JOHN TAYLOR MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

Early Years to Primary and Secondary to Sixth Form Phases

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

John Taylor Free School

Date ratified by JTMAT Board:		July 2026
Date for review:		July 2027
Date reviewed by Local Governing Body:		September 2026
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John Taylor Mission Statement

"We believe in the power of education to improve lives – and the world"

This statement is at the heart of the John Taylor story. We are driven to ensure that our communities can realise their true potential through learning. This is our mission. To that end, we provide the experiences, resources, structures, and systems to enable all to engage, all to progress, all to achieve. Through the opportunities that our Multi-Academy Trust offers, we extend our mission beyond the school in which it originated.

1. Introduction

JTMAT considers excellent school attendance as paramount to pupils achieving their full potential and therefore, enhancing lifelong outcomes. It is central not only, to academic attainment but in developing children socially, morally, ethically and in enhancing well-being. It is with this in mind, that we set expectations of excellent attendance for all our pupils.

Evidence shows pupils with excellent school attendance are more likely to reach higher standards of achievement and be at less risk of exposure to crime and other safeguarding risks.

Excellent attendance is a learned behaviour. Therefore, we place equal importance on high attendance and excellent punctuality on all our pupils, including those who are not of statutory school age.

We believe that excellent attendance and punctuality in the early years of school develops and establishes attitudes towards school attendance which impacts on future school attendance and ultimately academic success and social and emotional well-being. Similarly, excellent attendance and punctuality post 16 establishes and develops attitudes towards attendance in the workplace and thus lifelong achievements.

Therefore, each child enrolled at each of our schools is expected to attend every day, on time so that they can achieve their full potential. We monitor and manage attendance and punctuality across all year groups according to this policy and statutory guidance. It is acknowledged however, that parents of children who are not of statutory school age cannot be subject to legal processes if their child has poor school attendance.

The DfE's research consistently emphasises the direct correlation between attendance and academic success. Higher attendance rates lead to improved academic performance, as pupils have more opportunities to engage with classroom materials, participate in discussions, and receive timely feedback from teachers (February 2024).

Findings from the Department for Education research report "The link between attendance and attainment in an assessment year published in March 2025" The link between attendance and attainment in an assessment year highlighted:

- At both KS2 and KS4, the higher the 5% attendance band a pupil is in during the assessment year, the more likely they were to achieve a successful outcome in 2022/23.
- At KS2, pupils who attended school nearly every day in Year 6 (with an attendance rate of 95-100%) were 1.3 times more likely to achieve the expected standard in reading, writing and maths compared to pupils who only attended 90-95% of the

time. This means missing just 10 days of year 6 reduced the likelihood of reaching the expected standard by around 25%.

- Pupils who attended nearly every day were 1.8 times more likely to achieve the standard than persistently absent pupils who only attend 85-90% of the time (relating to 4 -6 weeks more time in school).
- At KS2, pupils who attend between 50 and 55% of the time are twice as likely to achieve the expected standard than students who are severely absent (attending less than 50% of sessions).
- A pupil with 60-65% attendance (equating to approximately 4- 6 extra weeks in school) has a four times greater chance of successful outcome than those who attend.

The analysis shows that as the level of attendance in the year of assessment at the end of Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 increases, the likelihood of achieving key attainment outcomes at the end of Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 increases.

The findings confirm the strong link between absence and attainment. Schools can offer a broad range of benefits to children including the opportunities to learn and gain vital qualifications. However, the benefits of school go beyond academic results. They can also be places of social and emotional development. If we want to offer every child the best chance in life, it must start with ensuring that they can regularly attend school.

2. Attendance is everyone's responsibility

Securing excellent school attendance and punctuality and promoting the importance of such, is the responsibility of the whole school community. This includes but is not limited to; JTMAT CEO and Board, Trust Strategic Attendance Manager, school staff (teaching and support), governors, parents, carers, and the pupils themselves. Each school ensures that each member of the school community understands their attendance roles and responsibilities, receives the relevant training required to support excellent attendance and is consistent in their communication with parents and pupils.

Attendance is integral and linked to all aspects of school life

Schools in JTMAT, promote excellent attendance and punctuality in the first instance, by ensuring that pupils and their families are provided with an environment where they feel safe, included, valued, supported, and are inspired by an accessible and innovative curriculum. We recognise that excellent attendance is integral to the school's ethos and culture and that approaches to the curriculum, behaviour management, well-being, inclusivity, and attendance are all inextricably linked and impact upon one another.

Culture of support and inclusivity

Where there are concerns about a child's attendance or punctuality it is our aim to work with our pupils and their families in a supportive manner to improve attendance by removing any barriers. JTMAT and our schools recognise the importance of building strong relationships with our pupils and their families.

Where a pupil has a medical or mental health condition (physical or emotional), a disability, a special educational need or indeed any other factor which may present a barrier to attendance we uphold our expectation of excellent attendance. We endeavour to work with these pupils and their families, taking into account their individual needs, in order to make reasonable and supportive adjustments to facilitate excellent school attendance.

Where parents/carers are facing challenges in getting their child to attend school, they should contact the school in order to seek support and resolve any potential underlying issues so that attendance can be improved. We promote a culture intended to empower older pupils by encouraging them to speak to a trusted adult in school, should they have concerns about attending school or wish to improve their school attendance.

Offering bespoke, individual support, encouragement and making reasonable adjustments to facilitate excellent school attendance, for those facing challenges or over coming barriers, is always our priority.

Use of resources

As part of our commitment to promoting excellent school attendance, schools ensure that attendance support and improvement is appropriately resourced. This may include both financial (for example, effective use of pupil premium funding) and human (deployment of senior leaders, attendance and pastoral staff, external agencies, and professionals) resources.

Celebrating and Incentivising Excellent and Significantly Improved Attendance

John Taylor Free School has individual ways of promoting and incentivising excellent and significantly improved attendance. We demonstrate the benefits of excellent school attendance throughout school life (For example, through displays, assemblies, registration periods and where appropriate through praise and reward to year groups, classes, and individual pupils). Here are some of the strategies we use at John Taylor Free School.

- Excellent and significantly improved attendance will be rewarded via the reward system.
- Parental communication directly via email to acknowledge both excellent and significantly improved attendance.
- Screens around school make reference to the importance of attendance
- Assemblies and our school newsletter reinforce the benefits of excellent attendance

Our Commitment

We are committed to:

- Promoting and modelling high attendance and punctuality and its benefits.
- Ensuring equality and fairness for all.
- Intervening early and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.
- Building strong relationships with families to overcome barriers to attendance.
- Working collaboratively with other schools in the Trust/geographical area, as well as other agencies.
- Ensuring parents/carers follow the framework set out in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that the parent(s)/carer(s) of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any SEND (Special Educational Need and Disability) they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- Ensuring our attendance policy is clear and easily understood by all staff, parents/carers and pupils.
- Regularly monitoring and analysing attendance, punctuality and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require more support.
- Working across schools, MATS (Multi Academy Trusts) and LAs (Local Authorities) to share expertise and collaborate on interventions.

3. Attendance Responsibilities

Improving attendance and punctuality is everyone's business. The barriers to accessing education can be wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates, and are often specific to individual pupils and families. Good attendance and punctuality begin with school being somewhere pupils want to be and therefore the foundation of securing good attendance is that school is a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environment where all pupils are keen and ready to learn. Our school is part of John Taylor Multi-academy Trust, and everyone plays a part in improving school attendance. See below to see the responsibilities that we have:

CEO and Trust Board – including but not limited to:

- Their senior leaders believe that 100% attendance is possible.
- Their strong culture of attendance gives pupils a reason to come into school and the culture is promoted across the school's ethos and policies.
- Pupil voice is a core element of their attendance work.
- They have rigorous consistency in systems and processes.
- They have a strategy for driving attendance improvement.
- They do what is right, in line with their values.
- They root their work in belonging and relationships.
- They deliberately invest in capacity and ensure school staff receive adequate training on attendance.
- They reinforce expectations with compassion.
- Ensuring school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- Regularly reviewing attendance data, discussing, and challenging trends, and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most.
- Sharing effective practice on attendance management and improvement across schools.
- Providing support, challenge, and accountability to the Trust Strategic Attendance Manager regarding attendance across the trust.
- Having an understanding of the attendance trends across the trust and the actions in place to improve/sustain high attendance including for vulnerable groups.
- Having an understanding of trust attendance performance in comparison to national averages and progress towards targets.
- Receiving regular reports on an attendance from the Trust Strategic Attendance Manager.

Trust Strategic Attendance Manager – including but not limited to:

- Providing strategic leadership across the Trust on the national attendance agenda and leading on the development of, and compliance with, the Trust's Strategic Plan for Attendance.
- Leading on a strategy that supports pupils and families to ensure at least good attendance and tackle barriers to attending across the Trust, it's schools, specific cohorts of pupils and individual pupils.
- Ensuring that each school in the Trust consistently implements current statutory guidance, legislation, JTMAT Policy, procedures and ethos.
- Advising and guiding the CEO, school staff and parents/carers.
- Developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing the Trust's Strategic Plan for Attendance.
- Setting and monitoring overall Trust and individual school targets for attendance including vulnerable groups.
- Holding schools within the Trust to account for compliance with attendance policies, processes, and strategies.

- Accountable for attendance data, developing and implementing robust data collection and analysis to identify attendance patterns and trends, providing recommendations on action.
- Designing and implementing systems for monitoring compliance across the Trust
- Reporting to the CEO, Trust Board, and other relevant groups within the Trust.

