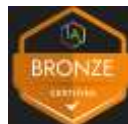


WOODLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL



Attendance & Punctuality Policy including EBSN



Updated: September 2026
Review Date: September 2027

WOODLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL, HEDGEHOGS NURSERY & SUNBEAMS CLUB

Attendance & Punctuality Policy including EBSN

INTRODUCTION & AIMS

At Woodlands Primary School, Hedgehogs Nursery & Sunbeams Club (the school) we recognise the importance of good attendance and the impact it has on children's progress, attainment, enjoyment of learning and relationships within school. The school is proudly recognised as an Inclusive Attendance school and our commitment to attendance centres around child-centric actions, evidence-informed practices and a shared understanding of everyone's roles and collective responsibilities to promote exceptional attendance.

Attendance at school 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 promotes exceptional attendance, which is recognised and celebrated 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's wellbeing and attendance. A child must attend school every day that they are required to do so unless an exceptional circumstance applies.

The attendance policy will be applied consistently and fairly. Some pupils face more complex barriers to attendance. This can include pupils who have long term physical or mental health conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Their right to an education is the same as any other pupil and therefore the attendance ambition for these pupils in our school will be the same as it is for any other pupil but additional support may need to be provided. Where these barriers exist, we will consider our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Our policy is accessible to leaders, staff, pupils, and parents, and is published on our school website. It will be shared with parents on the website, 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 will be reviewed and updated as necessary. The Attendance & Punctuality Policy is based on the premise of equal opportunities for all.

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.

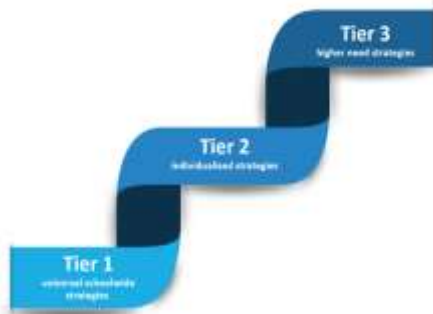
- Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that "The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full-time education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise".
- Section 444 (1) of the Education Act 1996 states that "if a child of compulsory school 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

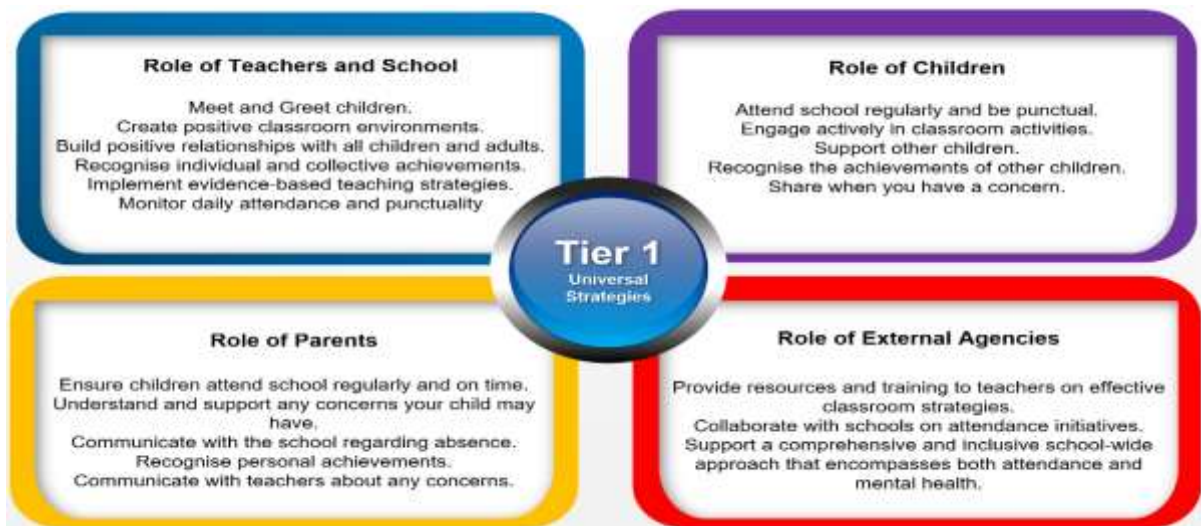
- any person who, although not a biological parent and does not have parental responsibility, has care of a child or young person. This could be one parent, both parents and/or carer/s.

