ATTENDANCE POLICY

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Brunel Academies Trust (BAT) is a company limited by guarantee with registration number 10074054 and registered offices at Unit B4C Orbital Retail Park, Thamesdown Drive, Swindon, SN25 4AN; BAT is the parent company and Sole Corporate Member of the subsidiary company, Brunel Education (BE) is a charitable company limited by guarantee with registration number 11991915, registered with the Charities Commission of England Wales (Charity Number 1214820) and with registered offices at Unit B4C Orbital Retail Park, Thamesdown Drive, Swindon, SN25 4AN

Tier 1 policies are centrally held policies relating to Education, Governance, People Services, Finance, ICT and Operations and are the direct responsibility of BAT. Tier 1 policies are created by the BAT Central Services Team but adopted and reviewed by the BAT Board.

We are committed to a sustainable future and to improving the social, economic, and environmental well-being of the community. We are dedicated to environmental improvements that foster a sustainable future and lead to social and economical improvements in the communities we operate within.

Amendments to policy		
Date	**Section**	**Amendment**

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ACADEMIES TRUST

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Statement of Intent

We want our children/pupils/students to thrive in our school every day. We build strong and enduring relationships because we believe this is the foundation children need to fully engage in our community, to feel a sense of belonging and succeed.

Every child/pupil/student has a right to access education, and **everyone** is responsible for supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and punctuality. Name of school are committed to providing the highest quality of education to our children/pupils/students and we recognise the clear link between attendance and the attainment and development of our children/pupils/students.

The aim of this Attendance Policy is to enable name of school to provide a consistent practice that actively encourages and supports the highest possible levels of attendance for all our children/pupils/students.

We support parents and carers to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of **compulsory school age** attend school regularly and in addition, promote and support punctuality when attending lessons.

We are committed to taking positive action in the line with the Equality Act (2010) regarding the needs of people with protected characteristics. These are age, disability, pregnancy and maternity, religion and belief, race, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and marriage and civil partnership. We make reasonable adjustments to avoid anyone with a protected characteristic being placed at a disadvantage. Our relentless approach to ensuring our children/pupils/students attend school and receive the education that they deserve, and are entitled to, is central to our school values.

It is our duty to strive for a goal of 100% attendance for all children/pupils/students so that they can take full advantage of the opportunities offered. It is vital that children/pupils/students attend school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for absence is unavoidable.

1. Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the statutory guidance on Working together to improve school attendance from the Department for Education (DfE). We aim to achieve this through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, which includes:

- 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 DfE's statutory guidance on Working together to improve school attendance 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 7 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006

- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/1751/contentsThe Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Equality Act 2010 https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/757/regulation/2/made

It also refers to:

- School census guidance
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools
- Ofsted's 2025 framework toolkit

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

Attendance data will be analysed every term by our attendance lead who will report back to the headteacher and governing board.

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising the deputy headteacher or assistant headteacher to be able to do so
- Working with the parents/carers 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/carers through all available channels
- Sharing information from the school register with the local authority, including:
    - Notifying the local authority when a pupil's name is added to or deleted from the school admission register outside of standard transition times
    - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who fail to attend school regularly, or who have been marked with an unauthorised absence for a continuous period of 10 school days
    - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who the school believes will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness

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3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader 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
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- 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/carers 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 Brendan Palmer and can be contacted via 01793 209198 and/or admin@churchwardschool.org.uk .

3.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 9)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance, and the headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher/deputy headteacher/assistant headteacher (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The Educational Welfare Officer is Fiona Kerrigan-Maglia and can be contacted via 01793 209198 and/or admin@churchwardschool.org.uk .

3.5 Class tutors

Class 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 on the same day.

3.6 School admin staff

School admin staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers and pupils about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents/carers and pupils to the Educational Welfare Officer where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

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3.7 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 9am 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 Fiona Kerrigan-Maglia, Education Welfare Officer, Kyrsta Anderson, Family Liaison Officer or Josie McLaughlin, Family Liaison Officer, who can be contacted via 01793 209198 and/or admin@churchwardschool.org.uk .

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Secondary school setting - Attend every timetabled session, on time.
- Sixth form setting - Call the school to report their absence before 9am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence.

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

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

We will take our attendance register at the start of each morning session of each school day and once during each afternoon 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 a place other than school
- Absent
- Absent – unable to attend due to unavoidable causes

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

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- 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 9.10am and ends at 3.10pm.

Pupils must arrive in school by 9.10am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 9.10am and will be kept open until 9.30am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1.00pm and will be kept open until 1.05pm.

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 9am, or as soon as practically possible, by calling the school admin staff, who can be contacted via 01793 209198 and/or admin@churchwardschool.org.uk .

