

Kidderminster Primary Schools' Alliance
KPSA



A group of maintained schools, working together on promoting improved outcomes for our children.

Chaddesley Corbett Endowed Primary School, Comberton Primary School, Cookley Sebright Primary School, Offmore Primary School, St Catherine's CE Primary School

Attendance Policy

Adopted by Comberton Primary School



**Comberton
Primary School**

*A caring community
for all to shine*

**Our expectation is
All children come to school everyday, on time**

Policy Written – September 2025

Agreed by Raising Standards Nov 2026

Review date – September 2026

This Attendance Policy will be reviewed annually by the school's governing body to ensure its effectiveness and compliance with statutory requirements. Any amendments will be communicated to staff, parents, and carers as necessary.

Comberton Primary School's Attendance Champion is Mrs D Frost, Headteacher.

Contents

1. Legal frameworks
2. Importance of good attendance
3. Day-to-day processes for managing attendance including how to report a child's absence
4. School day – arrival and collection times and term dates
5. Coding of attendance/absence
6. Requesting a leave of absence (including holidays in term time)
7. Strategies for Using Data to Target Attendance Improvement Efforts
8. Multi-tier approach – what is it?
 - Tier 1 – Universal strategies
 - Tier 2 – Individualised strategies
 - Tier 3 – Higher needs strategies
9. Safeguarding and non-attendance
10. Definitions – Types of authorised and unauthorised leave
11. Details of the National Framework for Penalty Notices
12. Removal from school roll and elective home education (EHE)

Appendices

Attendance register codes

Escalation Flow Chart

1. Legal frameworks

This attendance policy operates within the framework of statutory attendance regulations outlined in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 and subsequent amendments. Comberton Primary School adhere to the following key attendance acts in the UK:

Education Act 1996: The Education Act 1996 is the primary piece of legislation that sets out the legal framework for school attendance in England and Wales. It outlines the responsibilities of parents, carers, and schools in ensuring regular school attendance. Sections 444-447 of the Act deal with offenses related to non-attendance and penalties for parents and carers.

Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006: These regulations specify the procedures for registering pupils and maintaining attendance records in schools in England. They also define the circumstances in which a pupil can be marked as absent or present.

Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013: These regulations amended the 2006 regulations and introduced stricter rules on authorizing term-time holidays. Under these regulations, headteachers are only allowed to grant leave of absence in exceptional circumstances.

School Attendance Code of Practice: The School Attendance Code of Practice provides guidance to schools, local authorities, and parents on the law and procedures relating to school attendance and absence. It sets out the principles for promoting good attendance and dealing with poor attendance.

Local Authority School Attendance Guidance: Each local authority in the UK may provide its own guidance and policies on school attendance. Schools should be aware of and follow the specific guidance issued by their local authority.

Department for Education (DFE) Guidance: The DFE periodically issues guidance documents and updates related to school attendance. Schools should stay informed about the latest DFE guidance 2024 and follow any recommendations or requirements outlined in these documents.

Child Employment Legislation: Legislation such as the Children and Young Persons Act 1933 and the Children (Performances) Regulations 1968 govern the employment and attendance of children involved in performances, modelling, and other activities outside of regular school hours.

Children Missing Education (CME) Statutory Guidance: This guidance outlines the responsibilities of local authorities in identifying and tracking children who may be missing education, including those who are not on a school roll or are not receiving suitable education.

Section 19 of the Education Act 1996 (England and Wales) outlines the duty of local authorities in ensuring that suitable education is provided for children of compulsory school age.