Governing Bodies and Link Governors – including but not limited to:

- To take an active role in attendance and punctuality improvement, support their school(s) to prioritise attendance, and work together with leaders to set whole school cultures.
- Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- Use data to understand patterns of attendance, compare with other local schools, identify areas of progress and where greater focus is needed.
- Ensure that school staff receive training on attendance.
- Providing professional support, challenge, and accountability to the Head Teacher/ School Strategic Lead for Attendance regarding attendance.
- Having an understanding of school attendance performance in comparison to national averages and progress towards targets.
- Receiving regular reports on an attendance from the Head Teacher/School Strategic Lead for Attendance.
- Ensuring the consistent implementation of this policy and that is does not discriminate on any grounds.
- Handling any complaints regarding this policy in line with the school's complaint procedures.

Head Teacher and School Strategic Lead for Attendance – including but not limited to:

- Have a clear school attendance policy on the school website which all staff, pupils and parents/carers understand.
- Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance and punctuality.
- Accurately complete admission and attendance registers.
- Have robust daily processes to follow up absence.
- Regularly monitor data to identify patterns and trends and understand which pupils and pupil cohorts to focus on.
- Developing, implementing, and reviewing strategic approach and action plans to address areas of development/improving attendance.
- Monitoring the impact of attendance interventions.
- Ensuring the effective deployment of resources to promote excellent attendance and punctuality across the school, vulnerable groups and for individual pupils.
- Ensuring the accurate and timely reporting of attendance data to the Trust Strategic Attendance Manager.
- Ensuring that relevant staff with key responsibilities (e.g., PP, EAL, SENDCos, heads of year etc) are aware of attendance performance and are accountable for excellent attendance within their areas of responsibility.
- Communicating with pupils and parents/carers regarding attendance, including individual pupil attendance.
- Ensuring that parents/carers are aware of their legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly to facilitate their child's legal right to a full-time education.
- Informing the local authority of Children Missing Education (CME), children withdrawn by parents to Elective Home Educate and pupils being deleted from the admissions register.

4. Working together with parents to improve attendance

As a Trust we aim for **ALL** our pupils' attendance to be in line or above national averages - **no more than 5 days absence in any one year.** To achieve this, we are committed to successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance, at home and in school. We aim to:

Expect – aspire to high standards from all pupils and parents and build a culture of can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.

Monitor – we use 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.

Listen and understand – when a pattern is spotted, we will discuss this with pupils and parents so we can listen and understand the barriers to attendance and agree how we can all work together to resolve them.

Facilitate support – we will remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.

Formalise support – where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, we will work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances we may do this by formalising support through an attendance contract or education supervision order, which is the local authority's decision.

Enforce – where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, we may request support through the local authority through a statutory intervention, a penalty notice in line with the National Framework or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

In addition to our aims above we focus on the prevention of poor attendance through good whole school attendance management. We identify opportunities for early intervention to reduce absence before it becomes habitual. For those pupils who are persistently or severely absent from school we look at targeted interventions to re-engage them in their education.

Attendance and punctuality expectations of pupils and parents/carers

We believe it is important to explain to parent(s)/carer(s)s the impact of missing days when pupils miss their education because of non-attendance. The table below shows this impact, in the percentage of attendance, the number of days, the number of weeks and the number of lessons missed. There are 365 days in a year, there are 190 school days and 176 days to go on holiday, go on trips and spend time with family.

In addition, when pupils are regularly late to school they miss vital parts of the education, particularly at the beginning of the school day. The table below shows the impact of this.

Attendance Matters			
Attendance during one school year	Equals approximate days absence	Which is approximately weeks absence	Which is approximately lessons missed
95%	9 days	2 weeks	40 lessons
90%	19 days	4 weeks	80 lessons
85%	29 days	6 weeks	120 lessons
80%	38 days	8 weeks	160 lessons
75%	48 days	10 weeks	200 lessons
70%	57 days	11.5 weeks	230 lessons
65%	67 days	13.5 weeks	270 lessons

Punctuality Matters		
Minutes per day during the school year		Approximate number of days teaching lost in a year
5 mins	=	3 days
10 mins		6 days
15 mins		9 days
20 mins		12 days
30 mins		18 days

We expect parents/carers to:

- Ensure their child attends every day and on time the school is open except when a statutory reason applies.
- Notify the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent (e.g. sickness).
- Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance.
- Book any medical appointments around the school day where possible.
- Provide up to date and accurate contact information.
- Provide the school with more than one emergency contact.
- Keep in regular contact with the school during a period of absence.
- Contact the school for support if school attendance/punctuality is a challenge.

We expect children and young people to:

- Attend lessons and any alternative provision as arranged by the school.
- Be punctual to school and to lessons.
- Talk to an adult in school if they find attending school/being punctual a challenge.

Children who do not attend every day

Where parents/carers decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at school.

If a child of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly at a school at which they are registered, or at a place where alternative provision is provided for them, their parents/carers may be guilty of an offence and can be prosecuted by the local authority.

A child is of compulsory school age from the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday until the last Friday in June in the academic year in which they become 16, provided that their 16th birthday falls before the start of the next school year.

The consequences of failing to secure a child's regular attendance

- Parents/carers who fail to comply with a school attendance order issued by the local authority to require a parent to get their child registered at a named school (under section 443 of the Education Act 1996). This may result in a fine of up to level 3 (£1,000).
- Parents/carers who fail to secure their child's regular attendance at a school, for which there are 2 separate offences: section 444(1) where a parent(s)/carer(s) fails to secure the child's regular attendance; and section 444(1A) where a parent knows that the child is failing to attend school regularly and fails to ensure the child does so. The section 444(1) offence may result in a fine of up to level 3 (£1,000) and the section 444(1A) offence my result in a fine of up to level 4 (£2,500), and/or a community order or imprisonment of up to 3 months.
- Parents/carers who fail to secure the regular attendance of their child at a place where the local authority or governing body has arranged alternative provision (under sections 444 and 444ZA). This may result in a fine of up to level 3 (£1,000), or if the parent is found to have known the child was not attending regularly and failed to ensure that they did so, a fine of up to level 4 (£2,500), and/or a community order or imprisonment of up to 3 months.
- Parents/carers who persistently fail to comply with directions under an Education Supervision Order (under Schedule 3 to the Children Act 1989) or breach a Parenting Order or directions under the order (under section 375 of the Sentencing Act 2020). These may result in a fine of up to level 3 (£1,000).
- Parents/carers who take their child out of school for an unauthorised term time leave or where there is a total of 10 sessions or more of unauthorised absence in a rolling 10-week period may be issued with a penalty notice fine (more details on page 30).

Both parents, all natural parents, whether they are married or not, all those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person, those who have day to day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after the child) are equally liable for ensuring that their child attends school regularly and on time, regardless of who the child resides with or who is the main carer.

Therefore, they may both be contacted when deemed necessary in managing attendance and punctuality. Similarly, where it is necessary to enforce statutory action (such as issuing of Penalty Notices) both parents/carers will be liable.

5. How absence and attendance is categorised

The national attendance and absence codes are used by the school and the decision of which code to use is that of the Headteacher. Applying the codes enable schools to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way and are used to collect statistics through the School Census system. For more information, please see Working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024).

There are two different types of absences:

An **authorised absence** is where: -

1) a child is too ill to attend school
   - after a period of 5 days and medical evidence has been provided.
   - for a child who has already been absent from **school for 5 days or more** and medical evidence is provided.
   - medical evidence is provided for absence immediately before or after a period of school holiday.
   - medical evidence is provided where there is a regular pattern to illness absence.
2) Evidence is provided for exceptional medical appointments.
3) The absence is unavoidable and exceptional.
4) A leave of absence for exceptional circumstances has been granted by the school.

An **unauthorised absence** is where: -

1) medical evidence is not provided for an illness absence of **school for 5 days or more** and there is a regular pattern of illness absence**.**
2) medical evidence is not provided for a child who has already been absent due to illness from **school for 5 days or more** and where there is a regular pattern of illness absence**.**
3) medical evidence is not provided for illness absence immediately before or after a period of school holiday.
4) the school considers that the absence was not unavoidable or exceptional.
5) a leave of absence request is declined but still taken (this includes holidays in term time).
6) Reasons for absence have been falsified.

6. Absence from school due to illness

All pupils should attend school unless they are too ill to do so. Illness may be either a physical illness or a mental health/emotional wellness issue. The school will request reasonable medical evidence in cases where they need clarification to accurately record absence in the attendance register. Only where the school has genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity or there is a regular pattern of illness should medical evidence be requested to support the absence. It is the responsibility of the parent(s)/carer(s) to provide this information to the school.

However, illnesses may not mean a child cannot attend school and parent(s)/carer(s) should liaise with the school. Additional guidance can be found using the link Should I keep my child off school checklist poster UK Health Security Agency.

Where a child requires medication throughout the school day to enable them to attend school parents/carers should liaise with the school who may make suitable arrangements in line with the school's 'Administration of Medication Policy'. If there are circumstances effecting a child's health and ability to attend school parents/carers should again liaise with the school so that reasonable adaptations can be made (For example, in hay fever seasons it is not necessary to keep a child at home when school may be able to make adaptions).

Where a pupil has significant health or medical needs schools may develop a personalised 'Health Care Plan' which it will implement to ensure that the pupil continues to have excellent school attendance. In this circumstance the school will also adhere to their Allergy Protocol and JTMAT Allergy Policy 2026.

Schools encourage parents/carers to notify them on the first and every day the child is unable to attend due to illness. Schools record absences as authorised where pupils cannot attend due to illness (both physical and mental health related).

Schools should authorise absences due to illness unless they have genuine cause for concern about the veracity of an illness. If there is frequent or prolonged absence or the school has a genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of illness, they can request that parents provide supporting medical evidence to support illness. Schools can record the absence as unauthorised if not satisfied of the authenticity of the illness but should advise parents of their intention.

