



Attendance & Registration Policy

Statement of Intent - Non-negotiables

- Every child is expected to attend school every day.
- When pupils' attendance falls below 95% they become a concern for senior leaders. Attendance is monitored weekly henceforward.
- Daily contact is made with the parents of pupils whose attendance is a concern.
- Good attendance is rewarded and celebrated publicly.
- Pupils whose attendance is consistently good are rewarded well.
- Pupils who are persistently absent are monitored daily and parents are contacted daily to celebrate improvements or remind of targets. Records are kept of this contact.
- All parents are informed of attendance expectations at transition into school including pupils who join mid-year.
- Reasonable adjustments are made for pupils with medically diagnosed serious illness. Termly meetings are held with parents and medical professionals to update next steps.
- Medical appointments must be held outside of the school day except in exceptional circumstances where school leaders are made aware of the exceptional circumstances.
- Unauthorised leave may lead to penalty notices.

Appendix A – Wiltshire Council Penalty Notice Code of Conduct

Appendix B - DfE guidance Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance. Sept 2022



Introduction and Background

The Pewsey Vale way recognises that positive behaviour and good attendance are essential in order to raise standards of pupil attainment and to give every child the best educational experience possible.

This policy is written with the above statement in mind and underpins our Trust ethos to:

- promote children's welfare and safeguarding
- ensure every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- ensure that pupils succeed whilst at school
- ensure that pupils have access to the widest possible range of opportunities at school, and when they leave school

For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and be at school, on time, every day the school is open. **It is a rule of the Trust that pupils must attend every day, unless there are exceptional circumstances. The *Head Teacher, not the parent*, is the only person who can authorise the absence.**

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence or late arrival disrupts teaching routines and impacts negatively on the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parental responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution. Where parents are separated both parents have equal responsibility in law for their child's attendance at school.

This policy seeks to ensure that all parties involved in the practicalities of school attendance are aware and informed that attendance matters in school. All are committed to the aims of "attendance matters". It details the responsibilities of individuals and groups involved and the procedures in place to promote and monitor pupil attendance.

Our policy aims to raise and maintain levels of attendance by:

- Promoting a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure and valued.
- Raising awareness of the importance of good attendance and punctuality
- Ensuring that attendance is monitored effectively and reasons for absences are recorded promptly and consistently.

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 a school.

Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that 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 DfE has produced guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities: Working together to improve school attendance. Our Attendance Policy reflects the key principles of that guidance.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>

Promoting Regular Attendance

At Pewsey Vale School, we believe in developing good patterns of attendance and set high expectations for the attendance and punctuality for all our pupils from the outset. It is a central part of our school's vision, values, ethos, and day to day life. We recognise the connections between attendance, attainment, safeguarding and wellbeing.

The name and contact details of the Head, who is responsible for the strategic approach to attendance can be found on the school website.

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is the responsibility of parents, pupils and all members of school staff.

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Give parents details on attendance in our newsletters
- Report to parents at least three times a year in reports on their child's attendance.
- Contact both parents listed on school admissions forms should their child's attendance fall below the school's target for attendance.
- Celebrate excellent attendance by reporting individual and class achievements
- Reward individuals and group good or improving attendance
- Refer poor attendance to other agencies

Understanding Types of Absence

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parent), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required. Each half-day is known as a "session".

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a justified reason like illness (although you may be asked to provide medical evidence for your child before this can be authorised), urgent medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been given. Unauthorised absences are coded with an O code. This type of absence can lead to the school referring to the Local Authority for penalty notices and/or legal proceedings.



Unauthorised absence includes, however, this is not exhaustive:

- parents keeping children off school unnecessarily e.g. because they had a late night or for non-infectious illness or injury that would not affect their ability to learn;
- absences which have never been adequately explained to school leaders;
- children who arrive at school too late to get a “U” mark on the attendance register to indicate they are in school for safeguarding purposes, however, this is counted as an absence for the session;
- shopping trips;
- family events;
- Problems with the distance travelled to school;
- looking after other children/ family members or children accompanying siblings or parents to medical appointments;
- their own or family birthdays;
- holidays taken during term time without leave - unauthorised absence will lead to a penalty notice being triggered by the Local Authority;
- day trips;
- other leave of absence in term time which has not been agreed.

School Attendance and the Law

By law all children of compulsory school age must receive an appropriate full-time education (Education Act 1996). Parents have a legal duty to ensure their child attends school regularly at the school at which they are registered.

Parents may be recognised differently under education law, than under family law. Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 states that a ‘parent’, in relation to a child or young person, includes any person who is not a parent (from which can be inferred ‘biological parent’) but who has parental responsibility, or who has care of the child.

A person typically has care of a child or young person if they are the person with whom the child lives, either full or part time and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their biological or legal relationship is with the child.

