



Attendance Policy

Lionel Walden Primary School

Date Approved	Sept 2025	
Approved by	<i>S Abey</i>	<i>J Dale</i>
	Headteacher	Chair of Governors
Review Date	Sept 2026	

Principles

As a school, we realise that for a child to reach their full educational potential, a high level of school attendance is essential. An ethos of high levels of attendance and punctuality is recognised and valued across our whole school community. We aim to work with parents/carers to ensure that all children registered at school attend every day and on time, unless the absence is unavoidable. We expect that all children will achieve 100% attendance but recognise that there may be exceptional or unavoidable reasons for absence, or absences relating to persistent health issues. Our policy applies to all children, including Reception-aged children, to promote good attendance habits from an early age.

The following guidance has been taken into consideration when developing this policy: [Working Together to Improve School Attendance. August 2024.](#)

Our attendance policy aims to:

- Support children and their parents/carers to have the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Ensure that all children have full and equal access to the best education that we can offer.
- Make parents/carers aware of their legal responsibilities.

School education lays the vital foundations of a child's life. Research clearly demonstrates the link between regular attendance and educational progress and attainment. As a school we will encourage parents/carers to ensure that their child achieves maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent this are identified and acted on promptly.

The school has a safeguarding duty of care to all its pupils. We take the role of ensuring a child's good attendance as part of our safeguarding duties.

Expectations:

We expect that all parents/carers will:

- Ensure regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities.
- Ensure that their child arrives at school prepared for the school day, punctually and in time for registration. Lateness is monitored and may be recorded as an unauthorised absence.
- Inform school in advance of any medical appointments during school time. Parents may on occasion be asked to provide supporting information from the hospital, doctor or dentist, such as appointment details card/letter/text message in relation to the time requested. Where possible, medical appointments should be arranged outside of school hours.
- Ensure that they contact the school before 9 am if their child is unable to attend school, citing the reason.
- Inform the school as soon as possible about any child's reluctance to come to school so that any problem can be quickly identified and dealt with.
- Follow application procedures regarding a request for leave of absence during term time, which should only be taken if absolutely necessary. Leave is not automatically authorised

unless considered an exceptional circumstance. Any leave taken during term time, that has been unauthorised, could be subject to a penalty notice/fine.

- Notify school immediately of any changes to contact details, and ensure school has more than one name, address and telephone number as an emergency contact.
- Engage with early interventions designed to support the family and their child's attendance at school.
- Discuss attendance where necessary face to face or on the telephone – conversations are preferable to messages or emails.

Parents/carers have a legal responsibility to ensure that children of statutory school age (the term after the child turns five) attend school on a regular and full-time basis. Permitting an absence from school without good reason is an offence. A pupil whose attendance drops to 90% each year will, over their time at primary school, have missed the equivalent of two whole terms of learning.

We expect that school will:

- Provide a safe learning environment.
- Keep regular and accurate records of attendance and punctuality.
- Monitor individual children's attendance and punctuality.
- Contact parents/carers when a child fails to attend and where no message has been received to explain the absence.
- Follow up all unexplained absences to obtain explanations from parents/carers. Although parents/carers may offer a reason, only the school can authorise the absence. In the case of long term or frequent absence due to medical conditions, information from a GP or other relevant body may be requested to assist school in offering appropriate support.
- Promote and celebrate good attendance and punctuality, for example through assemblies, social media, displays and parent/carer communications.
- Meet regularly with the Local Authority Attendance Improvement Officer (AIO) to monitor and support school attendance and punctuality.
- Refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to the Local Authority Attendance Service.
- Provide intensive and bespoke support to children at risk of persistent absence.
- Work alongside other services and teams to support children's attendance. e.g. other schools in a multi academy trust, the Local Authority, Early Help, Social Care, Virtual School and the local community (including volunteers).
- Share attendance data with parents/carers and make it clear what good attendance and success looks like for their child.
- Communicate clearly and consistently with parents/carers and children regarding attendance.
- Follow the Local Authority Medical Needs Policy for children who are failing to access education in school due to medical and behavioural needs. This goes hand in hand with Section 19 of the Education Act 1996.
- Consider an Individual Healthcare Plan for children with medical needs.
- Work alongside the Access and Inclusion team to identify and support children with medical needs preventing them from attending school.