Acceptable, cost-free supporting medical evidence generally includes:

- hospital or clinic letters
- dated appointment cards from the GP, dentist or hospital
- a copy of a recent prescription or medication packaging bearing the child's name and date
- digital health records such as screenshots from the NHS App or an email or SMS from a healthcare provider confirming an appointment
- 111 or Nurse consultations
- Consultant letters
- Records of previous consultations
- Hospital discharge letters or summaries

Please note the school does not advise parents to request formal, paid GP fit note as supporting medical evidence.

Further information can be found here: DfE external document template

All pupils should return to school as soon as they are well enough.

Mental Health and Absence from School

Many children will experience normal but difficult emotions that make them nervous about attending school, such as worries about friendships, schoolwork, examinations or variable moods. It is important to note that these pupils are still expected to attend school regularly. Staff will however recognise that there are attendance challenges where a child has a social, emotional or mental health issue, particularly a severe issue for which the child is receiving clinical treatment.

School staff will work quickly with parent(s)/carer(s) to ensure that such circumstances do not act as a barrier to regular attendance. Any associated anxiety about attending should be mitigated as much as possible by creating a plan to implement reasonable adjustments to alleviate specific barriers to attendance. The school will facilitate support for children where a mental health issue is affecting attending such as:

- Trusted adult periodically checking how the pupil is feeling
- Enabling the pupil to access a quiet space during unstructured times
- Additional pastoral care support which could include counselling
- Referral to the School Nursing Team or the local Mental Health Support Team (MHST)
- Restorative approaches where there are peer worries
- Exit cards to use in particular lessons
- Safe space to access when the pupil is feeling anxious
- Early Help Intervention
- Team around the Family discussions

Pupils who are too ill to attend school

Pupils with long term illness or other health needs may need additional support to continue education, such as alternative provision arranged by the local authority. Local authorities are responsible for arranging suitable education for children of compulsory school age who, because of health reasons, would otherwise not receive suitable education. This applies whether or not the child is registered at a school and whatever type of school they attend.

The education must be full-time or as close to full-time as the child's health allows. DfE's statutory guidance on ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs sets out that local authorities should provide education as soon as it is clear that the child will be away from school for 15 days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative. Local authorities should have a named officer responsible for the education of children with additional health needs.

7. Other absence from school

There are very few circumstances where other absence from school will be authorised.

Medical Appointments

Schools encourage parents/carers to make appointments outside of school hours. Where this is not possible, they should get the school's agreement in advance, and the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment. Parents/carers will be asked to provide evidence of medical appointments which fall inside the school day.

Hospital Appointments

Schools will ask parents/carers to provide evidence of hospital appointments which fall inside the school day. Parents/carers should avoid taking the child out for the entire school day for an appointment when it is practical for them to attend for part of the day. If the school considers that the child could have attended for part of the day but is absent for the whole day a proportionate unauthorised absence will be recorded.

Requests for Leave of Absence – exceptional circumstances

Requests for leave during term time should be made at **least 2 weeks in advance** of the event and in writing using the Leave of Absence Request Form provided by the school. Retrospective approval for absence cannot be granted. The Headteacher will review each request for term time leave individually and will authorise if there are exceptional circumstances. Parents/carers do not have the right of appeal if a request for a leave of absence is declined, the head teacher's decision is final. The school will not authorise a request for leave of absence:

- during periods of public examinations or internal school assessments, which the pupil is scheduled to sit.
- for holidays during term time regardless of circumstances.
- For pupils with complex needs for the purpose of avoiding busy holiday periods

Where leave of absence is NOT authorised and parents/carers decide to take pupils out of school despite the school's decision, absence will be recorded as unauthorised and subject to a penalty notice (fine).

If the school grants a leave of absence request and subsequently obtains evidence that indicates an application was falsified, the school reserves the right to amend the child's

attendance records to record the absence as unauthorised and apply for the issuing of a fixed penalty notice.

Where a pupil fails to return to school after an agreed period of leave of absence, absence will be recorded as unauthorised, a penalty notice (fine) requested, and they may be reported to the Local Authority as 'A Child Missing in Education' and potentially lose their place at the school.

Suspected Unauthorised Term-Time Leave Disguised as Illness

Where a pupil is absent from school for **more than four consecutive school days** due to reported illness, and the school has **reasonable grounds to believe** that the absence may be due to **unauthorised term-time leave**, the school reserves the right to:

- Request **supporting medical evidence** to support the illness claim (e.g. GP appointment card, prescription, hospital letter).
- Record the absence as **unauthorised** if satisfactory evidence is not provided.
- Undertake a home visit.
- Notify parents/carers in writing of the school's concerns and the potential consequences of unauthorised absence.
- Refer the matter to the Local Authority for consideration of a Penalty Notice or other enforcement action, in line with statutory guidance.

Parents/carers are reminded that term-time holidays are not permitted unless authorised in advance by the Headteacher under exceptional circumstances.

Absences due to religious observance

A request for leave of absence wherever possible should be made 2 weeks prior to the date of the religious observance. As a general rule 'a day exclusively set apart from religious observance' is a day when the pupil's parents/carers would be expected by the religious body to which they belong to stay away from their employment in order to mark the occasion. The trust will not authorise further days in addition to the day exclusively set apart for religious observance.

Absences for Elite Sporting Events and Pathways

Elite sport is sport at the highest level of competition, national and/or international. Where an elite sporting organisation requires a pupil to participate in a weekly scheduled training session or event, a leave of absence form should be completed by the parent(s)/carers(s) and accompanied by an official supporting letter from the relevant sporting organisation. This letter should confirm the selection of the pupil in an elite performance squad or pathway and the necessity to regularly train during the school day in order to be an ongoing member of that squad/pathway. The request for this type of leave is considered by a member of the senior leadership team and will be reviewed on a termly basis.

Requests will not be considered from parent(s)/carer(s) without the required evidence as outlined above. The school is not able to authorise absence for extra training sessions when not requested/required by the organisation who have selected the pupil.

If the request is approved the school will contact the sporting organisation directly for additional information such as evidence of their safeguarding procedure and confirmation that the necessary vetting checks have been undertaken.

Absences for participating in a regulated performance

A school can grant leaves of absence for pupils to undertake employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours. The school can only do so where the local authority has granted a licence for the pupil to take part in a performance which is regulated by section 37(2) of the Children and Young Persons Act 1963. Where a pupil does not need a licence for such a performance because there is a Body of Persons Approval (BOPA) covering the pupil and this has been issued by the local authority in whose area the performance will take place. Whilst the school is able to grant leaves of absence on these occasions attendance will be monitored and where this becomes of concern, they may contact to local authority who granted the licence.

Children Missing in Education

Where a pupil has been absent from school for a period of **20** consecutive school days without authorisation or has not returned within **10** days after an unauthorised (requested) absence a pupil can be removed from the admissions register when the school and LA have failed to establish the whereabouts of the pupil.

Part-time timetables

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs.

The school can grant a leave of absence in some instances to temporarily reduce the timetable of a pupil of compulsory school age to part-time, if the school and a parent(s)/carer(s) who the pupil normally lives with have agreed that.

The pupil will temporarily be educated only part-time for a limited amount of time and the arrangements will be agreed with the parent, pupil and school and the pupil will be expected to attend the school based on what has been agreed. This is not a long-term arrangement and will be reviewed regularly to work towards the pupil attending a full time.

8. Day to Day Procedures

Attendance Registers

Schools take an attendance register at the start of each morning session and once during the afternoon session. The school uses Bromcom information management system to ensure the accurate recording of attendance information, the ease of data analysis and sharing.

Attendance registers are legal documents and are preserved for a period of 6 years.

The school uses the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are recorded in a consistent way.

Attendance registers are not amended or altered unless the reason for absence is established after the register has closed. Any amendments to the register include the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for amendment, the date of amendment and the name and role of the person who made the amendment.

Morning Registration

The school gates open to welcome pupils at 8:10am and close at 8:50am. Pupils arriving after the gates have closed should:

- Press the button at the main pedestrian gate to enter the school site.
- If arriving between 8:50am – 9:00am* (students should enter the building via the side gate and sign in with the Attendance team and provide a reason for being late)
- If arriving after 9:00am students sign in at reception using the sign in screens providing reason for being late. Pupils who are late, after the gates have closed, are marked as late before the register closes (L code).

Morning registration is open from 8:50. Pupils arriving after registration closes (after 9:10), are marked as late after register closes (U code). This is an unauthorised absence and negatively impacts a pupil's attendance percentage.

Afternoon Registration

Afternoon registration is open from 1:40pm (1:25pm on a Wednesday). Pupils arriving after registration closes after 1:50pm (1:35pm on a Wednesday), are marked as late after register closes (U code). This is an unauthorised absence and negatively impacts a pupils attendance percentage.

Lesson Registration

In secondary schools, attendance and punctuality registers are also taken for individual lessons.

Staff will email the Attendance team if a student has not arrived but has present marks earlier in the day. The attendance officer (Mrs Wiles) will communicate this with the member of staff on duty who will locate the student and reintegrate the student back into the lesson.

If a student cannot be located, the member of the staff on duty will seek support from student support, progress leaders and the senior leadership team to carry out a thorough and systematic search of the premises.

If the student has not been located after a thorough and systematic search, parents/carers will be notified and, if possible, asked to support in contacting the student.

All the above actions are carried out promptly and in a timely manner.

Leaving the Premises During the School Day

Any student leaving the school premises must sign out via the main Reception and indicate the reason. Students leaving for any pre-planned appointments will be required to provide evidence. Students in Year 7 – 11 will require collecting by a parent if they are leaving the site during the school day. Staff will communicate in advance with parents of those students who require collection due to illness.

Notifying the school of a child's absence

Parents/carers must notify school on the first and every day the child is unable to attend school by 9:00am.