Unauthorised absence may result in the school referring to the Local Authority for sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This may include issuing each parent with a Penalty Notice for £120, reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days or referring the matter to the Magistrates Court whereby each parent may receive a fine up to £2500 and/or up to 3 months in prison. If a parent is found guilty in court, they will receive a criminal conviction.

There is no longer any entitlement in law for pupils to take time off during the term to go on holiday. In addition, the Supreme Court has ruled that the definition of regular school attendance is “in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school”.



The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 were amended in September 2013. All references to family holidays and extended leave have been removed. The amendments specify that the heads of school may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are "exceptional circumstances" and they no longer have the discretion to authorise up to ten days of absence each academic year.

At Pewsey Vale School, leave of absence shall not be granted in term time unless there are reasons considered to be exceptional by the Head Teacher, irrespective of the child's overall attendance. Only the Head Teacher or their designate (not the local authority) may authorise such a request. All applications for a leave of absence must be made in writing on the prescribed form provided by the school. Where a parent removes a child when the application for leave was refused or where no application was made to the school, the issue of a penalty notice will be requested by this school.

A Penalty Notice may be issued where there have been at least 10 consecutive sessions of unauthorised absence for the purpose of a holiday, however, due to the importance of pupils settling into school at the commencement of the school year, Penalty Notices may also be issued if there have been at least 6 consecutive sessions of unauthorised absence during the first two calendar weeks of September due to a term time holiday

At Pewsey Vale School 'exceptional circumstances' will be interpreted as:

... being of unique and significant emotional, educational or spiritual value to the child which outweighs the loss of teaching time.

We will not agree leave during term time under any circumstances:

- at any time in September. This is a crucial transition time for all pupils to settle into their new class at the start of the academic year as quickly as possible
- during assessment and test periods (including internal school tests/ assessments) in the school's calendar affecting your child.
- when a pupil's attendance record already includes any level of unauthorised absence or they have already been granted authorised leave within that academic year.
- Where a pupil's attendance record falls below 96%

Whilst any child may occasionally have time off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If a parent thinks their child is reluctant to attend school, then we will work with that family to understand the problem and provide any necessary support. We can use outside agencies to help with this.

If leave of absence is authorised, the school will not provide work for children to do during their absence. Parents are however advised to read with their children and encourage them to write a diary while they are away.



Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

A pupil is defined by the Government as a '**persistent absentee**' (PA) when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason; this can be authorised or unauthorised absences. Absence at this level will cause considerable damage to any child's education and we need a parent's fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

We monitor all absence, and the reasons that are given, rigorously. If a child is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark we will inform the parent immediately. PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully. We also combine this with academic tracking where absence affects attainment. PA pupils and their parents are subject to a school-based meeting and the plan may include: allocation of additional support through the School Nurse, Wiltshire Council Education Welfare Service, or Social Care. We may also use circle time, individual incentive programmes, individual targets and participation in group activities to support us in raising attendance.

We will write to both parents listed on school admissions forms/ email/ text and set an attendance target of 100% and contact you daily to let you know that the attendance target is or isn't being met. We will do this until your child's attendance falls within acceptable limits.

Where ongoing medical issues prevent good attendance, a meeting will be held with health professionals, parents and the school to determine next steps.

Absence Procedures

If a child is absent from school the parent must follow the following procedures:

- Contact the school on the first day of absence before *9am* and each subsequent day of absence before *9am*.
The school has an answer phone available to leave a message if nobody is available to take your call. Alternatively, parents can drop into school personally and speak to the office staff. If we do not hear from you we will make a home visit and, if necessary, contact the police or social care
- Contact the school on every further day of absence, again before *9am*.
- Ensure that your child returns to school as soon as possible
- Provide medical evidence if your child's attendance falls below 90%, otherwise it will be marked as "unauthorised" absence and coded "O".

If your child is absent we will:

- Telephone or text you on the first day, and every subsequent day of absence if we have not heard from you, we may also visit you on the first day of absence, if we have not heard from you;
- If we are unable to contact parents of prolonged absent students, we will telephone emergency contact numbers, send letters home and a home visit may be made in the interests of safeguarding;
- Make a home visit to ascertain the safety of the child if we have concerns for their welfare;
- Write to both parents listed on school admissions forms if your child's attendance is below 95%;
- Invite you in to school to discuss the situation with our pastoral/attendance worker or the Attendance Officer if ~~absences~~ persist;



- Arrange a formal school attendance meeting if attendance deteriorates following the above actions;
- A referral will be made to Local Authority if no contact has been made with parents by the 10th day of absence (or sooner if deemed appropriate), at which point your child will be considered to be “missing from education.