The Attendance Champion for our school is the Headteacher.

All members of the school staff have a safeguarding responsibility for identifying trends in attendance and lateness; with the Headteacher having overall responsibility for the monitoring of attendance and lateness of every pupil. Where there are concerns, parents will always be informed by letter and/or telephone conversation and given an opportunity to come into school to meet with designated staff.

We expect that all children will:

- Attend school every day.
- Attend school punctually.
- Attend appropriately prepared for the day.
- Discuss promptly with their class teacher any problems that may affect their school attendance.

We expect that governors will:

- Monitor attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis.
- Hold the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

We expect that the Local Authority will:

- Provide support, information and guidance to school by having regular meetings to discuss attendance.
- Act as a partner with school to support in some cases of persistent absence.
- Work with schools in the enforcement of penalty notices, fines and prosecutions in cases that require legal involvement.
- Identify suitable provision and reasonable adjustments for pupils unable to access education due to prolonged ill health.

School Attendance Strategy

Whilst the Headteacher is our Senior Attendance Champion, for day-to-day aspects of attendance, please contact our school office.

We are responsible for all children's attendance at school, and we partner with other agencies to help us do this. For children who might need extra support to maintain their attendance e.g. Young Carers, we may signpost families to appropriate places to reduce the impact that their needs and personal circumstances have on their attendance at school. Safeguarding and attendance are closely linked, and we work together with Social Care to identify where children need extra support. We will work with families in many different ways to overcome barriers to attendance. All staff have direct access to our trained Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputies, and this is important for this work.

School is responsible for monitoring whole school attendance data and using this to inform how we support pupils. We share this data within the school staff to ensure continuity of support. We are required to report our attendance to the Department for Education (DfE) so that we can compare our performance with that of other schools, both locally and nationally. Attendance data is analysed regularly, and children whose attendance is falling or deemed to be a concern will be noted. This will be communicated with parents and carers. Support will then be put in place. Children whose attendance falls to 90% or under are deemed to be 'persistently absent' and can be referred to the Local Authority for enforcement action. Pupils whose attendance is

50% or under are 'severely persistently absent' and parents/carers will be expected to engage in substantial support.

We have a whole-school ethos of promoting and celebrating attendance. This means that we train every staff member in attendance procedures so that everyone understands the processes for attendance and the pastoral structures in school. We train, remind and support all staff to follow this policy, and constantly refer to it. Good attendance is celebrated with children and families and reported to parents/carers at Parents Evenings and in formal written end-of-year reports.

Our whole-school strategy for attendance involves deciding how to allocate resources (both financial and staffing) to manage attendance. Our support and early interventions for attendance are regularly monitored to ensure they are having an impact and are worth the resources allocated to them.

Supporting Attendance

As a school, we aim to work collaboratively with parents/carers to improve school attendance. This means that we will **listen, empathise and support with attendance. However, if this is unsuccessful, legal sanctions will be considered where appropriate.**



When required, support strategies with a monitoring period will be put in place to help improve the attendance or lateness of a pupil. Should a pupil's attendance or lateness continue to be a concern despite the support strategies in place, with no improvement to the expected level set by school, a referral will be made to the Local Authority Attendance Team for statutory aged pupils. This could result in a Penalty Notice/fine, or prosecution being issued by Cambridgeshire County Council, as per section 444 Education Act 1996. This may result in a fine of up to £2500 and/or 3 months in prison.

Lateness and attendance are monitored daily by the **school attendance officer** who will:

- Scrutinise the registers daily, monitoring authorised/unauthorised absence and other reasons provided for pupil absence and lateness.
- Raise concerns with parents/carers of identified patterns of lateness with an initial 'Late Letter'.
- Contact parents by telephone, email, or letter to establish a reason for a pupil's absence if the reason is unknown.
- Raise concerns with parents/carers once attendance has fallen below an acceptable level.
- Offer support or signpost to other areas of support within the community.

