Pewsey Vale School Attendance Policy

Approved by: Chantel Dean	**Date:** 6th January 2025
Last reviewed on:	

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Contents

Policy statement

Acorn Education Trust is committed to ensuring that students and parents/ carers understand the absolute importance of full attendance at school. Absence has a detrimental effect on a student's academic progress; indeed, it is the greatest determinant of under-achievement at all phases. Poor attendance or sporadic absences may also be an indicator of underlying issues that need resolving either inside or outside of school. Absence from school may also mean that a young person is more vulnerable to safeguarding risks, such as sexual and criminal exploitation, including county lines activity. As such, all our schools invest time and money in working with families to make student attendance a top priority. As a Trust, we take our duty to safeguard children and our mission to challenge educational and social disadvantage seriously. Securing great attendance for all students is at the heart of our work. We work tirelessly to create a culture in our schools where students want to attend and we see great attendance as a benchmark of our climate.

1. Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024)](#), through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

> Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils

> Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance

> Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence

> Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled

> Acting early to address patterns of absence

> Building strong relationships with families to make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024)](#) and [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

> Part 6 of the [Education Act 1996](#)

> Part 3 of the [Education Act 2002](#)

> Part 7 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)

> [The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments)](#)

> [The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013](#)

It also refers to:

> [School census guidance](#)

> [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)

> [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

3. Roles and responsibilities

Outstanding achievement can only be achieved if it is recognised to be everyone's shared responsibility.

3.1 Acorn Education Trustees will:

- Scrutinise attendance key performance indicators
- Hold the Executive to account for annually reviewing the attendance policy
- Set high expectations of all trust leaders, school leaders, staff, pupils and parents
- Make sure trust/school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
    - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
    - Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Recognise and promote the importance of school attendance throughout trust/ school's policies and ethos
- Make sure the trust/school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- Make sure all trust leaders and schools within the trust, have high aspirations for all pupils, but adapt processes and support to pupils' individual needs

    The Chair and Vice Chair of the Safeguarding, Standards and Improvement committee are the link trustees for attendance.

3.2 Acorn Education Trust Executive will:

- Hold the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy
- Report to the Trust Board via the Safeguarding, Standards and Improvement committee on a termly basis
- Regularly review and challenge attendance data and help school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Work with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and provide support and challenge
- Monitor attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluate the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils needs
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, work with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
- Make sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
    - The importance of good attendance
    - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
    - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
    - The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Make sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data

3.3 Acorn Education Trust schools will:

- Accept that outstanding attendance is everyone's responsibility
- Formally recognise good attendance and punctuality (above 97%)
- Challenge attendance that is less than good and set targets for students to improve
- Intervene when poor attendance / punctuality becomes a problem and before it becomes a habit
- Follow up on any non-attendance with no contact on the first day of absence with a phone call
- Deal sympathetically with any problem a student may have which is causing attendance / punctuality to decline and always stay in regular contact with parents / carers
- Act swiftly to reduce absence, in particular persistent absence, with a specific focus on immediate support for vulnerable learners
- Work actively with children and families in Nursery and Reception classes to emphasise the benefits of high attendance; to instil and reinforce good habits of attendance from the start of their educational journey
- Ensure every child of statutory school age has access to full time education
- Communicate a clear and transparent process around the management of attendance to parents and carers following the listed process: prevention and reward / recognition; support

and challenge with punitive measures where necessary; and legal action and / or external agencies when other measures have no impact

- Not to grant extended leave during term time and will automatically refer to the local authority to fine

- Involve other external agencies if we believe there could be wider safeguarding issues surrounding the child

- Ensure that systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all students, including those who are educated off-site, are implemented

3.4 The Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

> Implementing this policy at the school

> Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to the Academy Council and the Trust attendance lead

> Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils

> Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies

> Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising Assistant Head i.c attendance to be able to do so

> Working with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers

> Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs

> Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels

3.5 The Designated Senior Leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader (also known as the 'senior attendance champion') is responsible for:

> Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school

> Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance

> Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes

> Monitoring and analysing attendance data

> Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis

> Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance

> Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement

> Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the headteacher

> Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence

> Advising the headteacher / attendance admin support (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices

> Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff

- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Chantel Dean.

3.6 Class teachers/form tutors

Class teachers/form tutors are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1), and submitting this information to the school office within the first 10 minutes of the session.

3.7 School admin/office staff

School admin/office staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the head of year/provision support lead where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

3.8 Parents

Where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult the school and/or local authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

- 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 them)

Parents are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 8.45am on the day of the absence (and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or local authority
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting Sarah Hunt who is our first line caller, and Teri Youngs who will chase up attendance and undertake the SAM meetings.