2. The Importance of School Attendance

School attendance is not merely a requirement but a fundamental pillar of education. Indeed, **Articles 28 and 29 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child states its importance as a fundamental human right.** It plays a pivotal role in shaping academic success, personal growth, and future prospects, making it an indispensable aspect of any educational system. Regular attendance to school can have a significant impact on:

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

3. Day-to-day processes for managing attendance including how to report a child's absence

Parents or carers must contact the school on the first day of their child's absence, preferably by 9am, to provide the reason for the absence. If you haven't let us know why your child is absent from school, your child will be marked as unauthorised. School will attempt to contact parents on Day 1 of absence. If we fail to hear from parents, a visit to the family home will be made on Day 3. The school's telephone number is 01562 754704 or you can email the school office on office@comberton.worcs.sch.uk

4. School Times of the Day and term dates

School day - The school day begins at 8.45am and ends at 3.15pm. Morning registration opens at 8.45am and closes at 8.55am. Children are expected to be in the playground just prior to 8.45 to allow for a smooth transition into the classrooms. Children need to arrive on time as learning starts straight away. Late arrivals are also very disruptive for both the office staff and the other children who have already settled to their morning tasks.

The gates are locked at 8.55am. Any pupils arriving after this time, must enter via the main foyer and sign their child in.

The school day ends at 3.15pm. Gates open around 10 minutes before the end of the day to allow parents time to access the site. Any children not collected by 3.25 (at the latest), will be sent to After School Club and will be charged accordingly.

Term dates - As a group of maintained schools, our term dates are outlined on Worcestershire County Council's website that can be viewed [here](#) and each individual school has their dates published on their website. Please use these dates to plan your family holidays.

5. Coding of Attendance (and absence)

Attendance will be recorded using the DFE's statutory attendance codes. These codes are outlined in Appendix 1 in this policy.

6. Requesting a Leave of Absence (including term time holidays)

Parents or carers must request leave of absence for their child in writing at least 10 school days in advance. Leave of absence during term time will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances. Parents should be aware that school does not authorise holidays in term time, as a family holiday is not considered 'exceptional'.

A leave of absence request form can be obtained from the school office or emailed to parents on request.

If leave has not been sought, and the absence extends to 5 or more days, school has to report this absence to the local authority. School will also act if it 'suspects' that a holiday has been taken and no leave of absence form was completed.

7. Strategies for Using Data to Target Attendance Improvement Efforts

Schools use a data driven approach/system to target families and children where attendance is not at the expected level. The trigger points for intervention are outlined on our 'Attendance procedures' document. This document is appendix 4.

Our letter triggers are data driven and, although some individual exceptional circumstances may be taken into account, (such as severe illness or hospitalisation), you will be notified at the outlined points if your child's absence falls below a certain level. As detailed in Department for Education's (DFE) "Working Together to Improve School Attendance" statutory paper 2024, school have a duty to report and act on attendance concerns.

Where concerns have been identified, parents are first notified by letter. If no improvement is seen, parents would be invited to attend and engage in any offers of support from the school. This may include meetings with the attendance champion (Headteacher)/family support worker, where a support plan or attendance contract would be created. Failure to engage with support would leave schools with no option other than the prosecution route.