If absence continues we will:

- Write to you if your child’s attendance is below 95%, or where punctuality is a concern
- Invite you into school to discuss the situation with our Attendance Officer, Child and Family Support Worker or Head Teacher if absences persist
- Create a personalised action/support plan to address any barriers to attendance
- Offer signposting support to other agencies or services if appropriate
- Refer the matter to the Local Authority for relevant sanctions if attendance deteriorates following the above actions

Local authority referrals

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to Wiltshire Council’s Education Welfare team. Local Authority Officers work with schools, families and other professionals to reduce persistent absence and improve overall attendance. If attendance does not improve, legal action may be taken in the form of a Penalty Notice or prosecution in the Magistrates Court.

Children missing in education

Where a child is not attending school, has moved without a forwarding address or school, or cannot be traced, or contact cannot be made with the parent, the school is required to inform the local authority that the child is missing. The school will carry out a home visit and refer the family to social care and the police to ensure any concerns for the child’s welfare have been thoroughly investigated.

Pupils will not be removed from the school roll until notified by the local authority that their enquiries are complete.

A referral will be made to Local Authority if no contact has been made with parents by the 10th day of absence (or sooner if deemed appropriate), at which point your child will be considered to be “missing from education.”

Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable and can contribute to further absence. If a child misses the start of the day they miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons, can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage further absence. Good time-keeping is a vital life skill which will help our children as they progress through their school life and out into the wider world.



How we manage lateness:

Registers are taken at the start of the school day. Your child will receive a late mark if they are not in by the school start time. Children arriving after this time are required to come in to school via the school office where they will be signed in. The school may send home 'late notes' in order to keep parents informed. From time to time the pastoral manager/attendance lead worker, or Senior Leader will undertake a 'Late Gate' check, greeting late arrivals at the main entrance to the school.

The registers will be closed at the time stated above. In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after that time they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence (U code). This means that parents face the possibility of a Penalty Notice if the problem persists. If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with the pastoral manager/attendance lead worker, Head Teacher or Senior Leader. You can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

We expect parents and staff to encourage good punctuality by being good role models for children.

We celebrate and reward good class and individual punctuality.

If leave of absence is authorised, the school will not provide work for children to do during their absence.

Understanding barriers to attendance

We can use outside agencies to help with this, such as the School Nurse, Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing support services, a Child and Family Support Worker or the relevant Local Authority team/s. Where outside agencies are supporting the family, you may be invited to attend a Team Around the Family meeting (TAF) to consider what is working well and what needs to improve. An individualised early help plan will be agreed and subsequently reviewed.

Some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include pupils who suffer from long-term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities, or other vulnerabilities. High expectations of attendance remain however, we will work with families and pupils to support improved attendance whilst being mindful of the additional barriers faced. We can discuss reasonable adjustments and additional support from external partners where appropriate.

The name and contact details of the school staff member pupils and parents should contact for more detailed support on attendance can be located on the school website.



Deletion from Roll

For any pupil leaving parents are required to make a formal request to the Head Teacher to be taken 'off roll'. The request should include: Child's name, class, current address, date of leaving, new home address, name of new school, address of new school. This information is essential to ensure that we know and safeguard the whereabouts of all of our pupils, even those who leave us. Pupils cannot be deleted from the school roll without this information and will be classed as absent until we have confirmation they are safe and attending another school.

It is crucial that parents keep school updated with current addresses and contact details for key family members in case of emergency.

Under Pupil Regulations 2006, all schools are now **legally required** to notify their Local Authority of **every new entry** to the admission register **within five days** of the pupil being enrolled. In addition to this, **every deletion** from the school register must also be notified to the Local Authority, as soon as the ground for deletion has been met in relation to that pupil, and in any event no later than the time at which the pupil's name is deleted from the register. This duty does not apply when a pupil's name is removed from the admission register at a standard transition point – when the pupil has completed the final year of education normally provided by that school.

Absence data

We use data to monitor, identify and support individual pupils or groups of pupils when their attendance needs to improve. Persistently absent pupils are tracked and monitored carefully. We also combine this with academic tracking as increased absence affects attainment.

We share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities, and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.

Suspensions / Exclusions

Pewsey Vale School will report all suspensions/ exclusions to the Local Authority (LA), with copies of all correspondence shared with the LA.

Summary

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance.

Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend school, on time, every day.

All school staff, local advisory boards and trustees are committed to working with parents and pupils as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.