When lateness or attendance becomes a concern, the school will normally follow the following procedures:

- Step One. A telephone call advising parent/carers of our concerns regarding the level of their child's attendance/lateness and offering support.
- Step Two. A letter sent to offer support and further explain the effect the absence/lateness is having on the child.
- Step Three. An invitation sent to attend a meeting to enter into an Attendance Agreement. This is a supportive meeting, entered into voluntarily to discuss the needs of a pupil and family and identify ways that barriers to attendance can be removed.
- Step Four. Should the Attendance Agreement fail to improve attendance, or should there be no engagement with interventions and support despite every attempt by the school to support the family, a request for the issue of a penalty notice/fine or prosecution could be made to the Local Authority Attendance Team for children of statutory school age.
- At Step 3 or 4, the school might consider using a Notice to Improve letter, a strategy used in partnership with the Local Authority to set targets for improved attendance. This is a final attempt to improve attendance when parents/carers are failing to engage with support being offered by school, before referring parents for legal sanctions.

Following use of one of the two pathways above, if attendance does not improve, school will refer to the Local Authority for legal sanctions.

- Liaise with other external organisations in relation to a pupil's attendance/lateness.
- Monitor pupil attendance within specific and identified groups.
- Monitor and respond to pupil absences for those with additional medical needs.
- Monitor pupils and follow procedures for pupils who are 'Children Missing in Education'.
- Follow reporting procedures for parents who have requested to home educate their child.
- Follow statutory procedures when deleting a pupil from roll.
- Monitor absences for illness and requests for leave to attend medical appointments.
- Reporting pupils to the Local Authority when they have 10 consecutive 'O' coded (unauthorised absence) sessions in school.
- Report pupils with unauthorised term-term leave absences (10 consecutive sessions of 'G' codes) to the Local Authority for issuing of a legal sanction to parents/carers.
- Report pupils with 15 consecutive days of 'I' (illness) codes to the Local Authority.

Registration

Reception to Year 6:

- The main school gates open at 8:35am
- The classroom door is opened at 8:40am.
- All external classroom doors are locked at 8:50am.
- Once the external classroom door has been closed, entry to the school is via the main entrance.
- Our morning registers is taken at 8:45 am and will remain open until 8:50 am. Pupils who arrive at school after the register has been taken, will be recorded as 'L' - late on the register. Our afternoon register is taken at 1:05 pm and will close at 1:10 pm.
- Pupils who arrive at school after registers close at 8:50 am, without an unavoidable reason, will have their lateness recorded as 'U' - unauthorised late which then impacts on their overall attendance level.

It is a legal requirement that a register of attendance is taken during the morning and afternoon at school. Any unexplained absence must be coded as unauthorised until a reason is given by parents/carers. This must be no later than 5 days after the session. Only the Headteacher may authorise or unauthorise an absence. The register can only routinely be amended where the reason for absence cannot be established at the time it is taken and it is subsequently necessary to correct the entry. Where amendments are made, the register will show the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date on which the amendment was made, and the name of the person who made the amendment. Registers are kept for three years as a record.

Lateness

When children arrive late at school, they disrupt routines, affect other children's learning, miss the teacher's instructions to the lesson and may also feel embarrassed at having to enter the classroom late. They may also miss important intervention programmes and the opportunity to practice key learning skills. Where pupils show a persistent pattern of lateness, parents/carers will receive contact from the school advising them of the concern and offering support to resolve the issue. Should the lateness continue, parents/carers will be invited to a meeting at school to discuss their child's lateness.

If there is no improvement, despite the school's attempts to address unauthorised absences, a referral could be made to the Local Authority Attendance Team for pupils who are of statutory school age.

Reporting a Pupil Absence

Parents/carers must contact the school on the first and every subsequent day of absence by 8:55 am.

For any pupil not present at the close of registration, and the reason is still unknown, a member of the office or SLT will attempt to make contact with the parent/carers once the registers have closed.

The member of staff will ring every contact, starting with the priority contact, until a reason for absence is known. Messages will be left on voicemail requesting parents to contact school regarding their child's absence. Outcomes of any phone conversations will be logged on the pupil's electronic school record. Staff will complete the registers in accordance with the correct use of registration codes (see appendix 1).