Parents/carers must give detailed reasons for absence. For example, 'child has a throat infection/been sick etc' rather than just 'unwell/poorly'.

Name of person absence should be reported to: Allison Wiles (Attendance Officer)
Contact Details: attendance@johntaylorfreeschool.co.uk / 01283 899891.

Where a child (including those of non-statutory school age) is absent from school and parents/carers have not contacted the school to inform them of the reason for absence, the school will record an unauthorised absence and follow safeguarding procedures to ascertain the reason for absence and whereabouts of the pupil. This may involve the school making contact with parents/carers and other named contacts on record. If by the third day of absence no contact has been made the school will carry out a home visit and may report the absence as a safeguarding concern or to the police.

Where there are pre-existing concerns about the safety or well- being of a pupil the school may carry out a home visit on the first day of absence. Where there are serious concerns about the safety and well-being of a pupil whose reason for absence is not known the school may contact the police, local authority, or children social care.

9. The relationship between safeguarding and absence

In order to carry out Safeguarding responsibilities, when a pupil is absent from school for more than 5 days a member of school staff will be required to carry out a safe and well check-in on the child.

Home visits are important in helping the school to make contact with all new or hard to reach families. They are particularly useful as they enable parents, carers or guardians to have contact with school, but in their own environment.

The safeguarding duty of schools

- Pupils are refusing to come to school.
- When there are attendance issues/concerns.
- When pupils are being educated at home.
- When all other means of contact with the family has failed.
- To try and establish that a child is safe if they are absent from school and attempts to contact parents, carers or guardians have not elicited a response and we have any welfare or safeguarding concerns for the pupil.
- To work with parent(s)/carer(s) or guardians to support a child with an attendance issue.
- To collect from or drop off a child where there are concerns for a child's welfare if they travelled by other means.
- To drop off or collect work for a child when they are completing schoolwork from home e.g. following a suspension, exclusion, or medical issue.
- To visit a child who has been off school for a period of time, for example due to medical issues, so that they do not feel isolated from school.
- To investigate situations where there are suspicions that someone may be on holiday contrary to earlier indications.
- Where there are safeguarding concerns about a pupil – on the first day of absence where no reason for absence has been ascertained.
- Where there are no safeguarding concerns about a pupil – on the third day of absence where no reason for absence has been ascertained.
- For pupils who are absent from school for 3 days where no reason for absence has been ascertained, this can be completed earlier if there are concerns raised, particularly during the first half term of a new academic year.
- Where a child is absent from school due to illness the school will contact the parent by telephone on the fourth consecutive day of absence to discuss plans for

the child to return to school. If the child does not return by the sixth day a home visit will be arranged by the school.

Specific examples

- **Long term illness**- Where a child is absent from school for a prolonged period, school staff must ensure they see the child at least weekly. This can be completed remotely but staff must ensure they see the child, not just the parent(s)/carer(s).
- **Unauthorised holiday**- Home visits or remote checks are not required for pupils who have requested a leave of absence, either authorised or unauthorised, *unless there are specific safeguarding concerns.*
- **Child in hospital**- Where a child is hospitalised it is appropriate for a member of staff to liaise with medical professionals to establish the wellbeing and safety of the child.
- **Section 19**- Where a child is receiving Section 19 education provision from the Local Authority a virtual check-in should be completed on a weekly basis by school staff and times and dates arranged with the parent at the commencement of the provision. A home visit will be conducted to meet with the child and parent once every half term. It is the expectation that the school will have completed the appropriate documentation prior to the Section 19 commencing. Please refer to the JTMAT Off Site Education Guidance.

10. Communication

Parents/Carers Communication

Good attendance and punctuality start with close and productive relationships with parents and pupils. In working in partnership with parents/carers, schools can discuss the link between attendance and attainment and wider wellbeing, and challenge parents' views where they have misconceptions about what 'good' attendance looks like.

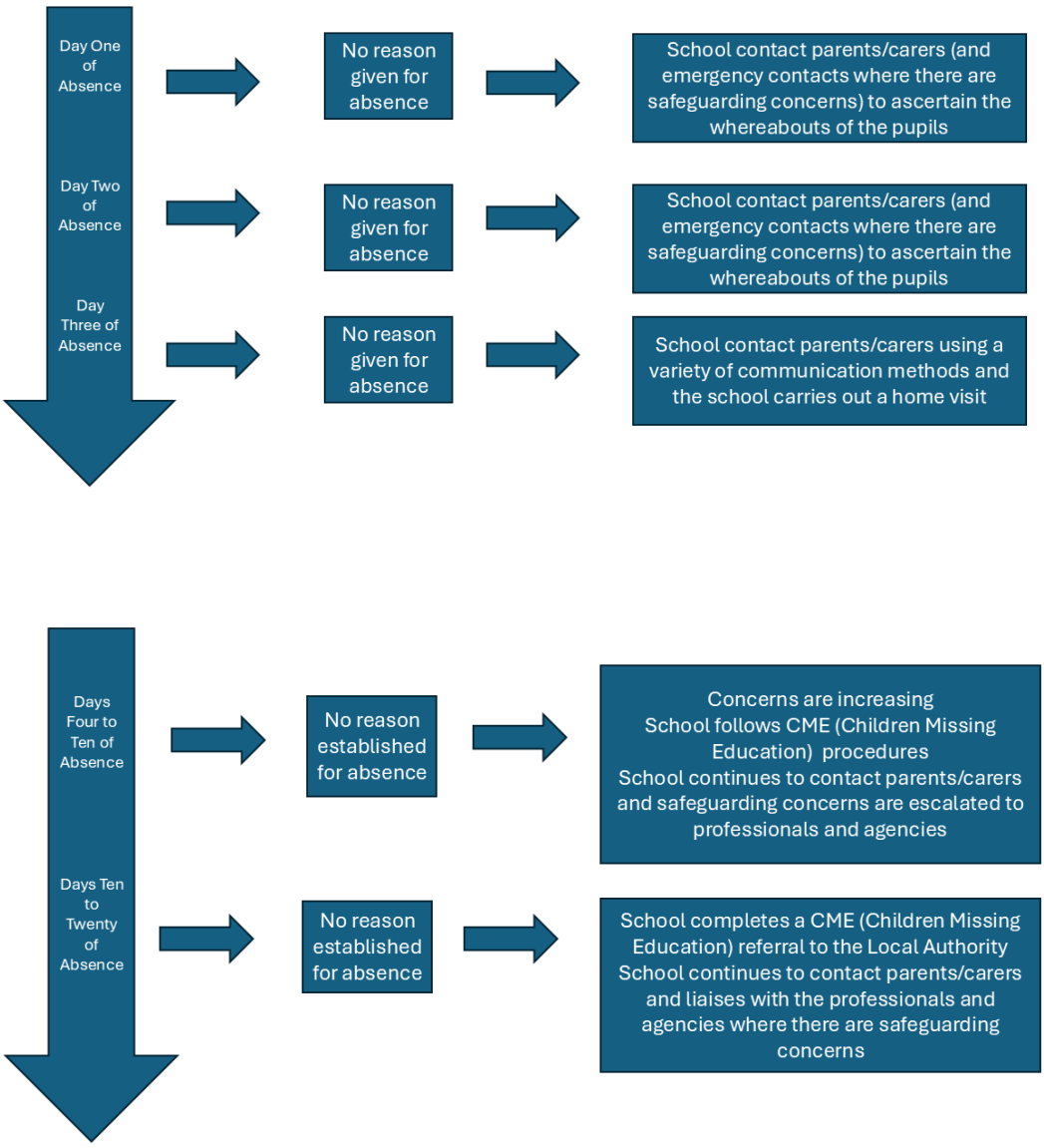
In order to ensure the school has effective procedures for managing attendance and absence the school and trust will follow a 'Graduated Response'. Building positive relationships with parents/carer is important so that when a pupil is absent from school.

Below is a diagram of the contact a parent(s)/carer(s) can expect from the school when their child is absent, and no reason has been provided. The school is responsible for adhering to safeguarding protocols and where they have concerns, they are expected to take advice from either Staffordshire Education Safeguarding Advice Service/Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Partnership.

Parent communication flow chart

Prior to contacting the parents/carers on the first day of absence all information available to the school regarding the pupil's circumstances are fully considered and understood.

Absence Communication Flow Chart



11. The John Taylor MAT Graduated Response from Early Years to Post-16

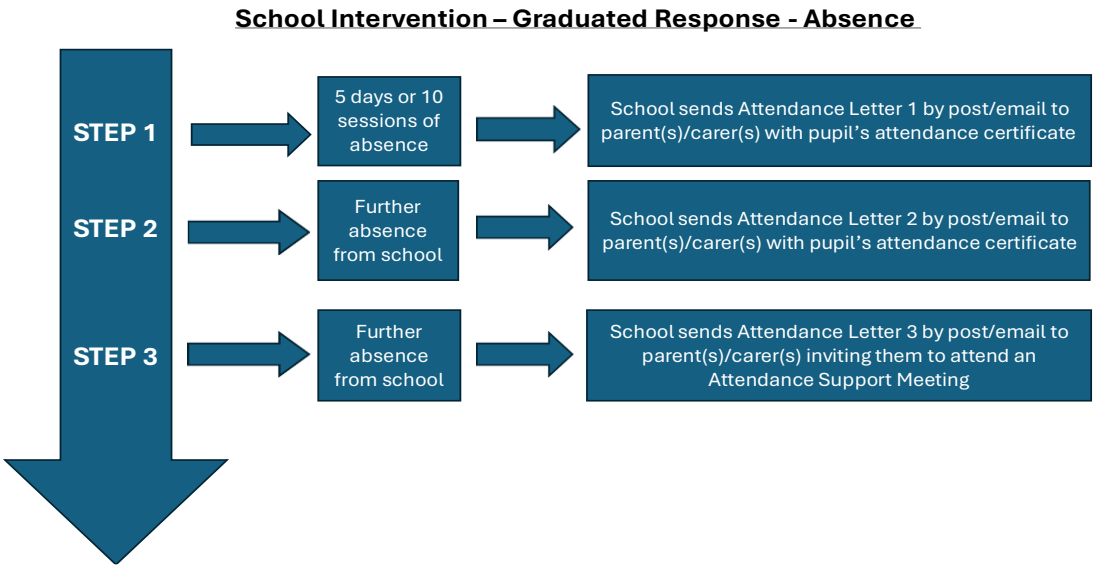
Our school aims to work to cultivate strong, respectful relationships with parents and families so that we can build trust and positive relationships. Open and honest communication is maintained with pupils and their families about the expectations of school life, attendance, and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them. The school liaises with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, e.g. local policing teams, children social care and early help team from the local authority.