Appendix A

Wiltshire Council Penalty Notice - Code of Conduct

Rationale

- 1.1 Regular and punctual attendance of pupils at school is both a legal requirement and essential for pupils to maximise the educational opportunities available to them. Wiltshire Council's Education Welfare Service will investigate cases of irregular attendance from school and, where appropriate, instigate legal action. Penalty Notices offer a means of swift intervention to deal with unauthorised absence to avoid this becoming entrenched.
- 1.2 Under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, parents are responsible for ensuring that their child of compulsory school age receives efficient, full time education that is suitable to the child's age, aptitude and ability and to any special educational needs the child may have. This may be by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- 1.3 Parents are defined in Section 576 of the Education Act 1996: all natural parents, whether they are married or not; any person who has parental responsibility for a child; and any person who, although not a natural parent has care of a child. Having care of a child means that a person with whom a child lives and who looks after a child irrespective of what their relationship is with that child, is considered to be a parent in education law.
- 1.4 If a child of compulsory school age who is registered at a school fails to attend regularly at the school then the parent is guilty of an offence under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996. It is the commission of this offence that can trigger the use of a penalty notice. If a penalty notice is used by the Local Authority it provides the parent with an opportunity to discharge liability for the offence and avoid court proceedings.
- 1.5 Wiltshire Council may prosecute for offences under Section 444 (1) of the Education Act 1996. Possible defences available include the following:
 - The pupil's absence was authorised by the school
 - The pupil was ill or prevented from attending by unavoidable cause
 - The absence was on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs
 - The school is not within walking distance of the child's home and the LA has made no suitable arrangements
 - The parent can show that their trade or business requires them to travel, and the child has attended school as regularly as the nature of the trade or business allows, and the child has attended school for at least 200 sessions during the preceding twelve months

Under Section 103 Education and Inspections Act 2006 a parent of an excluded pupil must ensure that the pupil is not present in a public place at any time during school hours on a day which is one of the first five schools days to which the exclusion relates or, where that exclusion is for a fixed period of five days or less, any of the days to which the exclusion relates, and is stated in the notice under section 104 (Education and Inspections Act 2006) to be a day on which Section 103(2) applies.



If the excluded pupil is present in a public place at any time during school hours on a school day falling within Section 103(2), the parent commits an offence (section 103(3)). A Penalty Notice may be issued by the Local Authority to offer the parent/s an opportunity to discharge liability for this offence. Wiltshire Council may prosecute for offences under Section 103 Education and Inspections Act 2006. A possible defence is reasonable justification for a parent to fail to comply with their duty under Section 103(2) of the act.

Legislation

- 2.1 The Education (Penalty Notice) (England) Regulations 2007 supports offences under section 444 of the Education Act 1996. Penalty Notices supplement existing sanctions available under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 or Section 36 of the Children Act 1989 to enforce attendance at school or alternative provision. There is no legal requirement to consider a Penalty Notice before proceeding to a section 444 prosecution.
- 2.2 Section 105 The Education and Inspections Act 2006 allows a penalty notice to be issued in respect of excluded pupils in a public place (as mentioned above).
- 2.3 The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 (section 23) adds two sections (444A and 444B) to the Education Act 1996. These sections introduced penalty notices as an alternative to prosecution and enable parents to discharge potential liability for conviction for that offence by paying a penalty.
- 2.4 If it appears that an offence under section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996 has been committed and none of the defences outlined above apply, then consideration can be given to issuing a penalty notice
- 2.5 Penalty Notices will require the parent of a child of compulsory school age whose attendance has been unsatisfactory to pay a penalty currently £120 if paid within 28 days, reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days as stated in the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013, statutory instrument No 757. (Figures correct at the time of writing, subject to amendment by further Statutory Instrument)
- 2.6 This Code of Conduct complies with the requirements as set out in Sections 14 – 16 of the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007
- 2.7 The issuing of Penalty Notices must conform to all requirements of the Human Rights Act 1998 and Equality Act 2010



Procedure

- 3.1 In Wiltshire Penalty Notices will be issued by the Education Welfare Service by first class post. In any case where the Penalty Notice is not paid within the prescribed period and where it is not appropriate to withdraw the Penalty Notice the Education Welfare Service will instigate action through the Magistrate's Court as required by legislation. Prosecution in such cases will be for the offence to which the Penalty Notice relates.
- 3.2 No parent shall receive more than three separate penalty notices resulting from the unauthorised absence of an individual child in any twelve-month period
- 3.3 Penalty Notices will be issued individually to each parent for each child according to each parent's liability for the offence or offences. An authorised officer has discretion when deciding to issue a penalty notice to one or more parents of a child. The specific circumstances in each individual case will be the determining factor.
- 3.4 The Education Welfare Service will receive requests to issue penalty notices from schools /academies / colleges in Wiltshire, Wiltshire Police and neighbouring Local Authorities. The Education Welfare Service will take forward these requests providing that:
 - The circumstances of the case meet the criteria for the issue of a penalty notice as specified in this code
 - All necessary information is provided to the Education Welfare Service in order to establish that an offence, under section 444 (1) of the Education Act 1996 for failure to secure regular attendance or section 103(3) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 for failure to comply with a duty towards an excluded pupil, has been committed.
- 3.5 The Education Welfare Service will ensure that the issuing of Penalty Notices is closely monitored to make certain that they are not duplicated, not issued where prosecution proceedings for the same offence are being considered and that recipients pay the relevant fine within the time frames specified.