Any unexplained absence will be recorded as unauthorised absence if there is no response from a parent/carers to an enquiry regarding their child's absence from school.

At times we may decide it is necessary to conduct a door knock to establish the safety and wellbeing of a child who is absent without explanation from a parent/carer.

For absences relating to a medical appointment, supporting information may be requested to authorise this absence. This can be a text message which clearly identifies who the appointment is for, or an appointment card. A period of absence will be authorised in relation to the length of

the appointment, usually no more than a morning or afternoon session. Consideration of the location of the appointment will also be given.

Illness

Children who are unable to attend school due to sickness or diarrhoea can return after they have been **48 hours clear from the last bout of sickness or diarrhoea**. These types of bugs can spread quickly and easily and it is therefore really important for the health and wellbeing of all members of our school community that these guidelines are adhered to.

Children with mild coughs, colds, sore throats, sneezes and runny noses who are otherwise well can continue to attend school. However, if they develop a high temperature they should stay at home until their temperature has reduced and they are well enough to return to school.

We expect children to attempt to come to school unless they are too unwell to complete basic tasks.

You can find lots of information on whether children can attend school with certain conditions on the NHS website - [Is my child too ill for school?](#). Here it describes certain common illnesses that children are normally able to manage well in school.

To reassure you, there are things that we can do in school to make their day manageable when pupils are suffering from certain low-level illnesses. Examples of these things are:

- Administering medicines (with written parental consent given via the school office)
- Check-ins with a trusted member of staff
- Reassurance that we will call a parent if they feel too unwell to complete the day

We often find that pupils are distracted from feeling a little under the weather when they come into school, and have their friends around them and their learning to occupy them.

Medical Needs and SEND

When children are prevented from accessing school due to physical or mental ill health, school will try to identify the barriers these pupils face, and use our tiered approach to supporting medical needs. This starts with the universal offer of support for all children and leads to higher tiers of need where increasingly specialist support is required. We will consider reasonable adjustments for uniform, transport, routines, access to support in school and lunchtime arrangements. We will liaise with appropriate services to ascertain support, in the rare instances that a pupil is unable to access any education inside the school setting. We will work with the Local Authority Access and Inclusion Team to identify available options for education. Where a pupil's health needs mean they need reasonable adjustments or support because it is complex or long term, we may seek medical information to better understand the needs of the pupil and identify the most suitable provision. This may take a variety of forms, which we will discuss with parents/carers on an individual basis.

Where children have an EHCP, we will liaise closely with the child's SEN Caseworker to work towards the best attendance outcomes for the child.

We are able to make adjustments to practice and policies to help meet the needs of pupils who are struggling to attend school, as well as making formal reasonable adjustments under section 20 of the Equality Act 2010 where a pupil has a disability. Any adjustments must be agreed by, and regularly reviewed with, the pupil and their parents/carers.

Definitions of Leave

We expect attendance at school to be 100% unless there are exceptional or unavoidable reasons for absence.

Authorised leave

An absence is classified as authorised when a pupil has been away from school for a legitimate reason such as:

- Illness or a medical appointment. There is an expectation that the pupil will be in school for registration or return to school after the appointment, depending on where the appointment falls within the school day and the health of the pupil.
- Religious Observance - only day(s) exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong to.
- The leave of absence has been authorised due to a short and exceptional, unavoidable circumstance.

Unauthorised leave:

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the school, even with the support of the parent/carers, such as:

- Shopping, hair appointments, visiting family, taking part in a protest or birthdays.
- There has been no reason provided by the parent/carers to support an absence.
- Failure to follow school procedures or inform the school when taking a pupil out of school during term time.
- A leave of absence that has not been authorised due to not being considered an exceptional circumstance.

Coding is always at the Headteacher's discretion.

Term-Time Leave

Parents do not have the right or entitlement to take their child out of school for a term-time holiday. Recent government guidelines have removed the discretion for headteachers agreeing to term-time leave. Any requests for leave of absence need to be submitted before the leave is taken. Parents must complete a Term-Time Leave Request Form (Appendix 2) and provide any

supporting evidence, if applicable, with their request. This also applies to parents requesting to take their child out of school during the school day.