WHAT UNDERPINS OUR SCHOOL'S APPROACH TO ATTENDANCE?

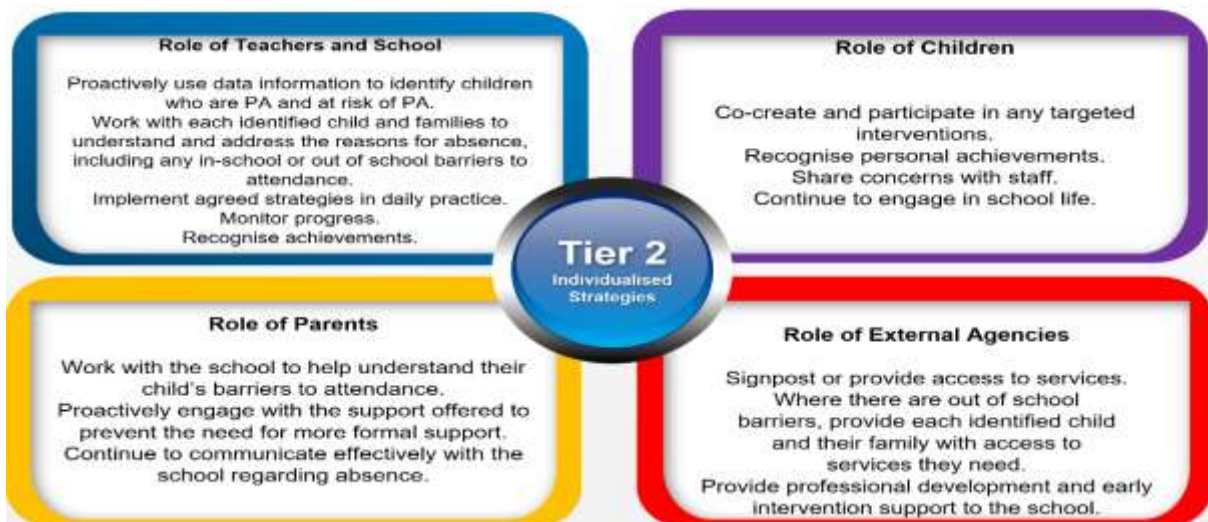


As a Bronze accredited Inclusive Attendance school, we aim to support children, parents and carers by operating a multi-tiered system of support and approach in aiming for exceptional attendance by all children at our school. This system aligns with the Department for Education's (DFE) 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' July 2026 policy.

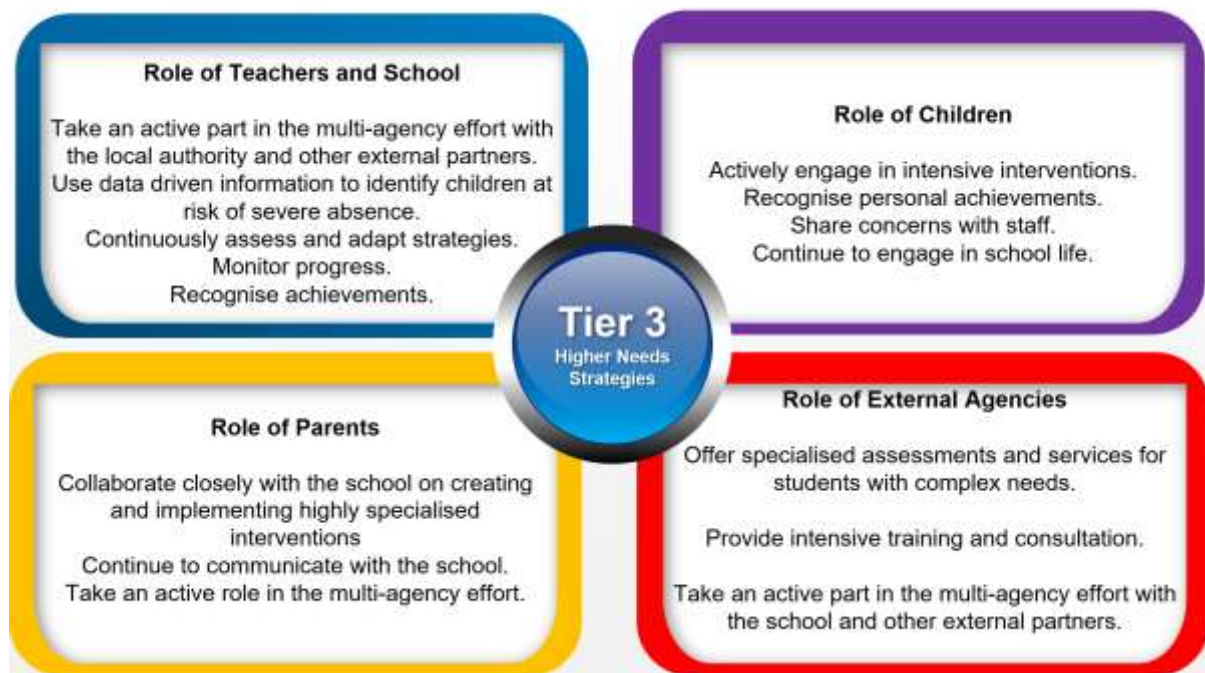
TIER 1 - Universal attendance strategies that support all children in our school.