Criteria for the Issuing of a Penalty Notice

- 4.1 Penalty Notices can be issued where a pupil has accrued 10 unauthorised sessions within the six-month period prior to the request being made or evidence of an offence under s.103 (3) Education and Inspections Act 2006 is established.



- 4.2 The issue of a penalty notice will be preceded by having previously issued a formal warning letter to each parent / carer. The letter will:
- Raise concern regarding the level of the unauthorised absence and give advice regarding contact with the school and the Education Welfare Service
 - Advise the parent of the powers of the Local Authority to issue penalty notices
 - State the number of unauthorised absences accrued which give rise to the formal warning being issued
 - Notify the parent that additional unauthorised absence may lead to a penalty notice if no improvement is effected within an agreed period – the standard period shall be fifteen school days except where exceptional circumstances apply e.g. deliberate parentally condoned absence or where a pupil has been located on a truancy sweep / located by the Police during school time and there are additional occurrences of unauthorised absence.
- 4.3 Penalty Notices will not be issued for pupils in the care of the Local Authority. Any attendance concerns will form part of the pupil's Personal Education Plan.
- 4.4 With effect from 22 March 2020 Wiltshire Council will **not** issue Penalty Notices for unauthorised absence **directly related** to the Covid-19 pandemic until such time as the Department for Education (DfE) deems appropriate.

Circumstances in which a Penalty Notice will be issued:

- 5.1 If in the view of an Education Welfare Officer the issuance is deemed appropriate in cases where a parent or parents continually fail to provide an explanation or fails to provide a justifiable explanation for a pupil's absence and this is recorded as an unauthorised absence by the proprietor of the school. This could include late arrival after the register has closed which is recorded as an unauthorised absence where these total 10 or more sessions.
- 5.2 For pupils stopped during a truancy sweep or located by Police during school hours where there are found to be additional unauthorised absences totalling 10 or more sessions
- 5.3 Following a request from a School / College / Academy for intervention where the circumstances appear to have been totally avoidable (e.g. too tired after a late night, a birthday treat, family / friends visiting, shopping) where this is unauthorised and these total 10 or more sessions
- 5.4 Where a school/college/academy makes a notification for an instance of unauthorised leave of absence (holiday during term time) which totals 10 or more sessions continuous or aggregated within the previous six months and within the current academic year and where the proprietor has not given permission or where permission was not sought prior to the unauthorised leave of absence being taken
- 5.5 Following notification from a neighbouring Local Authority



- 5.6 For pupils who are stopped by Police in a public place during the first five school days of an Exclusion, whether for a fixed period or permanent exclusion or, where that exclusion is for a fixed period of five days or less, any of the school days to which the exclusion relates as specified in section 103(2) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and is stated in the notice under section 104 to be a day on which the parent is subject to this subsection.

Procedure for withdrawing Penalty Notices

- 6.1 A Penalty Notice may be withdrawn by Wiltshire Local Authority if the Authority determines that:
- It ought not to have been issued
 - It ought not to have been issued to the person named as the recipient
 - It is materially defective
- 6.2 Where a penalty notice has been withdrawn in accordance with the above a notice of the withdrawal will be issued to the recipient and any amount paid by way of penalty in pursuance of that notice shall be repaid to the person who paid it. No proceedings shall be continued or instituted against the recipient for the offence in connection with which the withdrawn notice was issued or for an offence under section 444 (1A) of the Education Act 1996 arising out of the same circumstances.
- 6.3 A Penalty Notice cannot be withdrawn because of an inability to pay
- 6.4 If a Penalty Notice is not paid in full before the expiry of the period of paying it and Wiltshire Council has neither instigated proceedings for the offence to which the notice relates nor is contemplating such proceedings, then the notice will be withdrawn.
- 6.5 If a Penalty Notice has been issued for unauthorised absence **directly related** to the Covid-19 pandemic **after** 16 March 2020 this will be withdrawn by Wiltshire Council immediately.
- 6.6 If a Penalty Notice has been issued for unauthorised absence **directly related** to the Covid-19 pandemic **before** 16 March 2020 any action relating to this will be suspended until such time as the Department for Education (DfE) deems appropriate.

Appeals

- 7.1 There is no statutory right of appeal against the decision to issue a penalty notice and the sole authority to authorise absence rests with the Headteacher of the school / academy / college
- 7.2 The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations does not permit Headteachers to give authorisation for absence retrospectively.