If the school suspect term-time leave has been taken but the parents/carers have not completed a Term-Time Leave Request Form, we will write to the parents/carers giving them an opportunity to clarify the reason for absence and provide supporting evidence. Failure to respond to or provide supporting evidence will result in a referral to the Local Authority for unauthorised leave from school.

Exceptional circumstances (*definition of exceptional: rare, unavoidable, short*) will be considered on an individual basis. Examples of requests for leave of absence that **do not** meet the criteria of an exceptional circumstance and **will not** be authorised and could be subject to a Penalty Notice fine/prosecution for pupils of statutory school age are:

- Cheaper holidays/flights in the UK or abroad.
- Holidays that overlap the beginning or the end of term.
- Trip of a lifetime.
- Visiting family or friends who have different half term holiday dates.
- Family weddings for more than 1 day or visits to see family abroad.
- Relatives coming to visit.
- Extension of leave if a pupil has not returned to school after an agreed absence if it does not meet grounds for an exceptional circumstance.
- Leave taken due to potential travel disruption.

Penalty Notices

If a pupil takes unauthorised term-time leave for **10 sessions** or more (generally 5 days) within a rolling 10 school week period, a Penalty Notice must be considered. **The sessions do not have to be consecutive.** They can occur over different weeks or even across terms, as long as they fall in the rolling 10-week window.

Schools record attendance in the morning and afternoon sessions. **Any unauthorised half-day or day absences count in the threshold for penalty notices** within the rolling 10 school week period.

The fine for a penalty notice is £80 per child, per parent/carer, increasing to £160 if not paid after 21 days but within 28 days for pupils who are of statutory school age. If a penalty notice remains unpaid, parents may be the subject of court proceedings for failing to ensure the regular school attendance of their child and this could result in a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a term of imprisonment of up to 3 months per parent.

For second offences of unauthorised term-time leave (10 consecutive sessions or more) within a three-year rolling period, the fine is a flat £160 per parent, per child. For the third offence in a three-year rolling period, the referral will be automatically considered for prosecution in relation to Section 444 Education Act 1996.

Children Missing in Education

If a pupil fails to attend school for 10 consecutive days, without explanation, the school will refer the pupil to the Local Authority as a Child Missing in Education. After a further 10 days of absence with no explanation, your child is at risk of losing their school place with us.

Elective Home Education

It is a parent's right to be able to withdraw their child from school to educate them at home if they wish to. There are legal responsibilities parents/carers must fulfil if they wish to educate their child at home, which are monitored by the Local Authority. Please speak to the headteacher in the first instance if you are considering this option.

APPENDIX 1

In accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 a pupil should be recorded as present or absent in the Attendance Register.

On each occasion the register is taken the appropriate national attendance and absence code must be entered for every pupil (of both compulsory and non –compulsory school age) whose name is listed in the admissions register at the time (exception boarder).

Full information contained in the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and the Statutory Attendance Guidance Working Together to Improve Attendance 2024.

1. If a pupil is present in school the following codes from table 1 should be used

Code	Meaning	Criteria	Statistical Value
/	Present at school AM	Must be in school at registration	Attending (Present)
\	Present at school PM	Must be in school at registration	Attending (Present)
L	Late arrival before register is closed	The pupil was absent when the register started being taken but arrives before the register is closed.	Attending (present)

2. If a pupil is absent from school so that they can attend a place other than school for any of the following reasons the relevant code from table 2 should be used.

Code	Meaning	Criteria	Statistical Value
K	Attending Education provision arranged the LA.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The nature of the provision must also be recorded.Code K can only be used if the child is present at the provision.	Attending an approved educational activity (present)
V	Attending an Educational visit or trip	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The pupil is attending a place, other than the school or any other school at which they are a registered pupil, for an educational visit or trip.Arranged by or on behalf of the school and supervised by a member of school staff.The visit or trip must take place during the session for which it is recorded.Code V can only be used if the pupil is present at the visit.	Attending an approved educational activity (present)