TIER 2 – Tailoring strategies to individual needs and providing early help support for persistent attendance challenges.



TIER 3 – Higher Needs Strategies Support: Furnishing specialised support for children, young people, and families with complex attendance requirements, including access to external agency support when necessary.



THE IMPORTANCE OF SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

School attendance is not merely a requirement but a *fundamental pillar* of education. It plays a pivotal role in shaping academic success, personal growth, and future prospects, making it an indispensable aspect of any educational system. Regular attendance to school can have a significant impact on:

- **Academic Achievement:** Regular attendance directly correlates with academic success. Children who attend school consistently are more likely to keep up with the curriculum, perform better in exams, and improve their life outcomes.
- **Knowledge Acquisition:** School is where children acquire knowledge and skills that are crucial for their personal and professional growth. Missing days means missing out on valuable learning opportunities.
- **Social Development:** School provides a vital social environment for children and adolescents to interact with peers, develop friendships, and learn essential social skills. Consistent attendance ensures children remain connected to their peer group.
- **Building Routine:** School attendance establishes a structured routine in children's lives, teaching them time management and responsibility, which are valuable life skills.
- **Teacher Interaction:** Regular attendance allows for meaningful teacher-child interactions. Teachers can provide personalised support, address questions, and assess individual progress more effectively when children attend regularly.
- **Preventing Knowledge Gaps:** Frequent absences can lead to significant knowledge gaps, making it challenging for children to catch up with missed lessons, potentially resulting in long-term academic struggles.
- **School Engagement:** Children who attend school regularly are more likely to engage in extracurricular activities, sports, and other enriching experiences that contribute to their overall development.
- **Legal and Parental Responsibility:** Parents or guardians are legally responsible for ensuring their child's regular school attendance. Failing to do so can lead to legal consequences.
- **Community Well-being:** High levels of school attendance contribute to the overall well-being of communities.

FACTORS INFLUENCING SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

At our school, we recognise that there are many factors which can impact on a child attending school; by working in partnership with children and parents we aim to support children in achieving high attendance at school. If parents have any concerns that they feel are affecting their child's attendance at school we ask that parents contact school as soon as possible; early help, support and intervention is vital to ensure attendance is at least good

- **Health Issues:** Children may experience physical or mental health issues that lead to absences. Chronic illnesses, infections, and mental health conditions can impact a child's ability to attend school regularly.
- **Family Circumstances:** Family-related factors such as bereavement, family illness, or caring responsibilities can result in absences from school.
- **Bullying and Safety Concerns:** Experiences of bullying, harassment, or safety concerns at school can sometimes deter children from attending.
- **Socioeconomic Factors:** Families facing financial difficulties may struggle to provide necessary resources for their children to attend school regularly.
- **Special Educational Needs (SEN):** Children with special educational needs may require additional support to attend school regularly.
- **Cultural and Language Barriers:** Children from diverse backgrounds may face challenges related to language barriers or cultural differences. These challenges can sometimes affect their attendance and engagement with school.
- **Parental Involvement:** Parental support and involvement in a child's education can positively influence attendance. Lack of parental engagement may lead to increased absenteeism.

