school. Due to robust monitoring of attendance, all pupils, including vulnerable children and children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), will have fair and equitable access to school in order to achieve the best possible outcomes. Pupils will leave Archers Brook SEMH school ready for a successful transition to further education or employment.

The table below sets out the attendance targets and at what stage parents/carers will be contacted about their child's attendance.



Appendix 1 - Cheshire West & Chester Code of Conduct for Education Fixed Penalty Notice (Unauthorised Leave of Absence & Irregular Attendance)

1. A Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) can only be issued in cases of unauthorised absence.
2. The first penalty notice issued to the parent for that pupil will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days reducing to £80 if paid within 21 days.
3. Where it is deemed appropriate to issue a second penalty notice to the same parent for the same pupil within 3 years of the first notice, the second notice is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.
4. A third penalty notice must not be issued within a 3 year period. Therefore, in cases where the threshold is met for a third (or subsequent) times within those 3 years, a penalty notice cannot be issued and alternative action should be taken instead. This will often include considering prosecution, but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions.
5. A FPN may be issued per parent per child.
6. Penalty Notices may be considered appropriate if:
    - Unauthorised absences of at least 10 consecutive school sessions (five school days).
    - Sessions either side of a weekend or school holiday will be counted as consecutive school days.
    - For poorly attending learners, at least 10 sessions (five school days) lost due to unauthorised absence during a school term. These do not need to be consecutive.
    - For poorly attending learners, persistent late arrive at school in a term. Persistent means at least 10 sessions of late arrival.
    - The presence of an excluded child in a public place in the child's first five days of exclusion (N.B. points 2 to 4 do not apply where a FPN is issued for an excluded pupil in a public place.)
7. The school must notify parents of the Attendance Policy and clearly state that parents may receive an FPN for an unauthorised leave of absence relating to holiday in term time.
8. Schools and the Education Welfare Services will take into account any exceptional circumstances when determining whether to issue a FPN.

Appendix 2 - What does 'percentage attendance' mean?

Parents/carers should be advised that from September 2015 the Government have categorised those pupils who have attendance of 90% and below as 'Persistent Absence' pupils (P.A.). RSA will be specifically targeting this cohort of pupils, in an effort to improve their attendance in the future. The table below shows the learning time lost against percentage attendance figures.

Attendance during one school year	**Equivalent Days**	**Equivalent Sessions**	**Equivalent Weeks**	**Equivalent Lessons Missed**
95%	9 Days	18 Sessions	1.4 Weeks	45 Lessons
90%	19 Days	38 Sessions	3.4 Weeks	95 Lessons
85%	29 Days	58 Sessions	5.4 Weeks	145 Lessons
80%	36 Days	72 Sessions	7.1 Weeks	180 Lessons
75%	48 Days	96 Sessions	9.3 Weeks	240 Lessons

Appendix 3 - Absence Codes: According to the DfE guidance the following codes are used on the register. New Attendance Codes from 19 August 2024

Attending a place other than the school.
These codes are classified for statistical purposes as attending an approved educational activity.

Code K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
Code V	Attending an educational visit or trip
Code P	Participating in a sporting activity
Code W	Attending work experience
Code B	Attending any other approved educational activity
Code D	Dual registered at another school

Absent leave of absence - These codes are classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Code C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.
Code M	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment
Code J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
Code S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination
Code X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
Code C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
Code C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance

Absent - other authorised reasons - These codes are classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Code T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes
Code R	Religious observance
Code I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)
Code E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made

Absent - unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause. - These codes are classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance

Code Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements
Code Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
Code Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
Code Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed

Code Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
Code Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Code Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Code Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause

Absent - unauthorised absence - Theses codes are classified for statistical purposes as unauthorised absence.

Code G	Leave of absence not granted by the school
Code N	Reason for absence not yet established
Code O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances
Code U	Arrived in school after registration closed

Attendance case working

These stages should be followed once a pupil has reached 10 sessions of unauthorised absence and the school is considering the Education Welfare Service's involvement as current strategies are not improving attendance.

Stage 1 (within 30 days)

- Ensure usual attendance policy procedures are being followed
- Continue normal first day contact etc.
- Conduct investigative safeguarding home visits.
- Gather information from teaching and support staff regarding the pupil's strengths and needs – this may include a round robin
- Meet with pupil to elicit their views about school (eg. what is working well / working less well)
- Develop a shared action plan in collaboration with parents / carers, pupils and key staff (informed by assessments and to address specific factors underlying non-attendance)
- Continue to follow assess, plan, do and review cycles focussed on targeted intervention and support – eg. Support and Attendance Plan
- Make an initial single assessment (simplified TAF assessment)
- Refer to other agencies as appropriate (e.g iART)

If parent/carer does not engage with support offered

- Arrange an Attendance Panel Meeting to discuss barriers to attendance, record the voice of the child and complete and ESO checklist
- Consider a Notice to Improve monitoring period (10-20 sessions unauthorised)
- Consider a first warning letter for prosecution for more entrenched cases (20+ sessions)

Stage 2 (within 60 days)