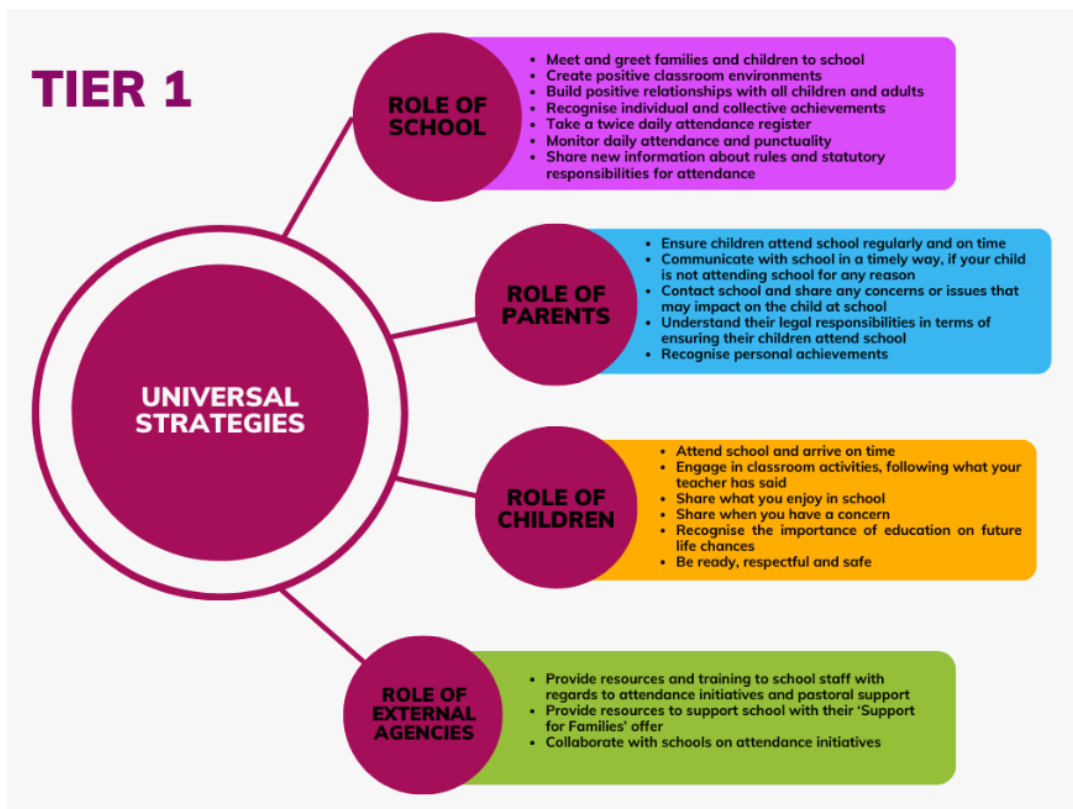
An attendance contract is a formal agreement between parents and the school or local authority to address irregular attendance, providing support as an alternative to prosecution. It is not legally binding but serves as a formal route to secure engagement with support when voluntary early help plans have not worked. An attendance contract aims to offer support rather than punishment.

8. Tiered approach to attendance

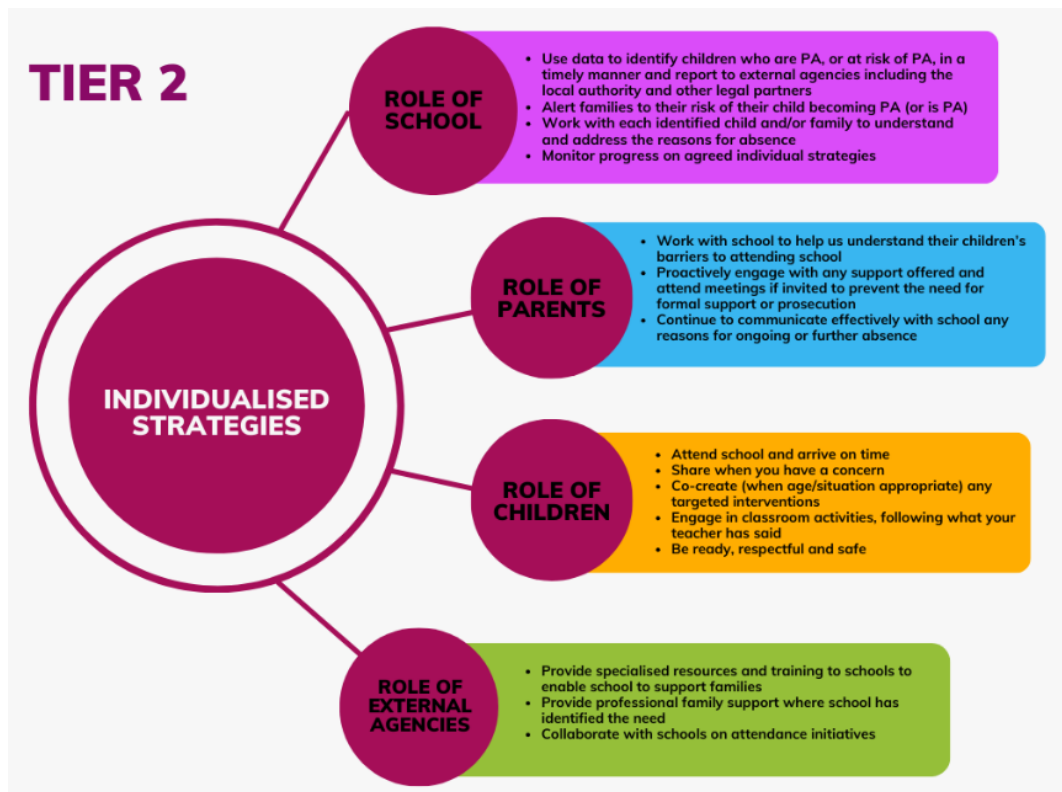
To guarantee a comprehensive and consistent approach to attendance, KPSA schools implement a Multi-Tiered System of Support. A Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) for school attendance involves three tiers of intervention, with roles for teachers, the school, children, parents, and external agencies – including the Local Authority. Data-driven decision-making and training requirements are pivotal to the implementation of this system. The system aligns with the Department for Education's (DFE) "Working Together to Improve School Attendance" statutory paper 2024.