If a pupil is unexpectedly absent and no contact has been received from a parent/carer by 9.00am, the school will follow its first-day calling procedures. This may include telephone calls, emails, text messages and, where necessary, contact with other emergency contacts provided for the pupil. Where the school is unable to establish the reason for a pupil's absence, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised until a satisfactory explanation is received. In line with safeguarding procedures, the school may undertake additional welfare checks where there are concerns regarding a pupil's safety or wellbeing.

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 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.

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.

Requests for planned absence should be submitted in writing to the Headteacher as far in advance as possible, using the school's Leave of Absence Request Form, available from the school office. Parents/carers should provide full details of the reason for the absence and the dates requested. The school will consider each request individually, taking into account the circumstances, the pupil's attendance record and any relevant guidance. Parents/carers should not make travel or accommodation arrangements until written confirmation of the school's decision has been received.

Where possible, the pupil should:

- Be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary, and attend school before/after their appointment
- Wear school uniform to their appointment, to make it easier to return to school afterwards

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible.

The pupil's parent must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. See 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

The school monitors punctuality regularly and will work with pupils and families where concerns arise. Where a pupil is persistently late, the school may contact parents/carers to discuss the reasons for lateness and identify any support that may help improve punctuality. Ongoing concerns may result in meetings with parents/carers, the implementation of an attendance support plan and, where appropriate, involvement from external agencies. The school recognises that regular punctual attendance is essential to ensure pupils do not miss valuable learning time and supports the development of positive routines and preparation for adulthood.

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 initiate safeguarding procedures and the headteacher will decide on the best course of action to ensure the safety of the pupil
- 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
- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the pupil's social worker and/or 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: issue a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention (see section 7 below), as appropriate.

4.6 Reporting to parents

The school will regularly inform parents (see the definition of 'parent', as used in this policy, in section 3.7 above) about their child's attendance and absence levels. The school will provide parents/carers with an attendance update at least termly through written reports. In addition, attendance may be discussed during annual reviews, parent consultation meetings and individual attendance meetings where concerns have been identified. Where attendance is causing concern, parents/carers will receive more frequent communication outlining the number of school days missed, the impact on learning and any support available to improve attendance. The school aims to work collaboratively with families to promote regular attendance and positive outcomes for all pupils.

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5. Authorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

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 for employment or for admission to another educational institution
- 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.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as situations that are rare, significant, unavoidable and outside the control of the pupil and their family. Each request will be considered on its individual merits, taking account of the pupil's needs, attendance history, educational impact and the specific circumstances of the request.

Examples of exceptional circumstances may include:

- Serious illness, medical treatment or a medical emergency involving the pupil or an immediate family member
- Bereavement of a close family member
- Attendance at a funeral or significant memorial event for a close relative
- Involvement in court proceedings or other legal obligations
- Social care involvement or exceptional family circumstances requiring the pupil's absence
- Significant and unforeseen circumstances where the Headteacher determines that the absence is justified and in the best interests of the pupil

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

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

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

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 2 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school office. 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 pupils or a parent they normally live with.

5.2 Other reasons for authorised absence

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 for religious

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observance. Pupils should attend school on the days surrounding those set apart for religious observance

- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – a pupil is a mobile child if their parent is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with them. In these circumstances a pupil will be considered as a mobile child, provided they are of compulsory school age and have no fixed abode and whose parent is in a trade or business that requires them to travel from place to place
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

5.3 Absences from the school site (which are not classified as absences)

The headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings. These are not classified as absences. Reasons 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

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

Churchward School values each child and young person as an individual and will work with families and carers to personalise our approach to encouraging school attendance. In line with our values, we offer personalised praise for attendance achieved against personalised targets. We believe that increased attendance leads to increased success in achieving personalised outcomes.

'Many children and young people will experience normal, but difficult, emotions that make them nervous about attending school, such as worries about friendships, schoolwork, examinations or variable moods. It is important to note that these children and young people are still expected to attend In many instances attendance at school may serve to help with the underlying issue as being away from school might exacerbate it, and a prolonged period of absence may heighten anxious feelings about attendance in the future' (para 54, Working Together to Improve Attendance, August 2024)

Pupils who have long term physical or mental health conditions have the same right to an education, the same as any other pupil. School has the same ambition for these pupils as with any pupil in our school and will endeavour to work with the pupil, their family and supporting agencies to ensure their educational needs are met.

We use a variety of strategies to encourage attendance: amend, add to or delete as required

- Building strong and enduring relationships with our pupild so they feel a sense of belonging in our school community
- Create personalised and achievable targets for pupils, based on their medical needs and/or additional needs that is realistic and appropriate for each individual.
- Create safe spaces for pupils to thrive.
- Offer an enriching curriculum.