P	Participating in a Sporting Activity P code can only be used if the pupil is present at the activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P code can only be used if the pupil is present at the activity. The sporting activity must take place during the session for which it is recorded. • The place is somewhere other than the school, another school where the pupil is registered, or a place where educational provision has been arranged for the pupil by a local authority under section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996 or sections 42(2) or 61(1) of the Children and Families Act 2014. • the activity is of an educational nature. • the school has approved the pupil's attendance at the place for the activity; and • the activity is supervised by a person considered by the school to have the appropriate skills, training, experience, and knowledge to ensure that the activity takes place safely and fulfils the educational purpose for which the pupil's attendance has been approved. 	Attending an approved educational activity (present)
W	Attending Work Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W code can only be used if the pupil is present at the activity Under arrangements by school or LA • In session for which it is recorded • The place is somewhere other than the school, another school where the pupil is registered, or a place where educational provision has been arranged for the pupil by a local authority under section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996 or sections 42(2) or 61(1) of the Children and Families Act 2014. • the activity is of an educational nature. • the school has approved the pupil's attendance • at the place for the activity; and • the activity is supervised by a person considered by the school to have the appropriate skills, training, experience, and knowledge to ensure that the activity takes place safely and fulfils the educational purpose for which the pupil's attendance has been approved. 	Attending an approved educational activity (present)
B	Attending any other approved Educational Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B code can only be used if the pupil is present at the activity Under arrangements by school or LA • In session for which it is recorded • The place is somewhere other than the school, another school where the pupil is registered, or a place where educational provision has been arranged for the pupil by a local authority under section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996 or sections 42(2) or 61(1) of the Children and Families Act 2014. • the activity is of an educational nature. • the school has approved the pupil's attendance at the place for the activity; and the activity is supervised by a person considered by the school to have the appropriate skills, training, experience, and knowledge to ensure that the activity takes place safely and fulfils the educational purpose for which the pupil's attendance has been approved. • As set out in the DfE's guidance on 'Providing remote education', pupils who are absent from school and receiving remote education still need to be recorded as absent using the most appropriate absence code. Schools should keep a record of, and monitor pupil's engagement with remote education, but this is not formally tracked in the attendance register 	Attending an approved educational activity (present)
D	Dual Registered at another school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school at which the pupil is scheduled to attend must record the pupil's attendance and absence with the relevant code. • Code D may only be used by either school for a session where the pupil is scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered. 	Not a possible attendance (neither present or absent)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby all unexpected and unexplained absences are promptly followed up 	
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Code	Meaning	Criteria	Statistical Value
C1	Leave of absence - performance or regulated employment abroad	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance licence issued by LA or Body of Persons Approval issued by LA or Justice of peace has given licence for pupil to go abroad for performance or regulated purpose 	Authorised absence
M	Leave of absence for Medical or dental Appointment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agreement in advance Application by parent child normally lives with Minimum time necessary Where pupil is absent at registration 	Authorised absence
J1	Leave of absence for Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agreement in Advance Application by parent child normally lives with In session absence recorded 	Authorised absence
S	Leave of absence for Studying for public examination		Authorised absence
X	Non – Compulsory School age pupil not required to attend school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For part time attendance Absence for timetabled sessions to use appropriate code and not X 	Not a possible attendance (neither present or absent)
C2	Leave of absence – compulsory school age pupil subject to part time timetable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exceptional circumstances if the school and a parent who the pupil normally lives with have agreed that, exceptionally, the pupil should temporarily be educated only part-time. Temporary See Working Together to improve attendance 	Authorised Absence
C	Leave of absence exceptional circumstances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exceptional circumstances No blanket approach School discretion Generally, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance. 	Authorised absence

Code	Meaning	Criteria	Statistical Value
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The pupil is a mobile child, and their parent(s) is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with them. A mobile child is a child of compulsory school age who has no fixed abode and whose parent(s) is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require them to travel from place to place. To help ensure continuity of education for pupils, when their parent(s) is travelling for occupational purposes in England, it is expected that the pupil should attend a school 	Authorised absence

3. If a pupil is absent with leave (NB schools not required to follow regulation 11 in granting a leave of absence should still use the relevant code)