- Continue with usual contact in line with attendance policy
- Conduct further home visits
- Discuss case with attendance lead in school
- Consider Attendance Planning Meeting if there is no improvement following the prosecution first warning letter
- Issue a final warning letter if no improvement following the Attendance Planning Meeting
- Consult with Education Welfare Officer to support in preparing witness statement and exhibits of evidence

Stage 3 (within 90 days)

- EWO will support in setting up Court File as follows:
- Statement of evidence S9
- Exhibits (labelled and numbered)
- Head teacher certificate
- Recent registration certificate

Emotionally Based School Non-attendance (EBSN)
Emotionally Based School Non-attendance (EBSN) is a term used to describe the needs of CYP who struggle to attend school due to underlying emotional based needs, such as anxiety, unhappiness and despair. These CYP may be reluctant to leave home and can present high levels of distress in response to parents' attempts to get them to school. This can result in prolonged absences from school.
EBSN is complex and multifaceted, requiring a holistic approach to assessment and intervention. Good practice guidance emphasises the importance of early identification and intervention to support the needs of CYP who may struggle to attend school, developing a SMART support plan, with timely review processes (CW&C, 2018).

The EBSN framework is embedded within the school's Attendance Policy and we use many of the tools and resources to underpin our early identification of need and targeted support and intervention approach.

Schools can access EBSN training and Guidance (EBSN: Good Practice Guidance for Schools) via: eCWIP for Education - Cheshire West Industry Professionals

Letter templates below:

Letter 1 - Attendance Concern
Letter 2 - Medical evidence letter
Letter 3 - Invite to Attendance Panel meeting
Letter 4 - Invite to Attendance Planning meeting after no response
Letter 5 - Invite to Attendance Planning meeting having attended the last meeting
Letter 6 - Attendance Action Plan
Letter 7 - After failure to attend meeting
Letter 8 - First Warning Letter
Letter 9 - Final Warning Letter

Please note that whilst these letters are numbered this is for information purposes only and should be removed from letters that are being sent out to parent/carers.

Letter 1 - Attendance concern

Our ref: XXXX
Date
Name
Address

Dear <insert parent/carer name>

RE: Attendance concern letter
<insert pupil name>
Re: Attendance – XX%

At <insert school> we have a strong focus on attendance to ensure that all pupils make excellent progress and achieve their very best potential.

Our records show that <insert pupil name> attendance is XX%. (Please see enclosed attendance record). As this is just falling below the national expected minimum of 96% we are therefore writing to offer additional support and to open communication in the hope that we can improve their attendance and ensure that it improves.

Good attendance is key to ensuring that pupils progress well at school. In addition, your child's attendance record has to be conveyed in any future reference provided by the school.
We are hopeful that your child's attendance will improve and we wish to offer our support and ask that you communicate to us any provision or assistance which you feel may be beneficial or communicate any reasons why you feel that improved attendance may be difficult so that we can work together in supporting your child.

The aim is for your child's attendance to improve within the next 4 weeks in order to avoid having to issue a continued attendance concern letter. If you would like to discuss anything in relation to this letter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Name
Position

Letter 2 - Medical evidence letter

Our ref: XXXX Date
Name
Address
United Kingdom

Dear <insert parent/carer name>

Re: Medical Evidence
<insert pupil name> Re: Attendance – XX%

<insert school> places great emphasis upon every student achieving their full potential. It is important therefore that every student attends the school regularly and participates in the schooling that is offered if they are to make good progress and benefit from the opportunities that school offers.

It is expected that parents/carers support their child by complying with the law which imposes a duty on parents/carers to ensure that their son/daughters are properly educated.

I am aware that there have been reasons provided for these absences however to enable us to authorise any future absences due to illness medical evidence will be required.

This can be in the form of:
- Copy of prescription relating to the illness
- A dated note from the GP's receptionist confirming your visit to the GP
- A medical appointment card
- Evidence of medical prescribed by the GP

May I remind you that after 10 sessions (5 days) of unauthorised absence you may receive a Notice to Improve warning.

If there is anything that you feel the school should be aware of, or that I can help you with, I would be grateful if you could telephone me at school to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely,

Name
Position

Letter 3 - Invite to Attendance Panel meeting

Our ref: XXXX
Date
Name
Address
United Kingdom

Dear <insert parent/carer name>

Re: Invitation to Attendance Action Plan meeting
<insert pupil name> Re: Attendance – XX%

I am writing to you concerning ……..…….’s attendance at school, which stands at…..%.

As parents/carers we would like to invite you to meet with the Attendance Panel at school/other on……...at…… where we hope to be able to discuss any concerns or issues affecting your son/daughter’s attendance. The meeting will last approximately 15 minutes.

We look forward to your co-operation in this matter and if you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact the school on……..…

Yours sincerely,

Name
Position

Letter 4 - Invite to Attendance Planning meeting after no response

Our ref: XXXX
Date
Name
Address
United Kingdom

Dear <insert parent/carer name>

Re: Invitation to Attendance planning meeting after no response
<insert pupil name> Re: Attendance – XX%

I am writing to you regarding the previous letter I sent out requesting a meeting regarding <insert pupil name> attendance record. Unfortunately, I have had no response.