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- Make decisions on targets in consultation with families, while understanding that a medical condition can worsen suddenly and taking this into account.
- Using focussed TAC or TAF meetings, including partner agencies.
- Create opportunities for dialogue with families about attendance, ensuring that we work in partnership with parents/carers. Establish a listening culture.
- Use different methods to encourage attendance; for instance, explaining the links between attendance and outcomes.
- Establish a breakfast club for targeted pupils and families.
- Raise the profile of attendance with families, particularly when pupils start at the setting.
- Teach and model a love of learning, helping families to see the value of the education that is offered to them.
- All parents and carers receive regular and timely attendance communication.
- Set weekly merits and praise strong attendance.
- Be aware of the complexity of different contexts and the pressures that families might experience, which may in turn contribute to poor attendance; for instance, in areas where many parents/carers perform seasonal work and are unable to take holidays over the summer break.
- Utilise support available from external partners.

We recognise that not all pupils, particularly those who are most vulnerable, are able to achieve 100% attendance through no fault of their own. We celebrate improvements in attendance and contextualised good attendance for individual pupils.

We positively recognise and encourage our students to maintain a high attendance or to improve poor attendance. We provide reward trips, positive hamper gifts and celebrations that acknowledge the students effort in attendance.

7. Supporting pupils with poor attendance

Our school will make use of the full range of support and 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.

7.1 Attendance contract

We use attendance contracts as a form of attendance support.

An attendance contract is a formal written agreement between a parent and the school to address irregular attendance at school. An attendance contract is not legally binding, but it provides a more formal route where previous support has not worked or would not have been appropriate.

Parents cannot be compelled to enter an attendance contract, and the school cannot agree an attendance contract in a parent's absence.

Where an attendance contract would be an appropriate form of support, the school will arrange a meeting with the parent (and pupil if they are old enough to understand) to discuss how we can work in partnership to improve the pupil's attendance.

Where parents fail to comply with an agreed attendance contract, the school may seek an alternative course of action. In the first instance, this will include discussions with the parents to seek explanations and determine whether the attendance contract remains useful. Where there is further non-compliance following these discussions, the school may take further action.

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7.2 Education supervision order

In cases where voluntary early help plans and attendance contracts have been unsuccessful, we may work with the local authority to issue an education supervision order. If an education supervision order is considered, the local authority will inform the parent(s) in writing and will set up a meeting.

An education supervision order is a formal intervention but **not** criminal prosecution.

An education supervision order initially lasts for 1 year, but it can be extended within the last 3 months for a period of up to 3 years at a time.

In cases where parents persistently fail to meet the directions given under the education supervision order, they may be liable to a fine of up to £1,000 upon conviction.

7.3 Notice 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.

A notice 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.

It 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, or prosecution considered, 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

7.4 Penalty notices

The headteacher (or a deputy or assistant headteacher, authorised by the headteacher), 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, we will check with the local authority before doing so, and send the local authority 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

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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.

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). These penalty notices are not included in the National Framework, not subject to the same considerations about support being provided, and do not count towards the limit as part of the escalation process.

In these cases, the parent must pay £60 within 21 days, or £120.

8. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

8.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

If the school becomes aware of barriers that relate to the pupil's needs, we will inform the local authority.

Where a pupil experiences complex barriers to attendance, the school will work proactively with the pupil, their family and relevant professionals to understand the underlying causes and identify appropriate support. The school recognises that barriers to attendance may include medical needs, mental health and wellbeing, special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), family circumstances, social care involvement, transport difficulties or other factors affecting a pupil's ability to attend regularly.

The school will adopt a person-centred approach, working collaboratively with parents/carers, the pupil and external agencies to develop strategies that promote engagement and support successful attendance. These may include:

- Early identification of barriers through regular communication with families
- Individual attendance support plans
- Reasonable adjustments to reduce anxiety and support successful participation in school
- Adaptations to arrival, transition and departure arrangements
- Enhanced pastoral support and key worker interventions
- Multi-agency meetings involving health, social care and education professionals where appropriate
- Temporary and time-limited reintegration programmes to support a return to full-time education
- Reviews of provision, curriculum access and support arrangements to ensure pupils' needs are being met effectively

The school will regularly review the impact of any support provided and will continue to work in partnership with families to remove barriers wherever possible. Referrals to the local authority, health services or other specialist agencies may be made where additional support is required to improve attendance and secure the best outcomes for the pupil.