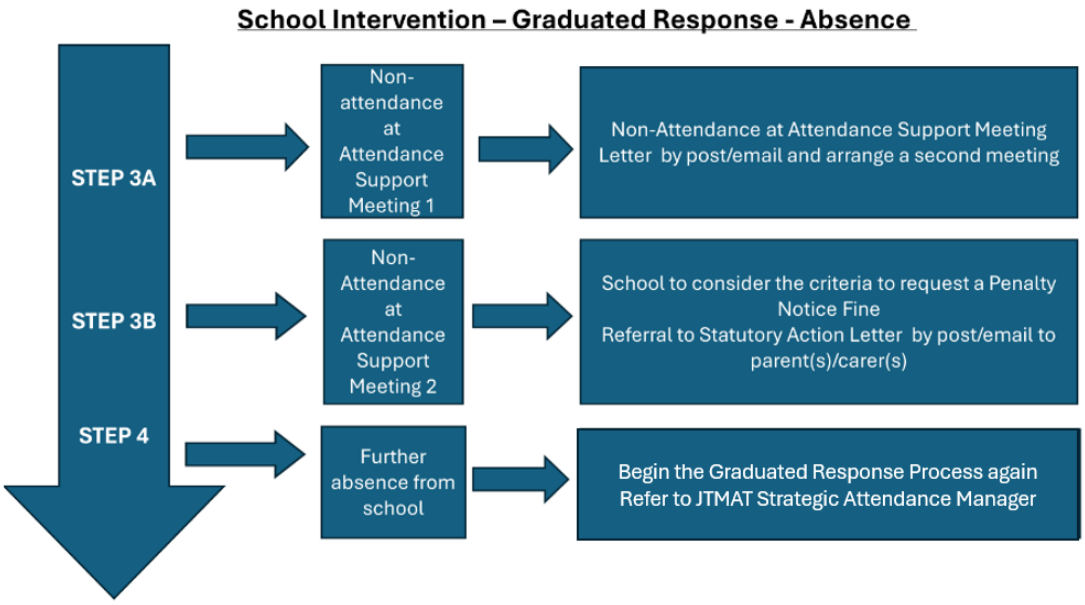
In our school we use the Graduated Response to manage attendance. The flow chart below shows the actions that John Taylor Free School takes as the number of days that a pupil is absent increases. During the first half term of a new academic year some actions

may be taken earlier to reduce the risk of the pupil becoming persistently absent. National data shows that pupils who miss school early are much more likely to struggle with attendance later. Analysis of attendance data shows that, of pupils who had at least one day of absence in the first week of the 2024 to 2025 academic year, over half (57.4%) went on to be persistently absent.

School intervention process

Prior to commencing Step 1 all information available to the school regarding the pupil's circumstances are fully considered and understood.



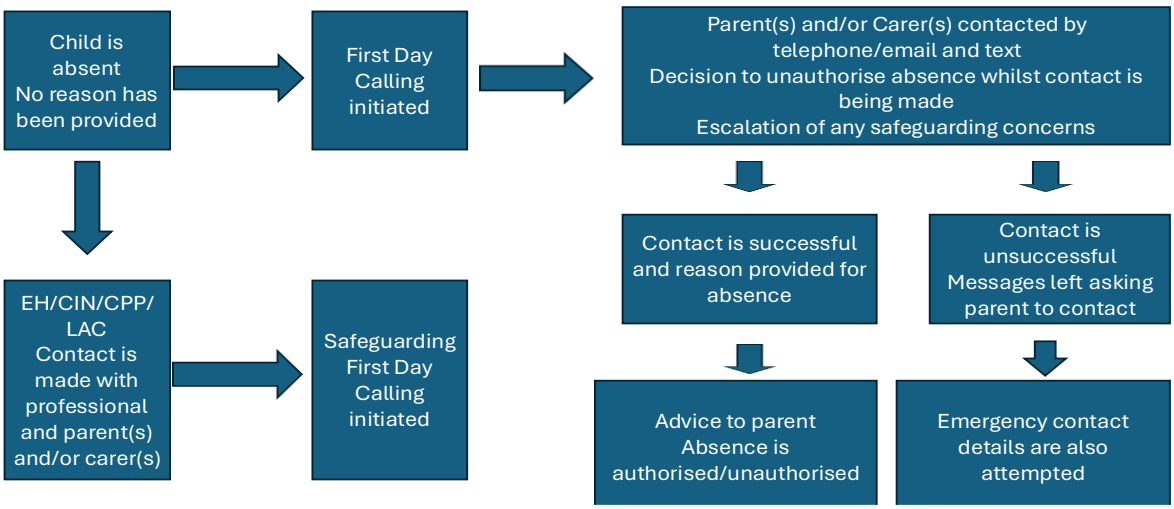


First Day Calling Process

In addition, our school operates a First Day Calling process for when a pupil is absent, and no reason has been provided by the parents/carers for absence. The school ensures there are two sets of emergency contact details for each pupil wherever possible to ensure the school has additional options for getting in touch with adults responsible for a pupil where the pupil is absent without notification or authorisation.

Prior to contacting the parents/carers on the first day of absence all information available to the school regarding the pupil's circumstances are fully considered and understood.

First Day Calling Process



When reasons for absence have not been provided

When reasons have not been provided by the parents/carers for unexplained absence from school it is important for the school to contact quickly to speak with you about the reasons. It may be that the school can offer some additional help or support in some way to address barriers to attendance. For example:

- Considers if an Early Help Assessment is appropriate.
- To offer support through an Attendance Support Plan.
- Send a letter asking for reasons for the absence(s).
- Invitation to attend a meeting in school.
- Suggest referring to a voluntary agency or community group.

In our school, we have additional support for pupils who have barriers to attending school regularly.

All pupils and parents/carers are urged to contact the school if they feel that they are facing challenges to ensure their child attends regularly. In the first instance you should contact the members of staff named on the front page of the policy.

Reporting an absence from school

For reporting a child's absence parents/carers should contact:

Contact Details: attendance@johntaylorfreeschool.co.uk / 01283 899891,
Parents/carers must notify school on the first day the child is unable to attend school by 9:00am. Parents must give detailed reasons for absence. For example, 'child has a throat infection/been sick etc' rather than just 'unwell/poorly'.

We want to ensure that parents/carers are aware of their legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and to facilitate their child's legal right to a full-time education – parents/carers will be made aware that this means their child must attend school every day that it is open, save for in certain circumstances, e.g., sickness or absences that have been authorised by the headteacher in advance. The school regularly

inform parents/carers about their child's levels of attendance, absence, and punctuality, and will ensure that parents are aware of the benefits that regular attendance at school can have for their child educationally, socially and developmentally.

If a pattern of absence becomes problematic, the school works collaboratively with the pupil and their parents/carers to improve attendance by addressing the specific barriers that prevent the pupil from being able to attend school regularly. The school always takes into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for pupil absence and will approach families to offer support rather than immediately reach for punitive approaches.

Where these barriers are related to the pupil's experience in school, e.g., bullying, the attendance officer works with the headteacher and any relevant school staff, e.g. the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator (SENDCo), to address this. Where the barriers are outside of the school's control, e.g., they are related to issues within the pupil's family, the school liaises with any relevant external agencies or authorities, e.g., local policing teams, children's services and early help teams and will encourage parents to access support that they may need.

Supporting pupils with SEND and/or health conditions

We recognise that pupils with SEND and/or health conditions, including mental health issues, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers, and will incorporate robust procedures to support pupils who find attending school difficult.

In line with the SEND Policy and Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy, the school ensures that reasonable adjustments are made for pupils with disabilities to reduce barriers to attendance, in line with any EHCP plans or IHCPs that have been implemented. The school secures additional support from external partners to help bolster attendance where appropriate.

The contact details for our SENDCo can be found on the front page of this policy.

Supporting pupils with mental health and safeguarding concerns

Where the school has concerns that a pupil's non-attendance may be related to mental health issues, parents/carers are contacted to discuss the issue and whether there are any contributory factors to their child's lack of attendance. Where staff have a mental health concern about a pupil that is also a safeguarding concern, they inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead, and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is followed. All pupils are supported with their mental health in accordance with the school's Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy.

The contact details for our Designated Safeguarding Lead can be found on the front page of this policy.