Parents or guardians are legally responsible for ensuring their child's regular school attendance. Failing to do so can lead to legal consequences.

A) Tier 1 - Universal Approach: Establishing a baseline universal attendance approach that benefits all children.



B) Tier 2 – Internal individualised Strategies and Early Help Support: Tailoring strategies to individual needs and providing early help support for persistent attendance challenges.



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



9. Safeguarding and attendance

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) guidance places a strong emphasis on school attendance as a key component of safeguarding. It highlights that consistent school attendance is crucial for identifying and responding to potential safeguarding concerns early on. Persistent absenteeism is identified as a serious safeguarding issue, particularly since research has shown links between low attendance and risks of exploitation, crime, and mental health challenges.

In the context of school attendance and education in the UK, the terms “Persistent Absence”, “Risk of Persistent Absence”, and “Severe Absence”; are used to describe different levels of irregular attendance by students. These terms are important for tracking and addressing attendance issues.

Persistent Absence (PA):

Definition: Persistent Absence is a term used to describe a level of student absence from school that is considered to be a safeguarding concern and recorded as such.

Threshold: In England, a student is considered to be persistently absent when they have an attendance rate of 90% or below. This means they have missed 10% or more of their school sessions.

Risk of Persistent Absence:

Definition: The term "Risk of Persistent Absence" refers to a situation in which a student's attendance is at a level that suggests they are at risk of becoming persistently absent.

Threshold: While there is no specific threshold for "Risk of Persistent Absence," it is typically used to describe students whose attendance is consistently low and becoming a concern, as the school communicates to parents in days, we identify 10 days or more as Risk of PA and we will follow internal school procedures.

Severe Absence (or Severe Persistent Absence):

Definition: The term "Severe Absence" or "Severe Persistent Absence" is used to describe the most serious cases of non-attendance.

Threshold: Particular focus and support will be provided to pupils who are absent from school more than they are present (those missing 50% or more of school). These severely absent pupils may find it more difficult to be in school or face bigger barriers to their regular attendance and as such are likely to need more intensive support across a range of external agency partners.

10. Absence Definitions

Your child is marked as absent if...

- They arrive at school after the register has closed.
- They do not attend school for any reason.

Examples when absence is authorised

- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave
- Emergency medical or orthodontal appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave. Routine dental or optician appointments are not authorised.
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave (such as a day for a close family member's marriage)
- An absence due to a sudden family emergency
- Suspension from school

Examples when absence is unauthorised

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Arrival at school after the register has closed.
- Absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
- Absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time (this includes marriages abroad where a holiday is also taken)
- Routine medical appointments
- Where a DfE code does not exist for the purpose of the absence

11. Details of the National Framework for Penalty Notices

Families that take holidays in term time are issued with a penalty notice. Examples of which can be seen in Figure 4 below.