WHAT WILL WE DO, AS A SCHOOL, TO SUPPORT CHILDREN ACHIEVING EXCEPTIONAL ATTENDANCE?

All staff will:

- **Create a Welcoming Classroom Environment:** All staff will strive to create a positive and welcoming classroom environment where all children feel motivated and engaged. We recognise that a supportive, caring and nurturing environment will encourage attendance.
- **Set Expectations:** Teachers and leaders will aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school. Teachers will set clear expectations for attendance and punctuality in their classrooms. This includes communicating the importance of regular attendance for learning and academic progress.
- **Support Positive Behaviour:** Teachers will implement strategies to reinforce positive behaviour related to attendance, such as recognising attendance and punctuality. All staff will listen and understand - when a pattern is spotted, discussions will be held with pupils and parents to listen to and understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.
- **Monitor Attendance:** Leaders will rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched. All staff, including teachers, teaching assistants, the admin team and SLT are responsible for monitoring the daily attendance of their children. Staff will maintain accurate attendance records, noting both present and absent pupils and staff will be encouraged to challenge parents when children are absent from school.

- **Promote Punctuality:** Teachers will encourage pupils to arrive at school on time each day. Punctuality is essential for a smooth start to the school day and minimises disruptions in the classroom.
- **Take Immediate Action:** When a child is absent without prior notification or a valid reason, teachers will take immediate action. This may involve contacting the school's attendance officer or designated staff member to report the absence. When formalised support is required, and where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners will work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through an attendance contract or education supervision order
- **Implement Early Intervention and support:** Teachers will identify patterns of poor attendance or lateness and intervene early to address any underlying issues. This may include communicating with the child, their parents or guardians, and relevant support services.
- **Maintain Communication:** All staff will maintain open lines of communication with parents or guardians regarding attendance. Staff will inform parents of any concerns about a child's attendance or punctuality.
- **Facilitate and provide Support:** Leaders and all staff will aim to remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues. Teachers can provide academic and emotional support to children who may be experiencing attendance challenges. Identifying the root causes and addressing them proactively will help improve attendance.
- **Identify Barriers:** Teachers will be alert to potential barriers to attendance, such as bullying, health issues, or family problems.
- **Keep accurate Attendance Records:** Accurate attendance records are crucial. Teachers should submit attendance data promptly to the school's administrative team (usually in the form of daily registers). This information is used for reporting to local authorities and the Department for Education (DFE).
- **Collaborate:** Collaborating with other school staff, such as attendance officers, counsellors, and administrators, will be essential for addressing attendance concerns effectively. Teamwork ensures a coordinated approach to supporting students.

WHAT SHOULD PARENTS/CARERS DO TO WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH SCHOOL?

We ask that parents let the school know straight away why their child is absent. Home/school communication is extremely important in supporting children to achieve and feel settled in school. We ask that parents/carers try to make any dental/GP appointments for their child outside of school time

It is pertinent 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.

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.

School follows the **School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024**, which came into effect from 19 August 2024. The 2024 Regulations made the attendance codes mandatory rather than simply advisory. The school will maintain its admission and attendance registers in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and the current statutory guidance, Working Together to Improve School Attendance.

Attendance is a safeguarding matter. Repeated, unexplained or prolonged absence may be an indicator that a child requires early help, safeguarding support or protection. Where attendance information gives rise to a safeguarding concern, staff will follow the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and refer the matter promptly to the DSL/DDSL. Attendance procedures must never delay an immediate safeguarding response.

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 will 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 will 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 \(applies from 19 August 2024\) \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/101444/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance.pdf) (See appendix 3.)

PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING A CHILD'S ABSENCE

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)

Our 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. We ask that parents/carers contact school on 0151 329 3164 before 9am on the morning of any absence and leave a message on the school answerphone. The message should consist of name and class of your child and full reason for absence. The attendance officer, or one of the administration team, will retrieve messages shortly after 9am and these will be coded in the statutory, daily attendance register. We ask parents/carers to give a full and accurate reason for a child's absence eg headache, temperature, vomiting. **NB: Each full day of absence equates to 2 absent sessions on the register (1 morning and 1 afternoon session).**

If you feel more support is needed with regards to your child's absence, please ask to speak to the school's Attendance Officer or the Deputy Head Teacher (designated attendance champion) or alternatively your child's class teacher. You may also wish to discuss any absence concerns with a member of our extended pastoral team, including the Designated safeguarding Lead, or the deputy safeguarding lead.