If a pupil is unable to attend school for long periods of time due to their health, the school will:

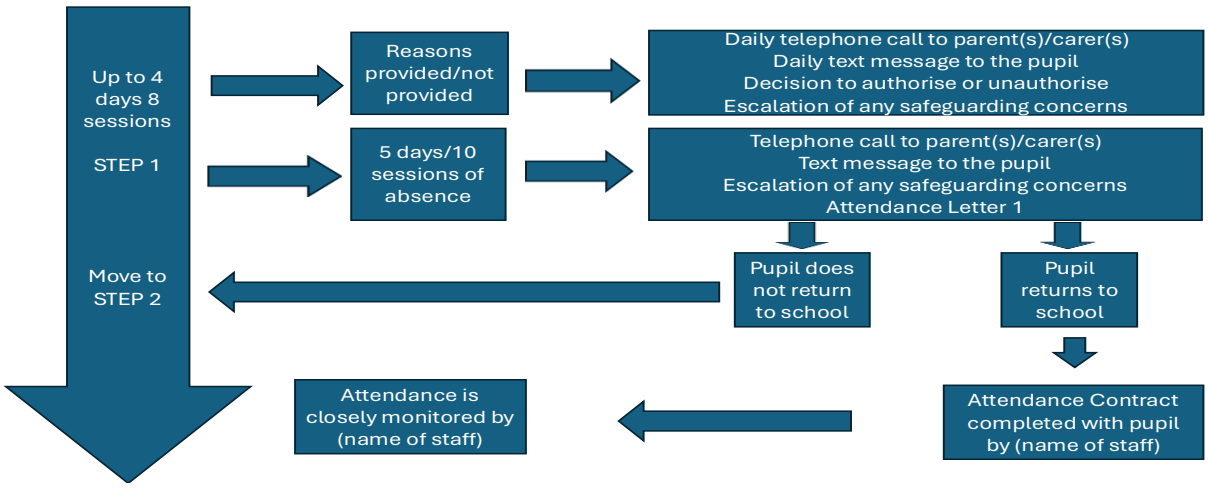
- Inform the Local Authority if a pupil is likely to be away from the school for more than **15** school days.
- Provide the Local Authority with information about the pupil's needs, capabilities, and programme of work.
- Help the pupil reintegrate at school when they return.
- Make sure the pupil is kept informed about school events and clubs.
- Encourage the pupil to stay in contact with other pupils during their absence.

The school implements an Attendance Support Plan to help any pupils with SEND and/or health issues cope with the stress and anxiety that attending school may cause them. Such plans will be regularly monitored and reviewed until the pupil is attending school as normal and there have been signs of significant improvement.

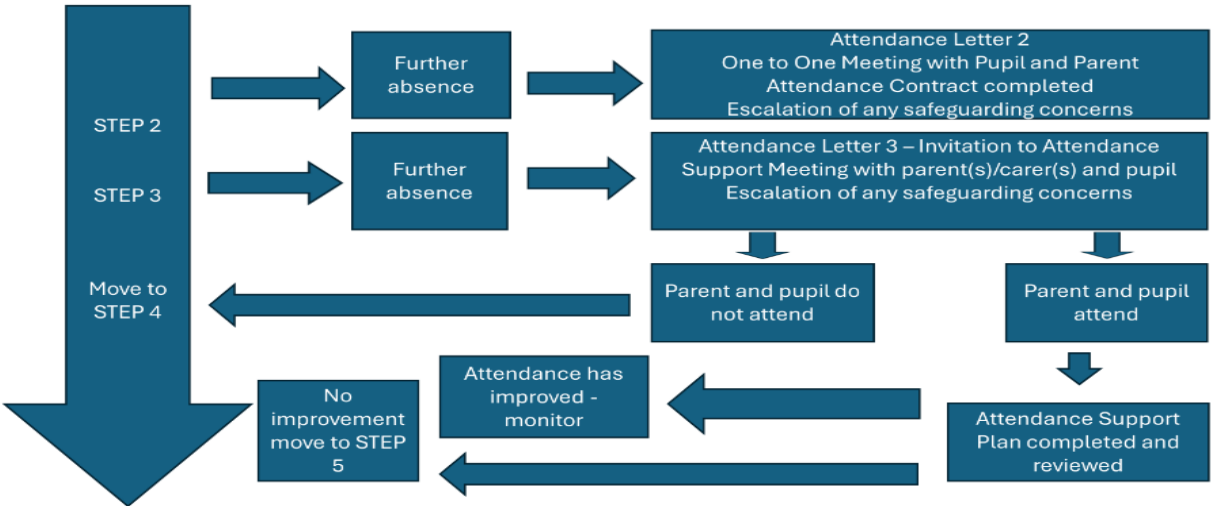
Post-16 Attendance Process

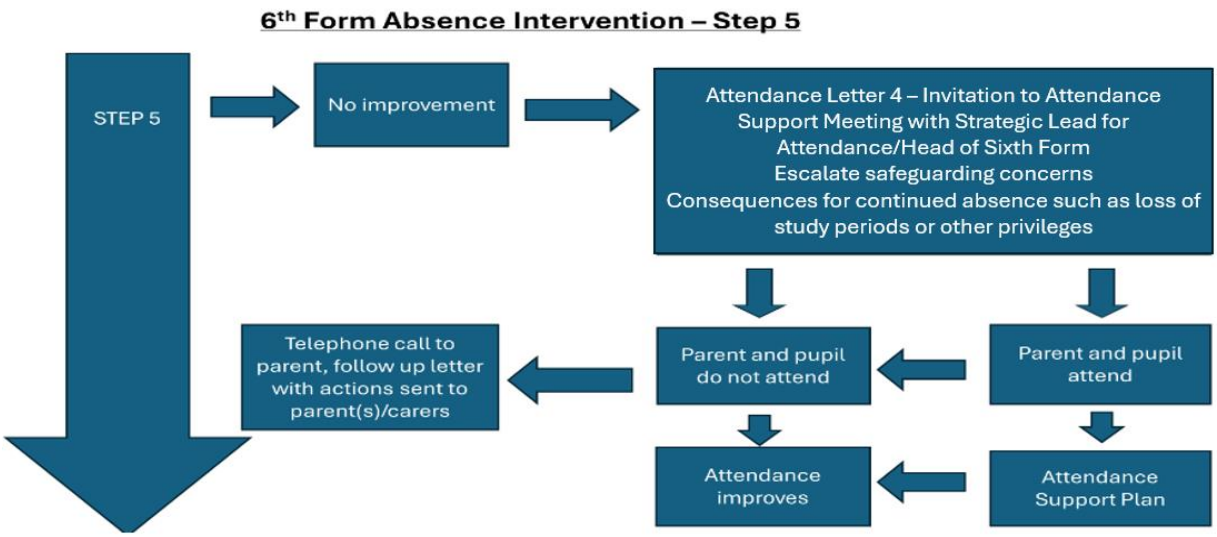
Prior to commencing Step 1 all information available to the school regarding the pupil's circumstances are fully considered and understood.

6th Form Absence Intervention – Graduated Response



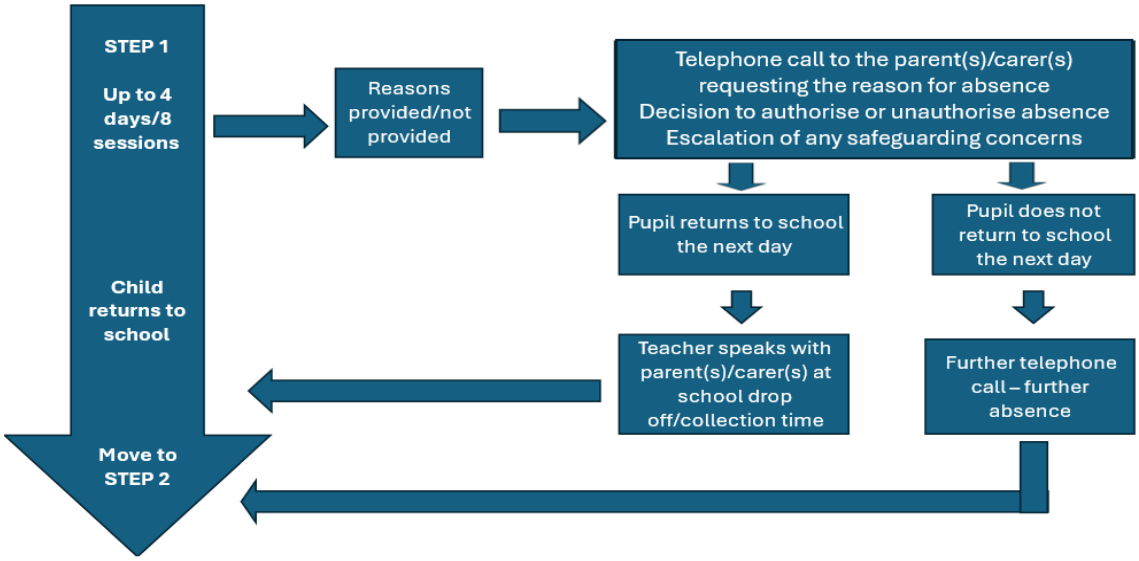
6th Form Absence Intervention – Steps 2 to 4