3.9 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day, on time
- Attend every timetabled session, on time

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an electronic attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, whether every pupil is:

> Present

> Attending an approved off-site educational activity

> Absent

> Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

> The original entry

> The amended entry

> The reason for the amendment

> The date on which the amendment was made

> The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

> Whether the absence is authorised or not

> The nature of the activity, where a pupil is attending an approved educational activity

> The nature of circumstances, where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

The school day starts at 8:30am and ends at 2:45pm

Pupils must arrive in school by 8:25am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8:30am and will be kept open until 8:45am The register for the second session will be taken at 1:45pm and will be kept open until 2:00pm

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8:30am or as soon as practically possible, by calling the school attendance office staff, who can be contacted via 01672 565000, selecting option 2.

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised, unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where the absence is longer than 3 days, or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

Parents wishing to request a leave of absence should email the Headteacher directly outlining the reasons for planned absence. A member of staff will then contact you. Requesting a leave of absence does not mean that the absence will be authorised.

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

> Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code

> After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

> Pewsey Vale School informs parents/carers of punctuality issues via the online platform SIMs. Late reports are generated weekly and tutors are informed of tutee who are persistently late. Tutors will speak to the student directly and may pass this information to the Head of Year. Parents/ carers may be invited in to an attendance meeting to discuss ongoing punctuality issues. A reward system is in place for students displaying excellent or improving attendance and punctuality.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

> Call the pupil's parent on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may contact police, social services and/or the educational welfare officer

> Identify whether the absence is approved or not

> Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session(s) for which the pupil was absent

> Call the parent on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer

> Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the pupil's youth offending team officer

> Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance

> Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals

> Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with we may issue a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention (see section 5.2 below), as appropriate.

4.6 Reporting to parents

The school will regularly inform parents (see definition of 'parent', as used in this policy, in section 3.7 above) about their child's attendance and absence levels <mark>via SIMs</mark>.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings.

The headteacher will only grant a **leave of absence** to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the [2024 school attendance regulations](). These circumstances are:

> Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad

> Attending an interview

> Study leave

> A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable

> Exceptional circumstances

A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to pupils during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, leave of absence will not be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

Headteachers within Acorn Education Trust are expected to liaise with other schools within the Trust when families request time off in term time if there are siblings at more than one school.

Leave of absence will not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least <mark>two weeks</mark> before the absence. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence. If a pupil is over compulsory school age (e.g. sixth form), leave can be requested or agreed by the pupil or a parent they normally live with.

Other valid reasons for **authorised absence** include (but are not limited to):

> Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)

> Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart

> Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

> If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

Other reasons the school may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):

> Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school

> Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)

> Attending provision arranged by the local authority

> Attending work experience

> If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

5.2 Sanctions

Our school will make use of the full range of potential sanctions – including, but not limited to, those listed below – to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

Penalty notices

The headteacher (or someone authorised by them), local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

If the school issues a penalty notice, it will check with the local authority before doing so, and send it a copy of any penalty notice issued.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

> Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks)

> Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil

> Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution

> Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day).

Each parent who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

If a **second** penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days.

A **third** penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

Notices to improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

They will include:

> Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences
> The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under [section 7 of the Education Act 1996](#)
> Details of the support provided so far
> Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
> A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
> A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
> The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

Pewsey Vale School's strategies for rewarding and improving attendance include:

1. Engage Families and Communities

- **Family Communication:** Regularly communicate with parents/carers about the importance of attendance. Use newsletters, meetings, and phone calls to keep them informed. Ensure SIMs displays accurate live data.
- **Community Partnerships:** Partner community organisations, and social services to provide resources and support for families facing challenges that may affect attendance.

2. Create a Positive School Environment

- **Welcoming Atmosphere:** Ensure that the school is a welcoming place where students feel safe and valued through the **I belong** incentive. This includes fostering positive relationships between students, teachers, and staff.
- **Inclusive Culture:** Promote an inclusive culture that respects diversity and addresses issues like bullying, which can deter attendance.
- **Breakfast Clubs:** Students can access a free hot breakfast between 8am and 8:30am daily.

3. Early Intervention

- **Monitor Attendance Data:** Use data systems to track attendance daily. Identify patterns and intervene early when a student starts missing school frequently.

- **Personalised Support:** Provide targeted support for students who have chronic absenteeism. This might include mentoring, counselling, or academic support.