TERM TIME HOLIDAYS

WHAT THE NEW RULES MEAN FOR PARENTS

“I WANT TO GO ON HOLIDAY IN TERM TIME”

Firstly, you must let the school know your plans. A term time holiday will not be authorised but there are some exceptional circumstances when leave will be granted. Please collect a form from the school office.

If your child will miss 5 or more school days for a holiday, you will be given a penalty notice fine. The fine is £160. This is reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days

FOR EVERY CHILD, A PENALTY IS GIVEN

A single parent with three children would receive a penalty notice of £480, reduced to £240 if paid within 21 days.

£480

FOR EVERY PARENT, A PENALTY IS GIVEN

A couple with one child would receive a penalty notice of £320, reduced to £160 if paid within 21 days.

£320

“WHAT IF I DECIDE TO GO ANYWAY? I WILL PAY A FINE, IT’S STILL CHEAPER”

Obviously, this is up to you. However, if, in any period of not more than 3 years, you decide to take another holiday, the penalty notices issued are more severe.

The second time a holiday is taken, there is no discount given for an early payment. A third time and there will be no fine option. Instead, your case will be taken straight to court. A magistrate can fine each parent £2500 per child.

2ND TIME (WITHIN 3 YEARS)

For two parents with ...

- 1 child = £320
- 2 children = £640
- 3 children = £960

£640

No discount for early repayment

3RD TIME (WITHIN 3 YEARS)

Case goes straight to court.

For two parents with ...

- 1 child = up to £5,000
- 2 children = up to £10,000
- 3 children = up to £15,000

£10,000

OTHER UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

If your child is absent for 5 or more days within 10 weeks, the school will consider prosecution. This is when we have received no reason for absence, the reason for absence is not accepted or school suspects that a holiday has been taken. The penalty notices are the same as for holidays (as outlined above). Schools have to report this absence to the local authority.

Your child is considered persistently absent if they have more than 20 days off in a school year. Being persistently absent has a significant impact on how well children do in school. Frequent absence or consistent unauthorised absence is considered as a safeguarding concern and is logged as such.

In addition to term time holidays, penalty notices are also used when schools have other ongoing attendance concerns.

As outlined in our Tier 2 and Tier 3 approach, if voluntary support or attendance contracts are unsuccessful, an Education Supervision Order (ESO) can provide formal legal intervention without prosecution. Before proceeding with an ESO, the school and local authority should exhaust voluntary support options and ensure the order would benefit the pupil and parent. Persistent non-

compliance with an ESO can lead to prosecution in the Magistrates Court by the local authority. Upon conviction, parents may face fines of up to £1,000.

Local authorities have the power to prosecute parents for various offences related to attendance: Failure to comply with a school attendance order may result in fines of up to £1,000. Failure to secure regular attendance at school or alternative provision may lead to fines of up to £2,500 and/or imprisonment. Persistent non-compliance with an Education Supervision Order may result in fines of up to £1,000.

12. Removal from roll and Elective Home Education

This refers to the process of a child's name being officially taken off the school's register, typically due to extended non-attendance or other circumstances. Elective Home Education (EHE) is an option that some parents choose after removal from roll, where they take responsibility for providing education to their child at home.

School must inform Worcestershire Local Authority of all deletions from our admission register when a child is taken off roll. Therefore, if a parent wishes to remove their child from the school roll to electively home educate then the following process must be followed.

- Parents should notify the school, in writing, of their intention to home educate their child/children. This letter should include the date they wish their child's name to be removed from the school roll.
- School will acknowledge receipt of the letter and will invite parent/s to a meeting (unless a request not to is included within the letter).
- At the meeting, school will share a document with parents that outlines their responsibilities in terms of home education for clarity.
- School will inform the local authority of the removal of the child from their school roll for elective home education.
- The local authority will notify the EHE team.