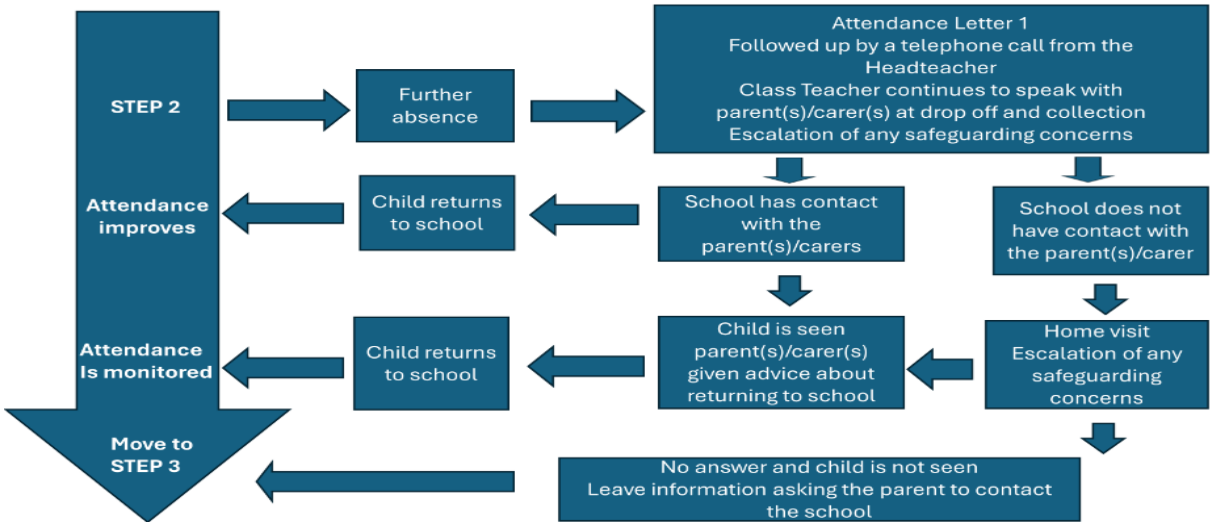


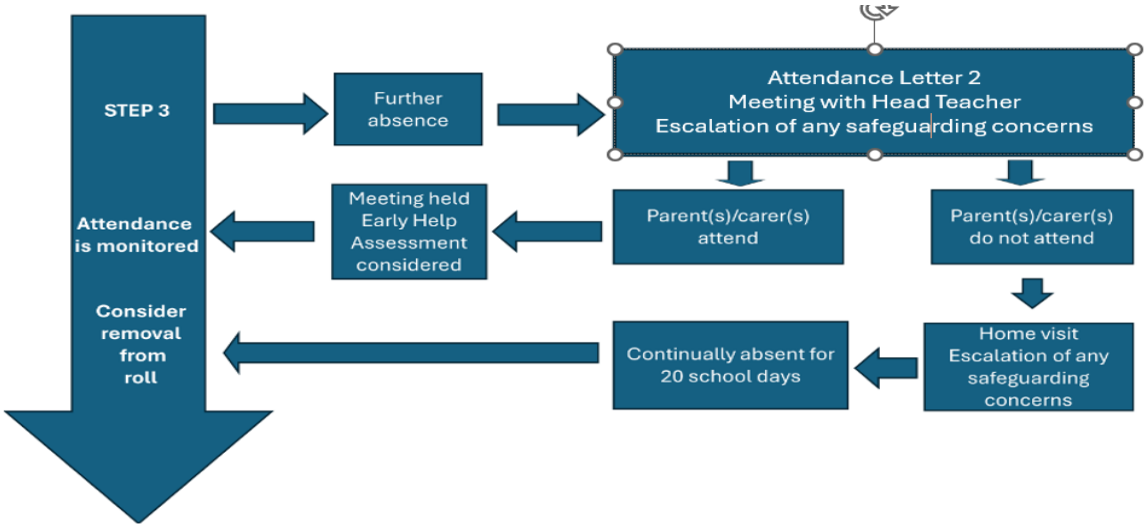


Early Years Attendance Process

Prior to commencing Step 1 all information available to the school regarding the pupil's circumstances are fully considered and understood.







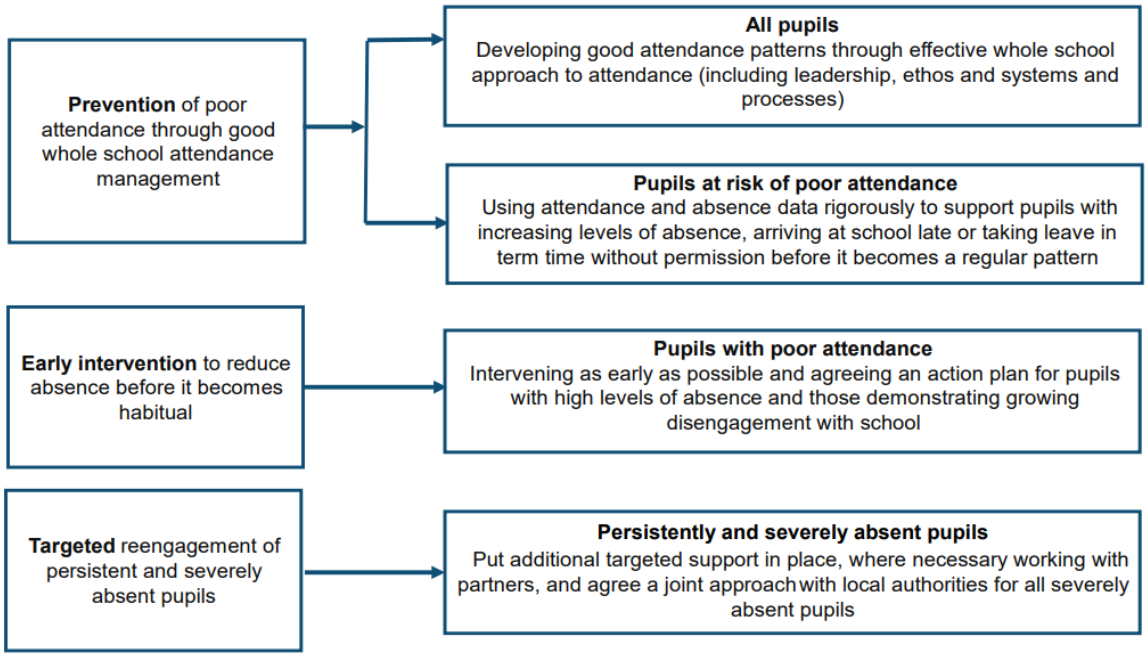
12. Persistent and Severe Absence Strategy

Where absence escalates and pupils miss 10% or more of school (equivalent to **19** days or more across a full school year), referred to as persistent absence, we work with the local authority to put in additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers to attendance and reengage persistently absent pupils. We consider some of the reasons for absence and understand the importance of school as a place of safety and support for children who might be facing difficulties, rather than reaching immediately for punitive approaches.

In addition, we particularly focus on pupils who are absent from school more than they are present, those missing 50% or more of school, referred to as severely absent. Some pupils may find it more difficult to be in school or face bigger barriers to their regular attendance and as such are likely to need more intensive support across a range of partners.

Severely and persistently absent pupils are an area of focus in our regular data monitoring approach, to identify pupils and cohorts who need targeted attendance support as quickly as possible.

Our strategy looks like this:



Vulnerable Pupil Strategy

The school recognises that improving attendance for vulnerable pupils requires a **whole-school approach**, underpinned by strong relationships, early intervention, and a culture that promotes the value of education.

There are various groups of pupils who may be vulnerable to high absence and persistent or severe absence, such as:

- Children in need.
- LAC (Looked after Children).
- Young carers.
- Pupils who are eligible for FSM (Free School Meals).
- Pupils with EAL (English as an Additional Language).
- Pupils with SEND (Special Education Need and Disability).
- Pupils who have faced bullying and/or discrimination.

We ensure that we provide support to our vulnerable pupil cohorts who may be at a higher risk of persistent absence, in conjunction with all relevant external authorities where necessary. The school uses a number of methods to help support pupils to attend school. These may include:

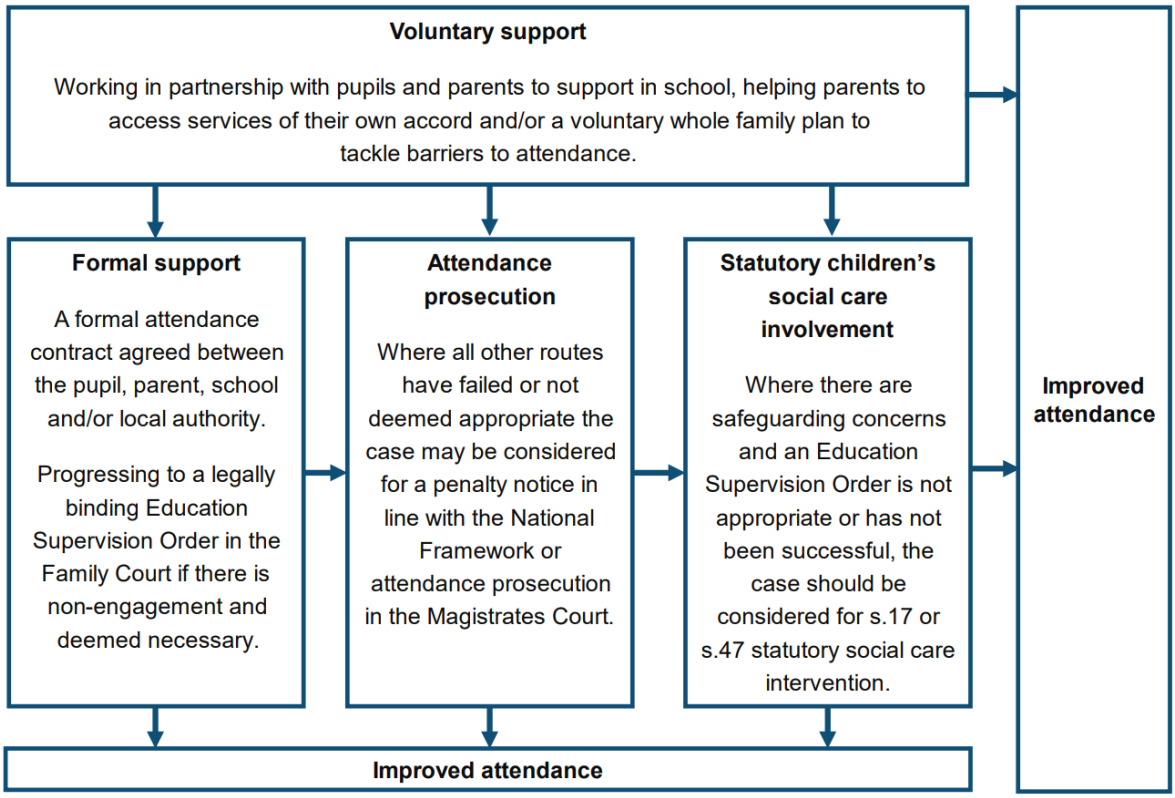
- Offering catch-up support to build confidence and bridge gaps in learning.
- Meeting with the pupil and their parent to discuss patterns of absence, barriers to attendance, and any other problems they may be having.
- Establishing plans to remove barriers and provide additional support.
- Leading weekly check-ins to review progress and assess the impact of support.
- Making regular contact with the pupil's parent to discuss progress.
- Assessing whether an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or an Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP) may be appropriate.
- Considering whether an Early Help Assessment may be appropriate

- Considering what support for re-engagement might be needed, including with regard to additional vulnerability.