4. Incentives and Recognition

- **Reward Good Attendance:** Reward system using achievement points for students with good or improved attendance. This could be through certificates, recognition in school assemblies, or small prizes.
- **Positive Reinforcement:** Highlight the importance of attendance through campaigns that celebrate students who attend regularly.

5. Address Barriers to Attendance

- **Transportation Solutions:** Where possible, work with local authorities to provide transportation for students who have difficulty getting to school.
- **Address Health Issues:** Provide access to health services at school, such as school nurses, to address health-related absences.
- **Mental Health Support:** Inform families of external mental health services and support for students dealing with anxiety, depression, or other issues that impact their attendance.

6. Engage Students

- **Student Voice:** Involve students in discussions about attendance. Gather their input on what might help improve their attendance and make school more engaging for them.
- **Relevant Curriculum:** Ensure that the curriculum is engaging and relevant to students' lives and future goals, which can motivate them to attend regularly.

7. Collaboration with Social Services

- **Case Management:** For students with significant attendance issues, a case management approach involving social workers or key workers to address underlying causes.
- **Wraparound Services:** Coordinate with social services to provide comprehensive support for families dealing with issues like housing instability, food insecurity, or domestic violence.

8. Enforce Attendance Policies

- **Clear Attendance Policies:** Attendance policies are clear, communicated and accessible to all stakeholders, and consistently enforced.
- **Legal Consequences:** As a last resort, work with local authorities to address chronic absenteeism through legal means, ensuring that all other interventions have been attempted first.

9. Professional Development for Staff

- **Training:** Provide training for teachers and staff on the importance of attendance and strategies for improving it. This includes understanding trauma-informed practices and how to engage with students and families effectively.
- **Attendance Teams:** Attendance improvement team within the school, comprising Senior leaders, pastoral support workers, and administrators who focus on improving attendance.

- **Regular Review:** Regularly review attendance data to assess the effectiveness of interventions. Adjustable strategies based on what the data shows.
- **Continuous Improvement:** Encourage a culture of continuous improvement where feedback from students, staff, and parents is used to refine attendance strategies.

We may contact you if we are concerned about a pupil's attendance and offer support to improve attendance. Where attendance does not improve a school attendance meeting may be held to look at further supportive measures to improve attendance. We may also offer parents an attendance contract which would be put in place alongside an Early Support Assessment which would run for a minimum period of a school term.

7. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

7.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance / 7.2 Pupils absent due to mental or physical ill health or SEND

1.Understand and Identify Complex Barriers

- **Comprehensive Assessment:** Thorough assessment of the individual student's situation. This could involve interviews with the student, family, and teachers, as well as reviewing attendance data and academic performance.
- **Holistic Approach:** Recognise that barriers to attendance are often interconnected, involving family issues (e.g., poverty, housing instability), health problems (e.g., chronic illness, mental health), and school-related factors (e.g., bullying, academic struggles).

2. Collaborate with Families

- **Build Trusting Relationships:** Establish trust with families through regular, non-judgmental communication. Use home visits or community meetings to connect with families on a personal level.
- **Address Family Needs:** Collaborate with social services to address family issues that impact attendance, such as food insecurity, lack of transportation, or unstable housing. Provide information on available community resources.

3. Provide Targeted Support to Students

- **Personalised Intervention Plans:** Develop individualised intervention plans that address specific barriers each student faces. These should be created with input from the student, family, and relevant school staff.
- **Counselling and Mentorship:** Where available, offer counselling services for students dealing with emotional or mental health issues
- **Pastoral support provisions:** Explore the appropriateness of internal provisions such as Springboard. Review current curriculum, including population group, tutor/ class groups and start/finish time. Implement a reduced timetable in extenuating circumstances and/or when supported by a medical practitioner.

4. Remove In-School Barriers

- **Restorative Practices:** Use restorative practices to resolve conflicts and improve student relationships, fostering a more supportive school environment.

- **Academic Support:**
  - **Tutoring and Remediation:** Provide tutoring, after-school programs, or summer school to help students catch up academically if they've fallen behind.
  - **Flexible Learning Options:** Consider alternative education programs or flexible scheduling for students who struggle with traditional school hours or environments.

5. Coordinate with External Partners

- **Social Services Collaboration:** Work closely with social services, healthcare providers, and community organisations to provide comprehensive support to families. This might include mental health services, housing assistance, or access to food programs.