Appendix 1: Coding Attendance in line with DFE guidance 2024:

Code \ (Present at the school):
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pupils must be present during registration to be counted.• If a pupil leaves after registration, they are still counted as attending for statistical purposes.
Code L (Late arrival before the register is closed):
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The pupil arrives after the register starts but before it closes.• Schools should discourage late arrival and set a consistent time limit for open registration, not exceeding 30 minutes.• If a pupil arrives late after the register closes, mark them as absent using code U or another appropriate absence code.
Code K (Attending education provision arranged by the local authority):
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pupil attends educational provision arranged by the local authority, not by the school.• Examples include attending courses at college or receiving home tutoring.• Schools must record the nature of the provision and ensure notification of absences.
Code V (Attending an educational visit or trip):
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pupil attends a school-arranged educational visit or trip supervised by school staff.• Must take place during the recorded session.• If pupil doesn't attend, record absence using relevant absence code.
Code P (Participating in a sporting activity):
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pupil attends an approved educational sporting activity.• Criteria for recording attendance include approval by the school, educational nature of the activity, and appropriate supervision.• Schools must ensure safeguarding measures and record absences with relevant codes.
Code W (Attending work experience):
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pupil attends work experience as part of their education arranged by the local authority or school.• Criteria for recording attendance are similar to other approved educational activities.• Schools must ensure safeguarding measures and record absences with relevant codes.
Code B (Attending any other approved educational activity):
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pupil attends an approved educational activity other than sports or work experience.• Criteria for recording attendance are similar to other approved educational activities.• Schools must record the nature of the activity and ensure safeguarding measures.
Code D (Dual registered at another school):
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Used when a pupil is registered at more than one school, indicating absence with leave to attend the other school.• Main examples include attendance at a pupil referral unit, hospital school, or special school temporarily.• Schools must promptly follow up on unexpected or unexplained absences to avoid double counting.
Code C1 (Leave of absence for regulated performance or employment abroad):
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Schools grant leave for pupils to participate in regulated performances or employment abroad under specific circumstances.• Criteria for granting leave include licenses issued by local authorities or exemptions.

- Schools must record the absence using this code and consider its impact on the pupil's education.

Code M (Leave of absence for medical or dental appointment):

- Schools encourage appointments outside of school hours; otherwise, prior agreement is necessary.
- Leave of absence is granted under specific conditions, including exceptional circumstances.
- Absences for medical or dental appointments are recorded using this code.

Code J (Leave of absence for interview for employment or admission):

- Schools can grant leave for pupils to attend interviews for employment or admission to another educational institution.
- Applications for leave must be made in advance, and leave is granted based on specific criteria.
- The interview must occur during the recorded session, and the absence is classified as authorised.

Code S (Leave of absence for studying for a public examination):

- Schools can grant leave for pupils to study for public examinations under specific conditions, agreed in advance with parents.
- Study leave should be granted sparingly, and provisions must be made for pupils who choose to continue attending school for revision.
- Absences for studying for public examinations are recorded using this code.

Code X (Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school):

- Schools can grant leave for non-compulsory school-age pupils to attend school part-time under certain circumstances.
- Absences for non-compulsory school-age pupils are recorded using this code, with exceptions noted.
- For pupils subject to a part-time timetable, this code should not be used, and appropriate absence codes should be applied.

Code C2 (Leave of absence for compulsory school age pupil subject to part-time timetable):

- Schools can grant leave for compulsory school-age pupils to temporarily reduce their timetable to part-time in exceptional circumstances, agreed upon with parents.
- Absences for pupils with part-time timetables are recorded using this code, ensuring agreement between the school and parents.

Code C (Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances):

- Schools may grant leave of absence at their discretion, but only for exceptional circumstances.
- Each application is assessed individually, considering specific facts and circumstances.
- Absences for exceptional circumstances are recorded using this code, ensuring compliance with regulations and discretion exercised by the school.

Pregnant pupils:

- Maternity leave for pregnant pupils is treated similarly to other leave of absence for exceptional circumstances.
- Schools should act reasonably and grant an appropriate period of leave considering individual circumstances, at their discretion.

Code T (Parent travelling for occupational purposes):

- Used when a pupil's parent(s) is travelling for trade or business, and the pupil is travelling with them.
- Schools should only request proof of occupational travel when genuine doubt exists about the reason for absence.