Mrs Liversey, the school's Deputy Head Teacher is the senior leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in school.

The school office will make contact with home – first response call (FRC) - when a child is absent if 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.

FORMAL ABSENCE MONITORING & SUBSEQUENT FOLLOW UP ACTIONS

We 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 i.e. children with a social worker
- Monitoring patterns of absence eg specific days across a period of time
- 'Welcome back' check in for any pupils that have been absent for 5 or more days where no satisfactory explanation has been received about the child's absence, allowing us to check a child's wellbeing and to offer support to families to ensure there are no ongoing needs that will impact on attendance
- The school's strategy for using attendance data to target attendance improvement for pupils or pupil cohorts who need it most.
- Supporting and directing parents/carers whose children have persistent absence (PA) or severe absence (SA) to access wider support to begin to reduce and thus remove the barriers to attendance. This may result in the need for support to be formalised in conjunction with the local authority.

EARLY IDENTIFICATION AND INTERVENTION: ASSESS, PLAN, DO AND REVIEW

Every pupil has a right to a full-time education and the school sets high attendance expectations for all pupils. The 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 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 class teachers, 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 (Tier 2). In accordance with the principles of early intervention, a graduated approach of assess, plan, do and review (multi-tier model) will be followed utilising a range 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 (Tier 3). This may be an assessment that focuses on the individual child's needs such as gathering wishes and feelings, conducting SDQ or SEND assessments and also may involve completing wellbeing assessments taking into account 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.

MEDICAL ABSENCE

Absence due to illness should be reported to the school by phone 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.

If parents/carers are unsure whether their child should attend school because of illness or infection, they should refer to current NHS advice, including *Is my child too ill for school?*. The school will also have regard to current UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) guidance, *Health protection in children and young people's settings, including education*, including the UKHSA *Public health exclusion periods in children and young people's settings*. These

resources provide current advice about when children should remain away from an education setting because of infectious illness and when they may safely attend. The links are here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-protection-in-schools-and-other-childcare-facilities>; <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-protection-in-schools-and-other-childcare-facilities/public-health-exclusion-periods-in-children-and-young-peoples-settings>; or access the NHS information based around 'When is my child too ill for school via the NHS link <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

In the majority of cases, a parent's notification that their child is ill will be accepted without question or concern. School 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.

A diagnosed medical condition, allergy, disability or requirement for medication should not in itself be regarded as a reason why a pupil cannot attend school where appropriate arrangements and reasonable adjustments can safely enable attendance. Where relevant, attendance planning will link with the pupil's Individual Healthcare Plan, Allergy Action Plan, Intimate Care Plan, SEND provision and/or other appropriate individual plan.

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 plan and work with parents to ensure we know 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.

Schools 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:

LATENESS AND PUNCTUALITY

The school 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.

At our school, classroom doors will be open from 8.45am with school beginning at the following times:

Hedgehogs: 8.45am
Squirrels & Foxes: 8.45am
Reception & KS1: 8.55am
KS2: 8.50am

All pupils are expected to be in school for registration by the following times:

- Register taken at *9.00am*
- Registers close *9.30am*

Afternoon registers are taken at the following times:

- Squirrels & Foxes: 12.30pm
- Reception & KS1 - 1.20pm
- Y3/Y4 – 12.50pm
- Y5/6 – 1.20pm

Any child who arrives after the gates are closed must enter the school by the main entrance and report to the school office to sign in. If pupils are not in class when the register is taken, they will be coded as 'L'. Any late arrivals after *9.30am* will be coded as 'U' which is an unauthorised absence for that session.

In accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, if a child arrives after the attendance register has closed, they will receive code U. This records that the pupil arrived after the register closed and is treated as unauthorised absence for that session. Persistent unauthorised absence may result in further attendance intervention, including consideration of a penalty notice or other legal action where the relevant criteria are met.

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.