4. Pupil Absent other Authorised reasons

R	Religious Observance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The pupil is absent on a day that is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body the parent(s) belong to (not the parents themselves) 	Authorised Absence
I	Illness (not medical appointment)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The pupil is unable to attend due to illness (both physical and mental health related). Schools should advise parents to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness. 	Authorised Absence
E	Suspended or permanently excluded with no alternative provision made	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The pupil is suspended from school or permanently excluded from school, but their name is still entered in the admission register, and no alternative provision has been made for the pupil to continue their education 	Authorised Absence

5. Pupil Absent – Unavoidable Cause

Code	Meaning	Criteria	Statistical Value
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The pupil is a mobile child, and their parent(s) is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with them. A mobile child is a child of compulsory school age who has no fixed abode and whose parent(s) is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require them to travel from place to place. To help ensure continuity of education for pupils, when their parent(s) is travelling for occupational purposes in England, it is expected that the pupil should attend a school where their parent(s) is travelling and be dual registered at that school and their main school. 	Authorised absence
Code	Meaning	Criteria	Statistical Value

Q	Unable to attend school because of lack of access arrangements	There is a lack of access arrangements for a pupil whose home is in England if— (a) a local authority have a duty to make travel arrangements in relation to the pupil under section 508B(1) of the 1996 Act(13) for the purpose of facilitating the pupil's attendance at the school and have failed to discharge that duty; (b) a local authority have a duty to make travel arrangements in relation to the pupil because of section 508E(2)(c) of the 1996 Act(14) for the purpose of facilitating the pupil's attendance at the school and have failed to discharge that duty; or (c) the school is an independent school that is not a qualifying school and— (i) the school is not within walking distance of the pupil's home; (ii) no suitable arrangements have been made by a local authority for boarding accommodation for the pupil at or near the school; and (iii) no suitable arrangements have been made by a local authority for enabling the pupil to become a registered pupil at a qualifying school nearer to their home.	Not a possible attendance
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not been available	The pupil is unable to attend because the school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport to and from the school that is normally provided for the pupil by the school or local authority is not available	Not a possible attendance
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread travel disruption	The pupil is unable to attend the school because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national, or international emergency	Not a possible attendance
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed	Part of the school premises is unavoidably out of use and the pupil is one of those that the school considers cannot practically be accommodated in those part of the premises that remain in use.	Not a possible attendance
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed	Where a school was planned to be open for a session, but the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g., due to adverse weather), the attendance register is not taken as usual because there is no school session. Instead, every pupil listed in the admission register at the time must be marked with code Y4 to record the fact that the school is closed.	Not a possible attendance
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention	<p>The pupil is unable to attend the school because they are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> in police detention, remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial, or sentencing, or detained under a sentence of detention. <p>A pupil's absence should be recorded under code Y7 (Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause) if they are unable to attend because they are serving a community based (i.e., non-detained) part of a sentence of detention, referral order, or youth rehabilitation order that requires them to be absent during the school day</p>	Not a possible attendance
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law	The pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> contrary to any guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of infection or disease published by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care (or the equivalent in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland), or prohibited by any legislation relating to the incidence or transmission of infection or disease. 	Not a possible attendance

Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause	This code should be used only where something in the nature of an emergency has prevented the pupil from attending the session in question. The unavoidable cause must be something that affects the pupil, not the parent. The fact that a parent has done all they can to secure the attendance of the pupil at school does not, in itself, mean the pupil has been prevented by unavoidable cause. Schools must also record the nature of the unavoidable cause (regulation 10(6))	Not a possible attendance
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6. Absent for unauthorised reasons.