6. Monitor Progress and Adjust Interventions

- **Regular Check-Ins:** Schedule regular meetings with the student and their family to review progress, discuss ongoing challenges, and adjust the intervention plan as necessary.
- **Data-Driven Decision Making:** Use attendance data, academic performance, and behavioural indicators to track the effectiveness of interventions.
- **Feedback Loop:** Create a feedback loop where students, families, and staff can provide input on the effectiveness of the strategies being implemented. Use this feedback to refine approaches continuously.

Where a pupil has an education health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that related to the pupil's needs, the school will inform the local authority.

7.3 Pupils returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence

1. Pre-Return Planning

- **Early Communication:**
  - **Liaison with Family:** Before the student returns, engage in open communication with their family to understand the reasons for the absence, any ongoing challenges, and what support the student may need.
  - **Student Involvement:** If appropriate, involve the student in these discussions to gauge their feelings and concerns about returning to school.
- **Develop a Reintegration Plan:**
  - **Personalised Support Plan:** Create a tailored reintegration plan that addresses the student's academic, social, and emotional needs. This plan should be flexible, allowing adjustments as the student settles back into school.
  - **Coordinate with Teachers:** Ensure that all relevant staff, including teachers, pastoral support staff, and administrators, are aware of the student's return and the support plan in place.

2. Emotional and Social Support

  - **Provide Access to School nurse:** Offer access to school nurse to support the student's emotional well-being. Regular check-ins with a trusted adult to monitor adjustment and address any anxiety or stress.
  - **Peer Support Groups:** If appropriate, involve the student in peer support groups where they can share their experiences and receive encouragement from others who have faced similar challenges.

- o **Facilitate Social Connections:** Encourage the student to reconnect with friends and participate in group activities or extracurricular clubs they previously enjoyed to help restore their sense of belonging.
- o **Monitor Social Dynamics:** Keep an eye on the student's social interactions to ensure they are not feeling isolated or facing difficulties in re-establishing friendships.

3. Ongoing Monitoring and Adjustment

- **Regular Check-Ins:**
  - o **Frequent Monitoring:** Schedule regular meetings with the student to discuss how they are coping with their return. These check-ins should be an opportunity to adjust their support plan as needed.
  - o **Parental Involvement:** Keep parents informed of any ongoing concerns. Encourage them to share observations from home that might inform adjustments at school.
- **Adjust Support Gradually:**
  - o **Transition to Independence:** As the student becomes more settled, gradually reduce the level of support, encouraging independence while ensuring that the student continues to feel supported.
  - o **Celebrate Milestones:** Recognise and celebrate the student's successes to boost confidence and motivation.

Gradual Reintegration – Exceptional circumstances only.

- **Phased Return:**
  - o **Part-Time Schedule:** Consider a phased return, starting with a part-time schedule if needed, gradually increasing the student's time in school as they become more comfortable.
  - o **Support Transition Period:** Use this time to assess the student's readiness to resume a full schedule and to make any necessary adjustments to the plan.
- **Safe Space:**
  - o **Designated Support Area:** Provide a safe space within the school where the student can go if they feel overwhelmed.

8. Attendance monitoring

A pupil's parent/carer is expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 4.2).

If a pupil's absence goes above three days, the school will contact the parent/carer of the pupil to discuss the reasons for this. If a pupil is late to school for more than five days, the school will also contact the parent/carer of the pupil to discuss the reasons for the lateness.

If a pupil's absence continue to rise after contacting their parent/carer and offering support to help improve a pupil's attendance, we will consider involving the education welfare officer.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level

absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

Pewsey Vale School collects and stores attendance data. It may be used to:

- Track the attendance of individual pupils
  Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern
- Monitor and evaluate those children identified as being in need of intervention and support

8.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level.

Specific pupil information will be shared with the DfE on request.

Data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics.

The school will benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement, and share this with the governing board.

8.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and
- Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

8.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
- Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severed absence, and their families (see section 8.4 below)
- Provide regular attendance reports to [class teachers/form tutors], to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinators, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads)
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

> Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

8.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's strategy for improving attendance.

The school will:

> Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence

> Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education

> Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:

- o Discuss attendance and engagement at school
- o Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
- o Explain the help that is available
- o Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
- o Review any existing actions or interventions

> Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant

> Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence

> Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 5.2, above).

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by Acorn Education Trust attendance lead and the Headteacher.

At every review, the policy will be approved by the Acorn Education Trust Board.

10. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

> Child protection and safeguarding policy

> Behaviour policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
****	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination

Pewsey Vale School **Attendance** Policy

X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: • In police detention

		• Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or
		• Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes

Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session

Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

Pewsey Vale School **Attendance** Policy