Where a vulnerable pupil at risk of persistent or severe absence is also at increased risk of harm, the school will work in conjunction with all relevant authorities, e.g., children's services to support the pupil in line with the school's duty of care. The school will also bear in mind that the continuation of absence following intervention may, in itself, constitute neglect, and will escalate any concerns in this regard in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

13. Attendance legal intervention

As absence is so often a symptom of wider issues a family is facing, the school and the trust work together with other local partners to understand the barriers to attendance and to provide support. The school allows sufficient time for attendance interventions and engagement strategies to improve pupils' attendance; however, where engagement strategies to improve attendance do not have the desired effect or parents fail to engage in the support being offered, the school will consider referring to East Staffordshire Local Authority to consider statutory action.



This may involve requesting the LA to issue a penalty notice (fine); referring to the LA for prosecution as a final resort and referring to children's social care where there are safeguarding concerns and concerns about educational neglect.

Educational neglect

Access to education and school attendance is not usually considered as neglect by itself. Attendance to school is a legal requirement and prosecution can be sought in cases where

parents fail to deliver on their responsibilities. Due to the legal power of prosecution as set out below, attendance is often considered as a separate education issue to the safeguarding definition of neglect.

Section 7 Education Act 1996 places a duty on parents/carers to ensure that their child of compulsory school age receives a suitable education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. Where parents/carers fail to provide this, they can be prosecuted under Section 4441 or 4441A of the Act.

Children have a legal right to an education and so failing to send the child to school regularly is an example of educational neglect. Article 28 of the United Nations Convention Rights of the Child says that "*children and young people have the right to education no matter who they are: regardless of race, gender, or disability; if they are in detention, or if they're a refugee"*.

The Equality Act 2010 puts a responsibility on public authorities to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination and promote equality of opportunity. This applies to the process of identification of need and risk faced by the individual child and the process of assessment. No child or group of children must be treated less favourably than others in being able to access effective service which meet their needs. This includes access to education through regular attendance at school.

The government statutory guidance, "Working together to Safeguarding children 2023" defines neglect as "the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical, emotional and/or psychological needs, likely to result in impairment of the child's health or development.
The Department for Education (DfE) Statutory Guidance 'Working together to improve school attendance' (2024) recognises the impact poor school attendance has on a child's education, development, and lifelong opportunities. The guidance, states, 'if all avenues of support have been facilitated by schools, local authorities, and other partners, and the appropriate educational support or placements (e.g., an education, health, and care plan) have been provided but severe absence for unauthorised reasons continues, it is likely to constitute neglect'. (Links to all legal documents are to be found at the end of the policy Appendix A).

Non-attendance to school is a symptom that something is wrong. If we consider the definition of neglect as set out in the Working together to Safeguard Children (2018) it is easy to see how education and school attendance fit within the description.

Education threshold for "persistent failure" to meet the child's basic needs

- Failure to adequately maintain access to education.
- Failure to ensure regular attendance at school or arrival on time.
- Failure to provide an education or apply for a school place to enable access to education.
- Failure to consent to assessment to explore unmet or undiagnosed need that may require higher threshold support, intervention, or specialist provision.
- Failure to attend assessments or appointments related to health or education.
- Failure to engage with the school or local authority services and support offered.
- Failure to engage with the specific action contained within the Education Health Care Plan or other formalised plan offered by the school, local authority or imposed by the magistrate or family court.

Education threshold for 'serious impairment of development' of the child:

- Primary aged children where attendance is 75% or less over an academic year (three terms) This level of school attendance reduces the possibility of achieving level 4, the recognised average level for a child at the end of KS2 (2013/14 national research).
- Secondary aged young people where school attendance is 75% or less over an academic year (three terms) as this means the young person is five times less likely to achieve 5 GCSE including English, Maths, the recognised average level for a young person at the end of KS4 (2013/14 national research).

14. The National framework for penalty notices

What is a penalty notice?

Penalty notices are issued to parents/carers as an alternative to prosecution where they have failed to ensure that their child of compulsory school age regularly attends the school where they are registered or, in certain cases, at a place where alternative provision is provided. Penalty notices can be used by all schools (with the exception of independent schools) where the pupil's absence has been recorded with one or more of the unauthorised codes and that absence(s) constitutes an offence. A penalty notice can be issued to each parent(s)/carer(s) liable for the offence or offences. They should usually only be issued to the parent(s)/carer(s) or parents/carers who have allowed the absence (regardless of which parent(s)/carer(s) has applied for a leave of absence).

Penalty notices are intended to prevent the need for court action and should only be used where it is deemed likely to change parental/carer behaviour and support to secure regular attendance has been provided and has not worked or been engaged with or would not have been appropriate in the circumstances of the offence (e.g. an unauthorised holiday in term time). Local authorities can consider earlier if there is a clear attempt to avoid the 5-day threshold.

How penalty notices are issued

Penalty notices must be issued in line with the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007, as amended and can only be issued by a headteacher or someone authorised by them (a deputy or assistant head), a local authority officer or the police. They must also be issued in line with Local Codes of Conduct which are drawn up and maintained by each local authority.

Where a penalty notice is issued by someone other than a local authority officer, the person issuing the penalty notice is expected to check with the local authority before doing so and must also send them copies of any penalty notices issued.

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents/carers allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first 5 days of a fixed period or permanent exclusion. The school must have notified the parents/carers of the days the pupil must not be present in a public place. This type of penalty notice is not included in the National Framework and therefore not subject to the same considerations about support being provided or count towards the limit as part of the escalation process in the case of repeat offences for non-attendance.

What is the national threshold to issue a penalty notice?

All schools in the Trust will follow the National Framework for Penalty Notices. **The threshold is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks.** A school week means any week in which there is at least one school session.

This can be met with any combination of unauthorised absence (e.g. 4 sessions of holiday taken in term time plus 6 sessions of arriving late after the register closes all within 10 school weeks). These sessions can be consecutive (e.g. 10 sessions of holiday in one week) or not (e.g. 6 sessions of unauthorised absence taken in 1 week and 1 per week for the next 4 weeks). The period of 10 school weeks can also span different terms or school years (e.g. 2 sessions of unauthorised absence in the Summer Term and a further 8 within the Autumn Term).

In some cases, a referral to the Local Authority can be made by the school even if the National Threshold has not been met. The local authority will decide if a penalty notice is to be issued or not.

Notices to improve

A Notice to Improve is a final opportunity for a parent(s)/carer(s) to engage in support and improve attendance before a penalty notice is issued. If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate but offers of support have not been engaged with by the parent(s)/carer(s) or have not worked, a Notice to Improve should usually be sent to give parents/carers a final chance to engage in support.

15. Monitoring and Analysing Attendance and Punctuality

The Strategic Lead for Attendance in each school will monitor and analyse attendance and punctuality data weekly to ensure that intervention and support is delivered quickly to address attendance issues.

The school will collect and report attendance data to the Trust Strategic Attendance Manager, Governors, School's Senior Leadership Team, lead professionals for vulnerable groups (e.g. PP, SENDCO, EAL, heads of year etc) at least half-termly. The Trust Strategic Attendance Manager will in turn collect and report attendance data to the CEO and Trust Board at least termly.

Data collected and analysed will include data for attendance, punctuality, persistent absence and severe absence:

- The school cohort as a whole.
- Individual year groups.
- Pupils from vulnerable groups – Pupil Premium, Free School Meals, Education Health Care Plan, Special Education Need and disability English as Additional Language, Social Worker, Looked after Child.
- Any other groups deemed to be at risk of poor attendance.

The Strategic Lead for Attendance and the Trust Strategic Attendance Manager will conduct thorough analysis of the data half-termly, termly and annually to identify patterns and trends; individual or groups of pupils needing support/intervention. Analysis is then used to develop and implement action plans/interventions to improve attendance.

Analysis will also include identification of:

- Types of absence (codes).
- Patterns in days of absence.
- Lessons which have poor attendance.
- Barriers to attendance.

Attendance data will be bench marked against national data and comparative data for the previous academic year. The Trust Strategic Attendance Manager for Attendance visits each school within the trust at least termly to review attendance data, analysis, trends, impact of intervention and progress towards targets.

Schools are legally required to share information from their attendance registers with the local authority and in the future with the DFE.

16. Summary

JTMAT and its schools are committed to promoting excellent school attendance and punctuality for all its pupils (both of statutory and non-statutory school age). We are also committed to working in a collaborative and supportive manner with pupils, families, external agencies and other schools and trusts to support excellent attendance.

Appendix A Useful Legislation and Guidance

Parental rights and responsibilities: Who has parental responsibility - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Legislation

Education Act 1996 (legislation.gov.uk)

Children Act 1989 (legislation.gov.uk)

Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (legislation.gov.uk)

Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 (legislation.gov.uk)

The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 (legislation.gov.uk)

The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 (legislation.gov.uk)

Equality Act 2010 (legislation.gov.uk)

Guidance

Children missing education - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Working together to safeguard children - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Alternative provision - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)