Payment of Penalty Notices

- 8.1 The arrangements for the paying of penalty notices will be detailed on the Penalty Notice
- 8.2 Payment by way of instalment is not permitted. Payment should be made in full according to the dates as stipulated on the Penalty Notice

Non-payment of Penalty Notices

- 9.1 Non payment of a Penalty Notice will normally result in prosecution under the provisions of section 444 of the Education Act 1996 or prosecution under section 103 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006

Publicity

- 10.1 All schools / academies / colleges / alternative education provisions intending to use penalty notices must:
 - Set out the establishment's process for managing absence
 - Ensure that all parents / carers are aware of the process to request leave of absence during term time
 - Make notifications to the Local Authority without delay when the particular criteria is reached
 - Publish details regarding arrangements of managing absence within the establishment's Attendance Policy



Appendix B

DfE guidance Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance. Sept 2022

All pupils

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

Pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent

| Parents are expected to: | Schools are expected to: | Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to: | Local authorities are expected to: |
|---|---|--|---|
| <p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered to prevent the need for more formal support.</p> | <p>Proactively use data to identify pupils at risk of poor attendance.</p> <p>Work with each identified pupil and their parents to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-school barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Where out of school barriers are identified, signpost and support access to any required services in the first instance.</p> <p>If the issue persists, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the local authority and other partners. Act as the lead practitioner where all partners agree that the school is the best placed lead service. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the school, continue to work with the local authority and partners.</p> | <p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p> | <p>Hold a termly conversation with every school to identify, discuss and signpost or provide access to services for pupils who are persistently or severely absent or at risk of becoming so.</p> <p>Where there are out of school barriers, provide each identified pupil and their family with access to services they need in the first instance.</p> <p>If the issue persists, facilitate a voluntary early help assessment where appropriate. Take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the school and other partners. Provide the lead practitioner where all partners agree that a local authority service is best placed to lead. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the local authority, continue to work with the school and partners.</p> |



Persistently absent pupils

| Parents are expected to: | Schools are expected to: | Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to: | Local authorities are expected to: |
|---|--|--|---|
| <p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.</p> | <p>Continued support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent and:</p> <p>Where absence becomes persistent, put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers. Where necessary this includes working with partners.</p> <p>Where there is a lack of engagement, hold more formal conversations with parents and be clear about the potential need for legal intervention in future.</p> <p>Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, work with the local authority on legal intervention.</p> <p>Where there are safeguarding concerns, intensify support through statutory children's social care.</p> <p>Work with other schools in the local area, such as schools previously attended and the schools of any siblings.</p> | <p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p> | <p>Continued support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent and:</p> <p>Work jointly with the school to provide formal support options including parenting contracts and education supervision orders.</p> <p>Where there are safeguarding concerns, ensure joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners.</p> <p>Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, enforce attendance through legal intervention (including prosecution as a last resort).</p> |

Severely absent pupils

| Parents are expected to: | Schools are expected to: | Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to: | Local authorities are expected to: |
|---|--|--|---|
| <p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.</p> | <p>Continued support as for persistently absent pupils and:</p> <p>Agree a joint approach for all severely absent pupils with the local authority.</p> | <p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p> | <p>Continued support as for persistently absent pupils and:</p> <p>All services should make this group the top priority for support. This may include a whole family plan, consideration for an education, health and care plan, or alternative form of educational provision.</p> <p>Be especially conscious of any potential safeguarding issues, ensuring joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners. Where appropriate, this could include conducting a full children's social care assessment and building attendance into children in need and child protection plans.</p> |



Support for pupils with medical conditions or SEND with poor attendance

| Parents are expected to: | Schools are expected to: | Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to: | Local authorities are expected to: |
|---|---|--|---|
| <p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered.</p> | <p>Maintain the same ambition for attendance and work with pupils and parents to maximise attendance.</p> <p>Ensure join up with pastoral support and where required, put in place additional support and adjustments, such as an individual healthcare plan and if applicable, ensuring the provision outlined in the pupil's EHCP is accessed.</p> <p>Consider additional support from wider services and external partners, making timely referrals.</p> <p>Regularly monitor data for such groups, including at board and governing body meetings and with local authorities.</p> | <p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p> | <p>Work closely with relevant services and partners, for example special educational needs, educational psychologists, and mental health services, to ensure joined up support for families.</p> <p>Ensure suitable education, such as alternative provision, is arranged for children of compulsory school age who because of health reasons would not otherwise receive a suitable education.</p> |

Support for pupils with a social worker

| Parents are expected to: | Schools are expected to: | Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to: | Local authorities are expected to: |
|---|---|--|---|
| <p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered.</p> | <p>Inform the pupil's social worker if there are any unexplained absences and if their name is to be deleted from the register.</p> | <p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p> | <p>Regularly monitor the attendance of children with a social worker in their area.</p> <p>Put in place personal education plans for looked-after children.</p> <p>Secure regular attendance of looked-after children as their corporate parent and provide advice and guidance about the importance of attendance to those services supporting pupils previously looked after.</p> |



Appendix C - Policy into Practice

Escalation Infographic

Escalation Steps Explained

Tutor Chat

Accountable: Tutor

This is a **supportive** measure.