- Pupils should ideally attend schools where their parents are travelling, being dual registered at both their main school and the one they're temporarily attending.
- Classified as authorised absence for statistical purposes.

Code R (Religious observance):

- Used when a pupil is absent on a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by their religious body.
- Schools may seek guidance from the parent's religious body to ascertain such days.
- Strategies such as setting term dates around religious observance days are encouraged.
- Classified as authorised absence for statistical purposes.

Code I (Illness - not medical or dental appointment):

- Indicates a pupil's inability to attend school due to illness, both physical and mental health related.
- Schools should not routinely request medical evidence but may do so when necessary.
- Classified as authorised absence for statistical purposes.

Code E (Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made):

- Used when a pupil is suspended or permanently excluded, and no alternative provision has been arranged.
- Alternative provision should be arranged within six consecutive school days of suspension or permanent exclusion.
- Classified as authorised absence for statistical purposes.

Code Q (Unable to attend school because of a lack of access arrangements):

- Indicates a pupil's inability to attend school due to a failure by the local authority to provide access arrangements.
- Classified as not a possible attendance for statistical purposes.

Code Y1 (Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available):

- Used when a pupil can't attend because the school is beyond walking distance and the usual transport provided by the school or local authority is unavailable.
- Walking distances for different age groups are specified.
- Classified as not a possible attendance for statistical purposes.

Code Y2 (Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel):

- Indicates a pupil's inability to attend school due to widespread travel disruptions caused by emergencies at the local, national, or international level.
- Classified as not a possible attendance for statistical purposes.

Code Y3 (Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed):

- Used when part of the school premises is unusable, and the pupil cannot practically be accommodated in the remaining usable parts.
- Classified as not a possible attendance for statistical purposes.

Code Y4 (Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed):

- Applied when the entire school site is unexpectedly closed, such as due to adverse weather.
- Attendance registers are not taken, and pupils are marked with this code to signify the closure.
- Not applicable for planned closures like weekends or holidays.
- Classified as not a possible attendance for statistical purposes.

Code Y5 (Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention):

- Used when a pupil is unable to attend due to being in police detention, remanded, or serving a sentence of detention.

- Communication with the Youth Offending Team is encouraged to support educational needs during detention.
- Classified as not a possible attendance for statistical purposes.

Code Y6 (Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law):

- Applied when a pupil's travel or attendance at school would violate public health guidance or legislation related to disease transmission.
- Classified as not a possible attendance for statistical purposes.

Code Y7 (Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause):

- Used for an unavoidable cause preventing a pupil from attending school, not covered by other specific codes.
- The nature of the unavoidable cause must be recorded.
- Classified as not a possible attendance for statistical purposes.

Code G (Holiday not granted by the school):

- Used when a pupil is absent for a holiday that the school did not approve in advance.
- Schools cannot retrospectively grant leave of absence, and absence for holidays without prior approval is considered unauthorised.
- Classified as unauthorised absence for statistical purposes.

Code N (Reason for absence not yet established):

- Employed when the reason for a pupil's absence has not been determined before the register closes.
- Schools must make efforts to ascertain the reason for absence promptly.
- If the reason cannot be established within five school days, the absence must be amended to Code O.
- Classified as unauthorised absence for statistical purposes.

Code O (Absent in other or unknown circumstances):

- Used when no reason for absence is established, or the school is not satisfied with the reason given, which doesn't align with authorised codes.
- Classified as unauthorised absence for statistical purposes.

Code U (Arrived in school after registration closed):

- Applied when a pupil arrives late after the register has closed but before the end of the session.
- Schools should discourage late arrival and set a specific time limit for registering attendance.
- Late arrival beyond the specified time results in the pupil being marked as absent.
- Classified as unauthorised absence for statistical purposes.

Administrative Code Z (Prospective pupil not on admission register):

- Utilized to set up registers in advance for prospective pupils who have not yet officially joined the school.
- Aims to streamline administrative processes.

Appendix 2 Escalation Flow Chart

ATTENDANCE ESCALATION PROCESS