Our records show that <insert pupil name> attendance is XX%. (Please see enclosed attendance record). This is below the national expected minimum of 96% and is therefore a cause for concern.

You are invited to attend a meeting to be held at <insert place> on <day, date and time>.

The purpose of the meeting is to discuss a way forward in improving <insert pupil name> attendance. A robust action plan will be implemented to support improved attendance.

You are urged to attend this meeting as failure to do so may result in a Notice to Improve being issued against you.

Yours sincerely,

Name
Position

Letter 5 - Invite to Attendance Planning Meeting – having attended the last meeting

Our ref: XXXX
Date
Name
Address
United Kingdom

Dear <insert parent/carer name>

Re: Invitation to Attendance planning meeting after no improvement
<insert pupil name> Re: Attendance – XX%

I am writing to you regarding the previous meeting regarding <insert pupil name> attendance record. Unfortunately, their attendance has not improved and there is now a more serious concern about their welfare and educational needs being met.

Our records show that <insert pupil name> attendance is XX%. (Please see enclosed attendance record). This is now well below the 96% expected minimum and is therefore a major cause for concern.

You are invited to attend a meeting to be held at <place> on <day, date and time>. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss a way forward in improving your <insert pupil name> attendance.

You are urged to attend this meeting as failure to do so may result in consideration being given to legal proceedings.

Yours sincerely,

Name
Position

Letter 6 – Attendance Action Plan

Our ref: XXXX
Date
Name
Address
United Kingdom

Dear <insert parent/carer name>
<insert pupil name> Re: Attendance – XX%

I am writing to you regarding the recent meeting which we had concerning <insert pupil name>
attendance at the <insert school>.

I have enclosed a copy of the Action Plan for your information and attention.

May I take this opportunity to inform you that: under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, you have a legal responsibility to ensure that <insert pupil name> attends the <insert school> regularly. Failure to do so may lead in legal action being taken against you by the Local Authority resulting in prosecution.

Thank you for attending the recent meeting; it is only by all working together that we can achieve the best possible educational and social outcomes for our pupils.

Yours sincerely,

Name
Position

Letter 7 - After failure to attend meeting

Our ref: XXXX
Date
Name
Address
United Kingdom

Dear <insert parent/carer name>
<insert pupil name> Re: Attendance – XX%

As you failed to attend a meeting on <day, date and time>, you are now invited to attend a meeting to be held at the <insert school> on <day, date and time>.
The purpose of the meeting is to discuss a way forward in improving your child's attendance. A member of the Senior Management Team will be present at this meeting.
You are urged to attend this meeting as failure to do so may result in the Local Authority initiating legal proceedings against you. I enclose a copy of your child's registration certificate.

Yours sincerely,

Name
Position

Letter 8 - First Warning Letter

Our ref: XXXX
Date
Name
Address
United Kingdom

Dear <insert parent/carer name>
<insert pupil name> Re: Attendance – XX%

I am writing to express my concern regarding <insert pupil name> continued irregular attendance. According to the class register, between <date> and <date> <insert pupil name> has been marked absent for XX sessions, of which XX were authorised and XX were unauthorised. <insert pupil name> has completed XX full weeks in school out of a possible XX weeks. A copy of the percentage attendance register is enclosed.
The <insert school> has made efforts to engage with you in attempting to improve this situation but despite this there has been no improvement in <insert pupil name> attendance.

Such attendance is not acceptable and I must remind you that S.444, Education Act 1996 requires you to make sure that your child comes to school, on time, every time the school is open. I am writing this letter to give you an opportunity to make sure that from now on and in future, your child attends school regularly.
Failure to do so may result in the Local Authority taking one of the following actions:
a) Initiating legal proceedings in the Magistrates Court under S.444(1) Education Act 1996. If convicted under this section, you may be fined up to £1,000.
b) Initiating legal proceedings in the Magistrates Court under S.444(1A) Education Act 1996. If convicted of this offence you may be fined up to £2,500 or be sent to prison for up to 3 months or both.
I now look forward to your co-operation in ensuring an immediate and sustained improvement in your child's school attendance.
If you wish to discuss this matter, please contact me at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely,

Name
Position

Letter 9 - Final Warning letter

Our ref: XXXX
Date
Name
Address
United Kingdom

Dear <insert parent/carer name>
<insert pupil name> Re: Attendance – XX%

On <insert date>, we wrote to you concerning <insert pupil name> irregular attendance at <insert school>.

Unfortunately, I now have to contact you again as <insert pupil name> has continued to be absent from school during the last XX weeks.

Obviously, such a record is not acceptable, and I now have to warn you that unless there is an immediate improvement in <insert pupil name> school attendance, the Local Authority will have no option but to instigate one of the following options:

a) Initiating legal proceedings in the Magistrates Court under S.444(1) Education Act 1996. If convicted under this section, you may be fined up to £1000.

b) Initiating legal proceedings in the Magistrates Court under S.444(1A) Education Act 1996. If convicted of this offence you may be fined up to £2,500 or be sent to prison for up to 3 months or both.

Please contact me to discuss.

Yours sincerely,

Name
Position