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

The national threshold for considering a penalty notice is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling period of 10 school weeks. These sessions need not be consecutive and may span different terms or school years. Where the threshold is met, the school and Local Authority will consider the individual circumstances, support already offered and whether a penalty notice or another attendance intervention is appropriate.

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*).

PROMOTING AND INCENTIVISING ATTENDANCE (REWARDS AND INCENTIVES)

The school recognises that the most effective schools consistently promote the benefits of good attendance. We recognise that good attendance is not a discrete piece of work but rather it is an integral part of the school's ethos and culture.

We understand that some children find it harder than others to attend school. Improved attendance or improved punctuality will be recognised and celebrated as we believe that every child has the right to feel they can achieve and be successful. At our school pupils will be taught about the positive link between attendance and high achievement through assemblies and PSHE sessions.

Attendance information will be readily available for both children and parents. Each half term, we will share individual attendance with parents via an updated registration certificate to enable parents to track their child's attendance more closely and we will also share a summary of attendance via the annual school report at the end of the academic year. Class teachers will also discuss children's attendance during parents evening meetings. We will also share whole school attendance weekly via the school bulletin – this will recognise and celebrate attendance on a weekly basis allowing all families the opportunity to achieve and feel successful - a new week, a new start!

Barriers affecting attendance in our school will be explored, taking both the child and parents views into account and every member of staff will be clear about how they can help to improve attendance and/or punctuality. As a trauma informed school all pupils will be welcomed back to school and reasons for their lateness/absence will be explored sensitively with barriers understood and the necessary support provided. At Woodlands Primary School we recognise that some pupils will require their own individual reward systems.

Consequences might also be used alongside our rewards and incentives.

APPLICATION FOR EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

As of 19th August 2024, the law ceased to include a leave of absence for a family holiday. A leave of absence will 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 Head Teacher 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/carers (Appendix 1)

The following will not be deemed to be exceptional circumstances:

- Family holiday
- Availability of less expensive holiday
- Availability of holiday accommodation
- Parent/carers' 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 the school in writing in advance where absence is required due to a religious observance.

ENFORCED SCHOOL CLOSURE

If our school was forced to close for a period of time, we have the facility to provide work via Tapestry (EYFS) or SeeSaw (Y1-Y6) and we could also instigate an online virtual school via Google Classroom. The expectation is children would still engage with ALL activities when work is set. Procedures for online learning are available in our Remote Learning Policy on the school website.