During the attendance focused tutor sessions, tutors will speak to any tutees whose attendance has declined. This should include asking them why they had the day/s off. The tutor should subtly gauge the validity of the absence for example, a serious illness or family member's funeral should be broached differently to a child having a "cold."

If needed, the tutor should give a gentle reminder about the seriousness of absence from school and show concern for the child's education.

Record: Tutor to add outcome of the conversation to ClassCharts.

C1: Tutor Home Contact

Accountable: Tutor

This is a **supportive** measure.

This is limited to three students per week (per tutor group) as to not overwhelm tutors with additional work. A phone call home is always preferable and should be tried multiple times before any other method (i.e. email) is fallen back on.

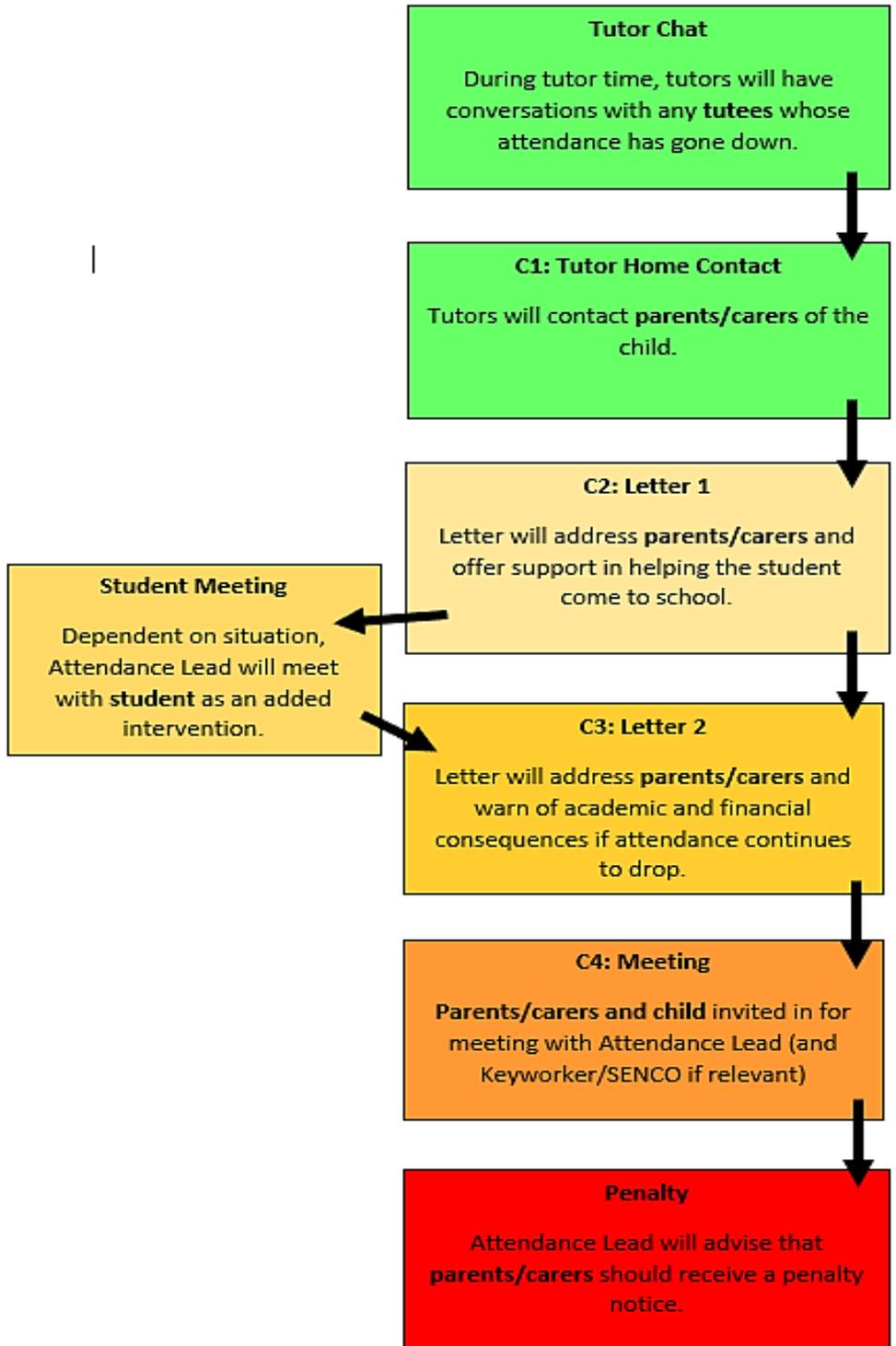
Record: Tutor to add outcome of the conversation to ClassCharts.

C2: Letter 1

Accountable: Attendance Lead

This is a **supportive** measure. A letter will be sent to the parents/carers of the student. As well as including a reminder of attendance expectations, this letter's purpose is to offer support and/or advice in getting the child to school. It will also serve as an opportunity to inform parents/carers that medical evidence will be required from this point on if the attendance continues to drop.