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8.2 Pupils absent due to mental or physical ill health

The school recognises that periods of mental or physical ill health can present significant barriers to attendance, particularly for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities. Where a pupil is absent due to mental or physical ill health, the school will work closely with the pupil, their family and relevant professionals to understand the impact of the health need and plan appropriate support.

The school will maintain regular communication with parents/carers during periods of absence and, where appropriate, seek advice from healthcare professionals, the local authority and other agencies involved in supporting the pupil. The purpose of this collaborative approach is to promote a successful return to education at the earliest appropriate opportunity while ensuring the pupil's health and wellbeing remain paramount.

Support and adjustments may include:

- Regular welfare and wellbeing check-ins with the pupil and family
- Adaptations to the school day, timetable or curriculum where appropriate
- Phased or graduated reintegration arrangements
- Adjustments to arrival, transition and departure routines
- Access to pastoral, therapeutic or emotional wellbeing support
- Reasonable adjustments to meet identified needs within the school environment
- Multi-agency planning meetings involving healthcare, education and social care professionals where appropriate
- Provision of learning materials and support to maintain engagement with education during periods of absence where this is appropriate and beneficial

The school will review support arrangements regularly to ensure they remain appropriate and effective. Where a pupil is expected to be absent for an extended period due to health needs, the school will work with the local authority and other relevant agencies to ensure suitable educational provision is considered in accordance with statutory guidance and the individual needs of the pupil.

Parents should consult the NHS guidance Is my child too ill for school? when deciding whether to keep their child home due to illness. We will share this guidance with parents, and provide support in understanding it, in order to promote school attendance wherever appropriate.

8.3 Pupils absent due to other barriers to attendance

The school recognises that some pupils may face additional barriers to attendance due to their special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), social, emotional or mental health needs, family circumstances, experiences of disadvantage, involvement with children's social care, or caring responsibilities. The school is committed to identifying and removing barriers to attendance at the earliest opportunity and ensuring that support is timely, appropriate and responsive to individual needs.

Where attendance concerns arise, the school will work collaboratively with pupils, parents/carers and relevant professionals to understand the underlying causes and agree strategies to improve attendance. Support will be proportionate to the level of need and regularly reviewed to ensure it remains effective.

The school may provide support through:

- Early identification and assessment of barriers affecting attendance
- Regular communication and partnership working with families
- Individual attendance support plans with clear targets and review points

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- Reasonable adjustments to routines, transitions, timetables, curriculum delivery or learning environments
- Enhanced pastoral support, mentoring or key worker involvement
- Support from the SEND team and wider inclusion services
- Access to therapeutic, emotional wellbeing or mental health support where appropriate
- Multi-agency working with health professionals, children's social care, Early Help services, attendance services and other external agencies
- Additional support for pupils who are disadvantaged or experiencing challenging family circumstances
- Flexible and personalised strategies to support pupils with caring responsibilities or other significant commitments outside school

For pupils with SEND, the school will consider whether attendance difficulties may be linked to unmet needs, anxiety, sensory differences, communication needs or difficulties accessing the curriculum and will review support arrangements accordingly.

For pupils who are disadvantaged, known to children's social care, previously looked after, young carers or who experience other vulnerabilities, the school will ensure attendance is considered as part of wider safeguarding and inclusion planning. Attendance concerns will be addressed through a coordinated approach that promotes engagement, wellbeing, educational progress and positive outcomes.

The school will ensure that any interventions and reasonable adjustments are timely, appropriate, evidence-informed and tailored to the individual pupil's circumstances. The impact of support will be reviewed regularly, with changes made where necessary to ensure barriers to attendance are reduced and pupils are enabled to access their education successfully.

Where a pupil has an education health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, the school will inform the local authority.

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

The school recognises that returning to education after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence can present challenges for pupils and their families. Where a pupil has been absent for an extended period, the school will work collaboratively with the pupil, parents/carers and relevant professionals to plan and support a successful return to school.

Prior to the pupil's return, the school will seek to understand any ongoing barriers to attendance and identify the adjustments, support and provision required to enable the pupil to re-engage with education successfully. Support arrangements will be tailored to the individual pupil's needs and reviewed regularly.

The school may support a return to education through:

- Pre-return meetings with the pupil, family and relevant professionals
- Individual reintegration or transition plans
- Phased or graduated returns to full-time attendance where appropriate
- Enhanced pastoral, emotional wellbeing or key worker support
- Adjustments to timetables, routines, curriculum access or the learning environment
- Opportunities for the pupil to reconnect with staff, peers and school routines before returning fully
- Reasonable adjustments to support identified SEND, medical or mental health needs
- Regular review meetings to monitor progress and address any emerging concerns

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Where appropriate, the school will work in partnership with health services, children's social care, the local authority and other external agencies to ensure a coordinated approach to the pupil's return. The school will also take steps to help the pupil rebuild confidence, promote a sense of belonging and minimise any anxiety associated with returning to school.