Code	Meaning	Criteria	Statistical Value
G	Holiday not granted by school	The school has not granted a leave of absence and the pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday. A school cannot grant a leave of absence retrospectively. If the parent did not apply in advance, leave of absence should not be granted.	Unauthorised absence
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Where absence is recorded as code N (reason not yet established) in the attendance register, the correct absence code should be entered as soon as the reason is ascertained, but no more than 5 school days after the session (regulation 10(7) to (9)). Code N must not therefore be left on the pupil's attendance record indefinitely; if a reason for absence cannot be established within 5 school days, schools must amend the pupil's record to Code O	Unauthorised absence
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	Where no reason for absence is established or the school is not satisfied that the reason given is one that would be recorded using one of the codes statistically classified as authorised.	Unauthorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Where a pupil has arrived late after the register has closed but before the end of session. Schools should actively discourage late arrival, be alert to patterns of late arrival and seek an explanation from the parent. All schools are expected to set out in their attendance policy the length of time the register will be open, after which a pupil will be marked as absent. This should be the same for every session and not longer than 30 minutes	Unauthorised absence

Administrative Codes

Code	Meaning	Statistical Value
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	NOT COLLECTED
#	Planned whole school closure	NOT COLLECTED

APPENDIX 2

APPLICATION FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL (2025-26)

Pupils attend school for a maximum of 190 days each academic year. Regular attendance is vital for your child's educational progress. The local authority and school expect all parents/guardians to ensure that their children attend school whenever possible. Absences due to holidays, taken during term time, can seriously impact on a pupil's academic attainment.

It is a legal requirement for parents/guardians to obtain the permission of the Headteacher before removing their child from school in order to take **any** leave in term time. Parents do not have an automatic right to take their children out of school for leave during term time. Recent government guidelines have removed the discretion for headteachers agreeing to term-time holiday leave. Any requests for leave of absence need to be submitted before the leave is taken.

If a pupil takes unauthorised term-time leave for **10 consecutive sessions** or more (generally 5 days) they will be subject to a Penalty Notice. The fine for a penalty notice is £80 per child, per parent/carer, increasing to £160 if not paid after 21 days but within 28 days for pupils who are of statutory school age. For second occurrences of unauthorised term-time leave (10 consecutive sessions or more) within a three-year rolling period, the fine is a flat £160 per parent, per child. For the third offence in a three-year rolling period, the referral will be automatically considered for prosecution in relation to Section 444 Education Act 1996.

The legislation only allows the Headteacher to authorise such leave in exceptional circumstances. Even in exceptional circumstances, the following factors may be taken into account when considering an application for leave:

- Will leave at this point in time be detrimental to the pupil's education?
- Is his/her attendance a cause for concern?
- Has he/she already had leave during term time this year?
- Did he/she have leave of absence during term time in the previous school year(s)?
- Does he/she have absences which have been recorded as unauthorised this year?

Exceptional circumstances will be considered on an individual basis. Examples of requests for leave of absence that **do not** meet the criteria of an exceptional circumstance and **will not** be authorised and could be subject to a Penalty Notice fine/prosecution for pupils of statutory school age include: cheaper holidays/flights in the UK or abroad; holidays that overlap the beginning or the end of term; trip of a lifetime; visiting family or friends who have different half term holiday dates; family weddings for more than 1 day or visits to see family abroad; relatives coming to visit; extension of leave if a pupil has not returned to school after an agreed absence if it does not meet grounds for an exceptional circumstance; leave taken due to potential travel disruption.

Should a leave of absence be taken after permission is withheld, then this will be recorded as unauthorised and will appear in both the school register and your child's report. Persistent unauthorised absence may result in the involvement of the Local Authority Attendance Officer and possible legal proceedings.

To apply for a child to be granted leave from school, parents should complete this form and return it to school for consideration well in advance of the proposed leave.

Child's Details			
Name:		Date of Birth:	
Name:		Date of Birth:	
Parent/Guardian Details:			
Parent 1:		Relationship to child:	
Parent 2:		Relationship to child:	
Home address:			

<p>Reasons for the request:</p> <p>Please explain the exceptional circumstances that require a leave of absence during term time.</p>				
First Day of Absence:		/ /	Last Day of Absence:	/ /
Parent's/Guardian signature			Date:	/ /
For school use only				
Headteacher's Decision				
Number of days:		Number of sessions:	% Attendance to date:	
	Unauthorised	Absence unauthorised, not approved by school in line with government guidance. May incur a Fixed Penalty Notice fine if child is above compulsory school age.		
	Authorised	Absence authorised, in line with government guidance due to specific exceptional circumstances .		
Comment:				
Signature of Headteacher:			Date:	