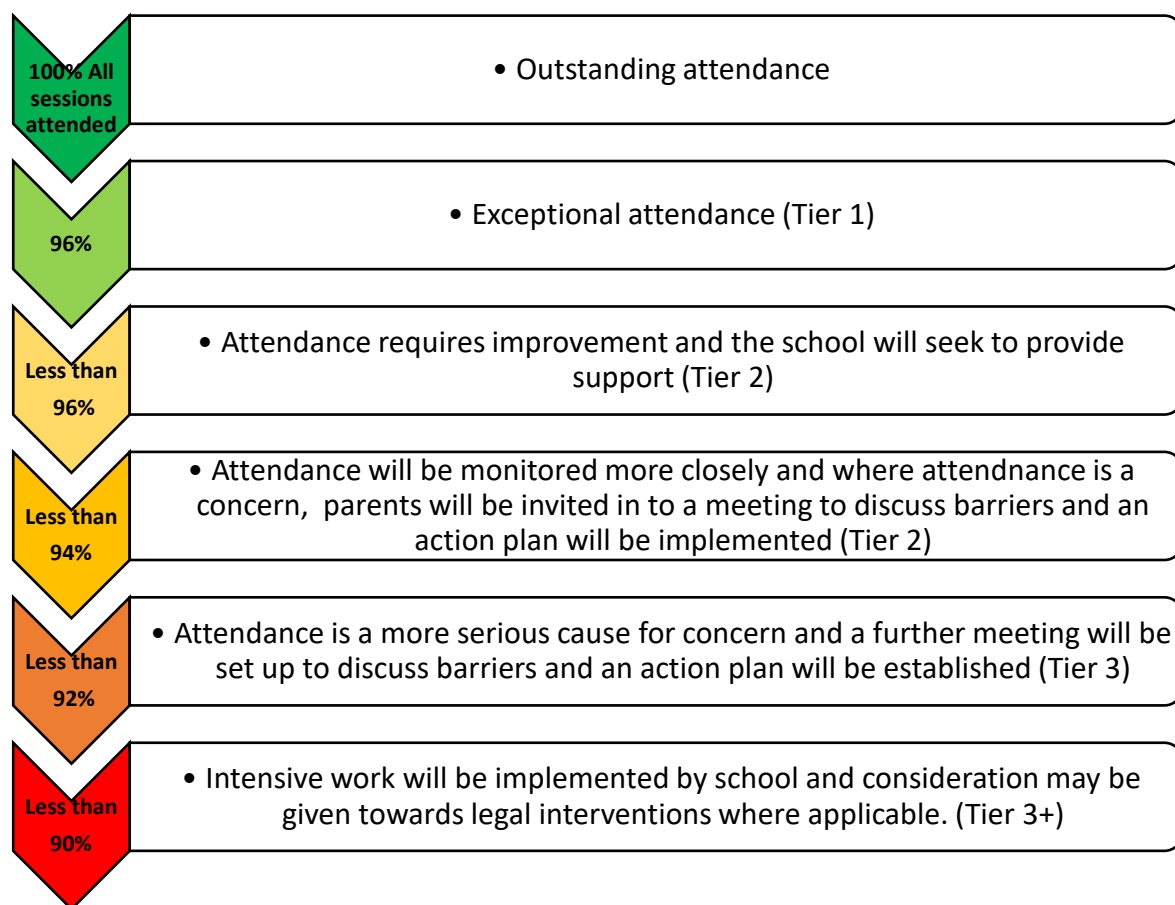
IMPACT

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 our school ready for a successful transition to secondary school.

Woodlands Attendance Monitoring and Support Thresholds

The percentages below are Woodlands' internal monitoring and support thresholds. They enable us to identify emerging concerns early and offer appropriate support before absence becomes entrenched. They do not replace statutory national definitions, including persistent absence and severe absence.



EMOTIONALLY BASED SCHOOL NON-ATTENDANCE (EBSN)

Emotionally Based School Non-attendance (EBSN) is a term used to describe the needs of Children and Young People (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 describes the barriers and emotional needs contributing to a child's difficulty attending school; it is not itself a statutory attendance code or an automatic reason to authorise absence. Attendance will continue to be recorded using the appropriate statutory attendance code for the circumstances of each individual session.

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

Cheshire West & Chester

Code of Conduct for Education Fixed Penalty Notice (Unauthorised Leave of Absence & Irregular Attendance).

Woodlands will follow the current Cheshire West and Chester Penalty Notice Code of Conduct and the national framework for penalty notices. Where this policy and any previous local document differ, the current statutory framework and current Local Authority Code of Conduct will apply.

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. National threshold for consideration of a Penalty Notice

The national threshold is **10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling period of 10 school weeks**. The sessions do not need to be consecutive and may include a combination of different types of unauthorised absence.

Meeting the national threshold does not mean that a Penalty Notice will automatically be issued. The school and Local Authority will consider the circumstances of the individual case, support already offered and whether a Penalty Notice or another attendance intervention is appropriate.

Where support is appropriate but has not been successful or engaged with, a **Notice to Improve** may normally be used as a final opportunity for attendance to improve before a Penalty Notice is considered. A Notice to Improve will not be used where it would not be appropriate or reasonably likely to change behaviour.

Woodlands will follow the current **Cheshire West and Chester Penalty Notice Code of Conduct** and the national framework for penalty notices. Where any previous local document differs from the current statutory framework, the current statutory framework and current Local Authority Code of Conduct will apply.

Appendix 2

How does number of days absent equate to 'percentage attendance'?

Parents/carers should be advised that from September 2015 the Government categorised those pupils who have attendance of 90% and below as 'Persistent Absence' pupils (P.A.). The table below shows the learning time lost in days/sessions against percentage attendance figures.