The aim of all reintegration support is to ensure that pupils return to education in a way that is sustainable, promotes wellbeing and enables them to access learning, develop positive relationships and achieve successful outcomes.

9. Attendance monitoring

9.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) weekly, 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.

The school has granted the DfE access to its management information system so the datea can be accessed regularly and securely.

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.

9.2 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

9.3 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 we have identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severed absence, and their families (see section 9.4 below)
- Provide regular attendance reports to class 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)

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- 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

9.4 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:
    - Discuss attendance and engagement at school
    - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
    - Explain the help that is available
    - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
    - 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 7, above)

10. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the headteacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

11. Links with other Policies

This policy is linked to our:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions
- EYFS policy

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This policy is adopted by the BAT Board of Trustees and will be reviewed every year or earlier if change to legislation.

Signed: CEO

Signed: Chairman of BAT Board of Trustees

Date:

This policy is adopted by Churchward School (part of the Brunel Academies Trust) **and will be reviewed every year or earlier if change to legislation.**

Signed: G Bailey Headteacher

Signed: Chief Education Director

Date: 28th September 2026

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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
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend

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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

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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

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Appendix 2: Framework of Responsibilities

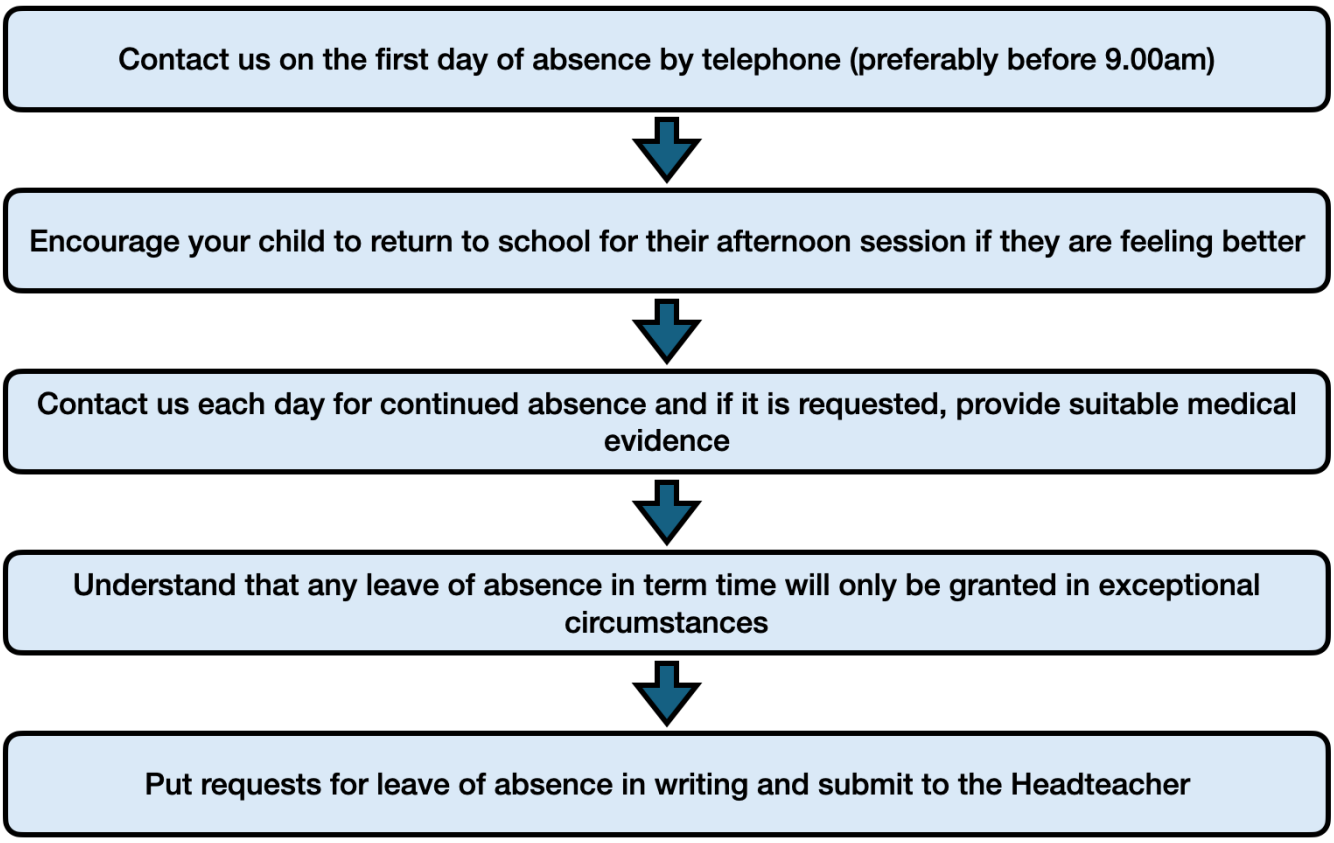
The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parent/carer(s) and the pupil, therefore, Churchward School expects everyone to uphold their responsibilities for promoting attendance at school.