Record: Attendance Lead will add to ClassCharts.





C2: Student Meeting

Accountable: Attendance Lead

This is a **supportive** measure.

Unlike the other steps, this step is not compulsory. The necessity for this step will be determined by several factors including (but not exclusive to) year group, circumstance, other behaviour and progress. The Attendance Lead will meet with the student during school hours. Meeting will be student-centred and will focus on the following:

- Informing the child where their attendance is and what this means in terms of missed learning.
- Exploring, from the student's perspective, what the barriers are in coming to school.
- Identifying any action the school can take in supporting the student.
- Giving the student short-term / medium-term / long-term attendance goals.

Record: A contract will be signed by the student and Attendance Lead. Attendance Lead will add to ClassCharts.

C3: Letter 2

This is a **cautionary** measure.

A letter will be sent to the parents/carers of the student. This letter will set out a clear reminder of attendance expectations. This letter's purpose is to inform the parents/carers that the school has serious concern for the educational welfare of the student in question and to warn them that financial consequences may follow the educational ones if attendance does not improve.

Record: Attendance Lead will add to ClassCharts.

C4: Meeting

This is a **cautionary** measure.

The meeting with the parents/carers will serve as an enforcement of the information given in the letter. The Attendance Lead will emphasise the necessity of good attendance and address any issues the parent/carer is facing in helping their child achieve this. The meeting will conclude with one to three actions being produced (to be completed by the parents/carers, school and/or student.)

Record: Attendance Lead will add to ClassCharts.

Penalty

This is a **punitive** measure.

The Attendance Lead will recommend the parents/carers to receive a fine. This action will be signed off by the Head (or Deputy Head) and any other significant member of staff (i.e. SENCO.)

Record: Head/Deputy Head will add to ClassCharts.



Tracking and Accountability

Tutor Responsibility in Practice

The tutor is responsible for checking the 'Attendance Tracker' sent to them each week and identifying tutees who need a 'Tutor Chat' or 'C1: Tutor Home Contact.'

- For any 'Tutor Chats,' the tutor is expected to complete these during the attendance focused tutor session of the week and record these on ClassCharts. The conversations and their outcomes must be recorded on ClassCharts by 14.45pm on Thursday each week.
- Tutors are expected to complete all phone calls home and have recorded them (and the outcomes) on ClassCharts by 14.45pm on Thursday each week.

After the deadline each Thursday, the Attendance Lead will check that ClassCharts reflects the actions indicated by the 'Attendance Tracker.' In the first instance of non-completion, the Attendance Lead will contact the tutor directly and request the actions be completed. Where non-completion of actions becomes repeated, the Attendance Lead will refer these instances to Line-Managers (who will follow disciplinary actions.)

Attendance Lead Responsibility in Practice

The Attendance Lead is responsible for checking ClassCharts and the 'Attendance Tracker' each week on Thursday. From this, the Attendance Lead is responsible for:

- Holding tutors to account (for 'Tutor Chats' and 'C1: Tutor Home Contact')
- Referring tutors to Line-Managers where incompleteness of actions is recurrent.
- Giving a prize weekly to the tutor group (in each year group) with the highest attendance.
- Identifying students who require letters and actioning this the relevant person
- Arranging and holding meetings with parents/carers and students who have met the criteria.
- Recording each letter sent and meeting held on ClassCharts.
- Recommending parents/carers (whose child has exceeded the threshold) receive a fine.
- Liaising with SLT to ensure safeguarding, SEN and external factors are considered in any action taken.
- Analysing the attendance data at the end of each term to establish students who are most improved and to instruct the next term's attendance foci.

Praise and Rewards

High Attendance

In the same way our escalating actions mirror our behaviour policy, so too will our rewards scheme.

Competition Winners:

To raise awareness of attendance and its importance amongst students, we will introduce a competitive element; the tutor group with the highest attendance from each year group will receive a prize during the attendance focused tutor session.



Individual Prizes:

For each week a student attends school with no absences, they will receive an additional 'golden ticket' to improve their chances in receiving a prize.

At the end of each term, students who have 100% attendance will receive a certificate from the Head.

At the end of the school year, students who are in the top range of attendance will be offered a place on a trip.

Improved Attendance

At the end of each term, students who have greatly improved in their attendance and/or have achieved the goals set out for them during an attendance meeting, will be invited for tea and cake with the Head to receive a personal congratulations.

Attendance and Registration Policy (P13)

Responsibility: Neil Pritchard, Head Teacher

Bi- annual review schedule

Next Review: January 2025

Adopted by T&L Committee January 2023

Verified by FGB February 2023

T&L Approving signature: _____

Date: _____

Head Teacher signature: _____

Date: _____

Chair of Governors signature : _____

Date: _____