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

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

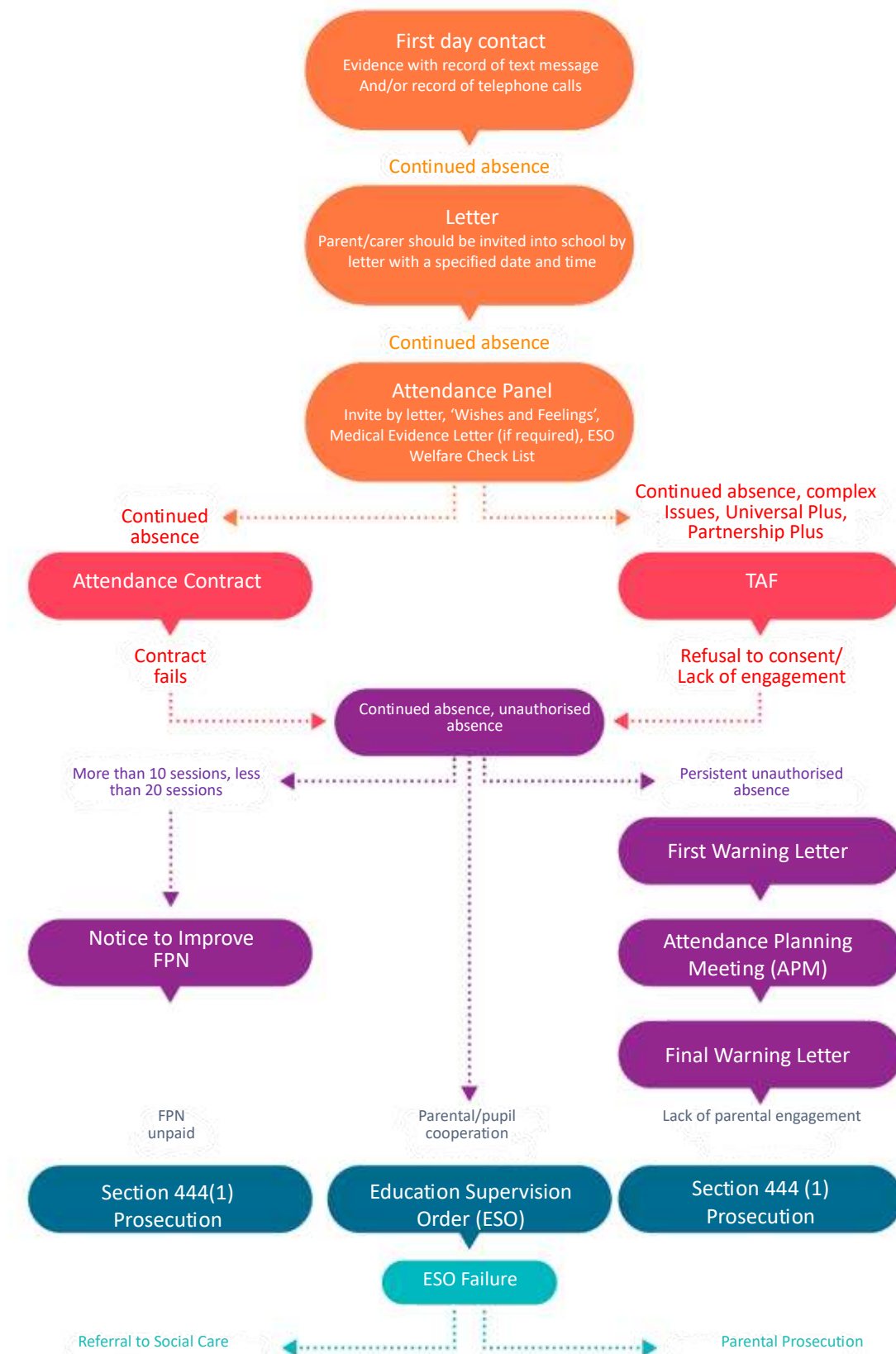
Absent - unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause. - These codes are classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance

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 - These 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 Pathway



Second Offences and severe offences can go to Section 444 (1a) prosecution and will be PACE interviewed.

NB. Where the national penalty-notice threshold has been met and support is appropriate but has not been successful or engaged with, a Notice to Improve may normally be used as a final opportunity for attendance to improve before a penalty notice is considered. A Notice to Improve will not be used where it would not be appropriate or reasonably likely to change behaviour, including where current national or Local Authority arrangements provide otherwise.