To do this everyone must understand their role in promoting a positive culture of attendance and be clear about what is required of them individually as well as how they need to work together in partnership with others.

Parent/carer(s):

- ensure students attend regularly and punctually
- promote the value of a good education and the importance of regular school attendance
- do everything to prevent unnecessary absences, such as making medical and dental appointments outsid of school hours
- work with the school to address any in-school barriers to attendance and support students by taking an interest in what they have been doing at school
- provide the school with more than one emergency contact for your child
- provide proff of medical appointments that can only be attended during the school day
- make early contact with the school when becoming aware of problems with attending school
- attend meetings if concerns are identified
- participate in Early Help meetings if required
- support the school in actioning agreed interventions/action plans

Please follow this process if the pupil is going to be absent from school:



Pupil(s):

- attend school evert day on time
- if the young person is in post-16, they may report their own absence. If the young person is unable to do this, their parent/carer should do this on their behalf

- attend all aspects of learning in line with their timetable
- aim for the highest possible attendance
- discuss concerns about attendance or punctuality with a trusted adult
- positively recognise and encourage our students to maintain a high attendance or to improve poor attendance
- recognise efforts with reward trips, positive hamper gifts and celebrations that acknowledge efforts in attendance e.g. weekly warriors, tutor titans, MVP

Employee(s):

- understand that promoting student attendance is the responsibility of all employees. Be curious, aware, vigilant, well-informed and listen to what students say about the barriers to accessing education
- ensure attendance has a high profile
- consider whether a students known or not yet identified
- treat all students and parent/carer(s) with dignity and model respectful relationships to build a positive relationship between home and school
- complete return to school process with students when required
- escalate concerns as per the Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- discuss attendance with parent/carer(s) at every opportunity (celebrate good attendance as well as raising concerning attendance)
- participate in training relating to attendance as appropriate

Where a student or family need support with attendance, the best placed person in the school will support the family, this may or may not be the class tutor. This person should remain consistent, and the school will draw on positive relationships to listen to and understand the barriers to attendance the student or family is experiencing.

The Office/Attendance Team:

- liaise with parent/carer(s) (and students, if appropriate) about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system, Bromcom (or CPOMS if they feel there is a safeguarding concern)
- transfer calls from parent/carer(s) to the appropriate senior leader in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance (if necessary)
- liaise with the Attendance Team to notify them of concerns about a students attendance
- oversee the completion of registers and ensure attendance coding is correctly assigned
- Take calls from parent/carer(s) about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- offer support and guidance on attendance where needed
- follow flow chart below

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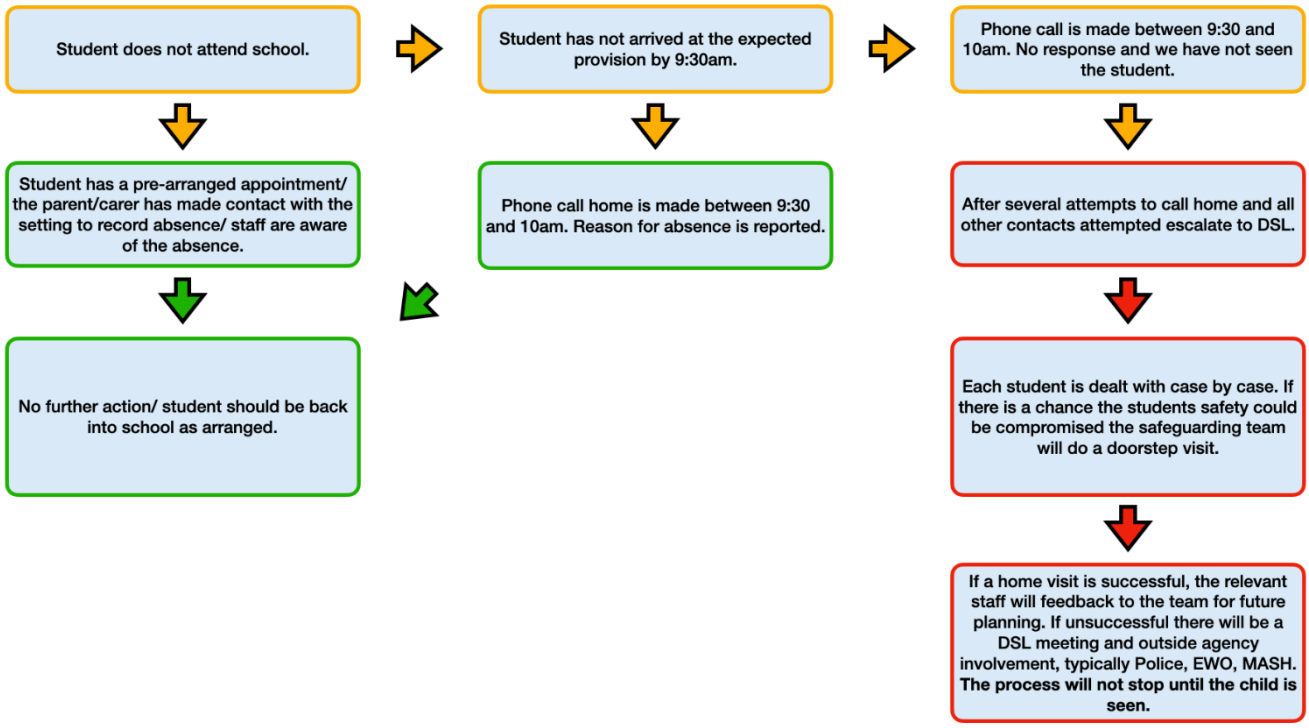
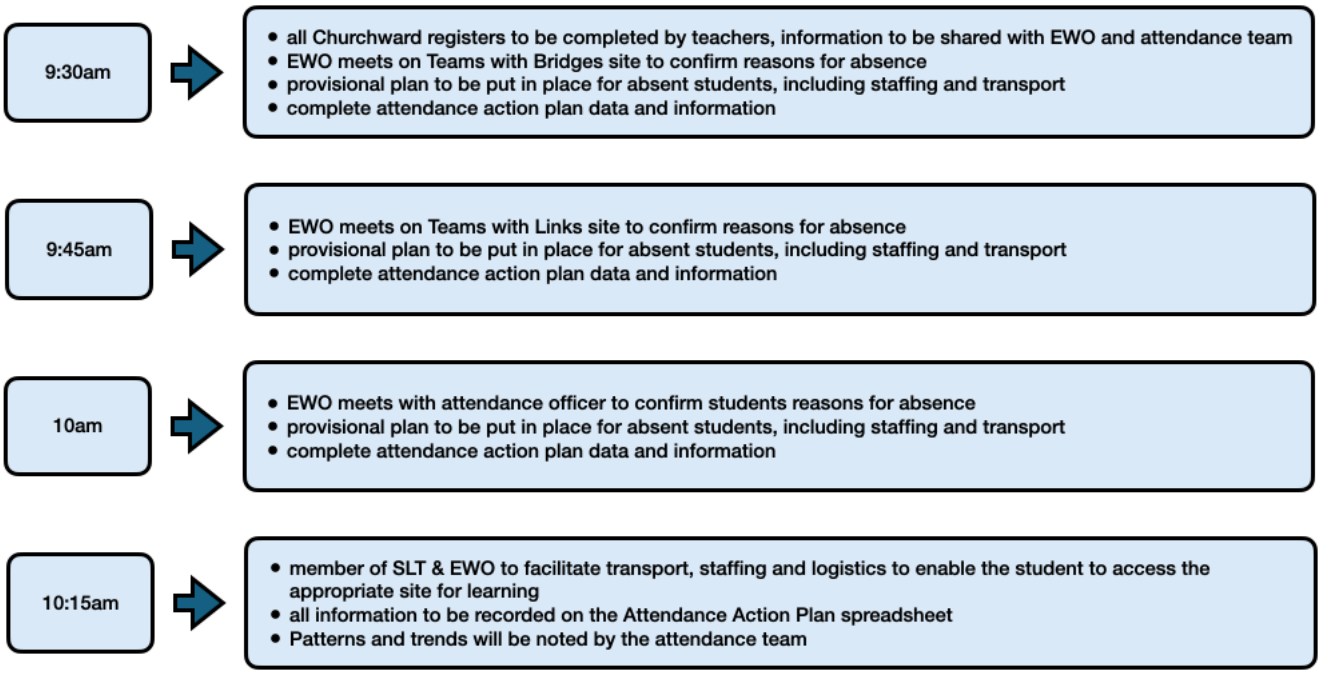
Non-Attendance Flow Chart



Absence Procedure for Attendance Action Plan – Student



Class Teachers:

- communicate with parent/carer(s) to acknowledge absence, ask on students wellbeing, offer help and enquire on expected date of return (if not known)
- liaise with the Attendance Team to notify them of concerns about a students attendance
- record conversations about attendance on the Bromcom system

- will support the DSL/EWO in actioning points from meetings to support the student to increase their attendance e.g. supporting with social stories, supporting part-time timetables and liaising with parent/carer(s)

Educational Welfare Officer:

- take a lead in promoting attendance ensuring it is the responsibility of all employees. Be aware, vigilant, well-informed and listen to what children say about the barriers to accessing education
- work with the SENDCo, where relevant, to ensure any SEND needs are fully understood
- monitor daily attendance for vulnerable children and track weekly attendance patterns and trends for all children, delivering intervention and support in a targeted way to children and families. This needs to include patterns of attendance for individual children, cohorts and groups but particularly for children with attendance below 92%
- support all employees to monitor attendance patterns and tackle attendance concerns effectively
- conduct thorough analysis of termly, and full year data to identify patterns and trends including analysis of students and cohorts and identifying patterns in uses of certain codes, days of poor attendance and where appropriate, subjects which have low lesson attendance
- work with the senior leadership team to benchmark the school's attendance data (at whole school, year group and cohort level) against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement
- monitor through data the impact of school wide attendance efforts, including any specific strategies implemented ensuring there is regular and positive communication with parents/carers
- ensure attendance is a standing agenda item for every site meeting and use practice examples to explore safeguarding themes and review relevant policy, procedures and code of conduct on a regular basis
- provide rewards for improving attendance, punctuality and overall high attendance
- work proactively on building strong relationships with families
- follow the LA Fast-Track procedure and support employees to offer Early Help where necessary and work with Education Welfare Officers to tackle persistent absence
- work with the LA, agencies, and safeguarding partners to overcome barriers to attendance
- attend welfare home visits where required
- escalate concerns when deemed appropriate as per the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- lead attendance training for employees and governors
- communicate attendance concerns to the social worker, if they have one or The Virtual School Head, if the student is a looked after child

Senior Leadership Team:

- take a lead in promoting student attendance ensuring it is the responsibility of all employees. Be curious, aware, vigilant, well-informed and listen to what children say about the barriers to accessing education
- ensure attendance has a high profile across the school
- work proactively on building strong relationships with families
- attend welfare home visits where required
- liaise with Attendance Lead, DSL, Behaviour Lead and SENCo as appropriate to discuss attendance concerns for individual students.
- participate in appropriate training in relation to attendance

Headteacher:

- develop a clear strategy and vision for improving attendance
- take a lead in promoting student attendance ensuring it is the responsibility of all employees. Be aware, vigilant, well-informed and listen to what children say about the barriers to accessing education

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- ensure the attendance policy is implemented consistently
- ensure attendance has a high profile at all times across the whole school
- monitor school level absence data and report data to the appropriate LGC
- decide whether to grant leave during term time for exceptional circumstances
- ensure attendance training is provided to employees annually

Training:

The school ensures that regular guidance and training on attendance is arranged in induction and at regular intervals thereafter so that staff and volunteers understand what is expected of them by this policy and have the necessary knowledge and skills to carry out their roles. As a minimum this will include all employees understand:

- The law and requirements of schools including on the keeping of registers.
- The importance of good attendance and that absence is always a symptom of wider circumstances; and the school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up and improving attendance.

Dedicated attendance training is provided to any employee with a specified attendance function in their role, including administrative, pastoral, or family support staff and senior leaders. This should include:

- The law and requirements of schools including on the keeping of registers.
- The process for working with other partners to provide more intensive support to studentswho need it.
- The necessary skills to interpret and analyse attendance data; and any additional training that would be beneficial to support students and student cohorts to overcome commonly seen barriers to attendance.

The school will help parents/carers to understand what is expected of them and why attendance is important to their child's attainment, wellbeing, and wider development and provide clarity on the short and long-term consequences of poor attendance.

The school maintains written records of all employee training.

Figure 1:

There are 190 school days each year, this means that there are 175 non-school days a year.

Attendance %	Rating	Days absent	Description
100%	Perfect Attendance	0	This is the best chance of success for your child
97%	Good Attendance	5	
95%	Improvement Required	9	Less chance of your child succeeding as it is harder for them to make progress
92%	Concern (Persistent Absence*)	19	
90%	**Serious Concern****	30	**Serious Concern Missing this much education will significantly on education**

*Persistent Absence is defined as: 10% or more of sessions missed (based on each students possible sessions). Absences may be authorised or unauthorised.

**Severe Absence is defined as: 50% or more of sessions missed (based on each students possible sessions). Absences may be authorised or unauthorised.