



Achieving Excellence through Leadership

Attendance Policy

Document Details	
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In line with the DfE guidance *Working together to improve school attendance*, decisions about whether to authorise absence, including requests for leave in term time, will be made on an individual basis, taking into account the specific facts and circumstances of each case. “Exceptional circumstances” are, by definition, rare, significant, unavoidable and short, and the test we apply is whether the event could reasonably be scheduled outside of school term time. **Family holidays, travel abroad for leisure or to visit relatives, and absences for reasons of convenience or cost are not considered exceptional circumstances.**

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are expected to attend school regularly in the same way as all other pupils. The existence of an EHCP, SEND support plan or medical need does not in itself constitute an exceptional circumstance or an automatic reason to authorise absence. Where a pupil has SEND or other vulnerabilities that create genuine barriers to attendance, the school will work with parents and relevant professionals to agree reasonable adjustments and provide support. However, **high expectations for regular attendance remain in place for all pupils**, in line with the DfE guidance and this policy.

Introduction and Background

Giles Junior School recognises that positive behaviour and good attendance are essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing and wider life chances.

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

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

The Department for Education (DfE) has produced statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities, **Working together to improve school attendance**, which includes a National Framework in relation to absence and the use of legal sanctions. Our School Attendance Policy reflects the requirements and principles of that guidance.

This policy is written with that guidance in mind and underpins our school ethos to:

- Create a clear policy for attendance, underpinned by high expectations and core values, which are communicated to and understood by all staff, pupils and families.
- Ensure every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled.
- Ensure that pupils succeed whilst at school.
- Ensure that pupils have access to the widest possible range of opportunities at school and when they leave school.
- Convey clear messages about how absence affects attainment, wellbeing and wider outcomes, and empower all staff to take responsibility for attendance.

This policy has been developed in consultation with school governors, staff, the Local Authority, and parents and carers. It seeks to ensure that all parties involved in the practicalities of school attendance are aware of and informed about attendance matters in school, and to outline the school's commitment to attendance being everyone's responsibility. It details the responsibilities of individuals and groups involved and the procedures in place to promote and monitor pupil attendance.

In addition, all schools follow the DfE's statutory safeguarding guidance **Keeping Children Safe in Education**, which emphasises the importance of understanding the potential vulnerabilities of children who are missing or absent from education.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

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

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

For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and are at school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

It is a rule of this school that pupils must attend every day, unless there are exceptional circumstances. It is the Headteacher, not the parent, who can authorise the absence.

Promoting Regular Attendance

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

The named contact for pupils and parents who need individual support with attendance is:

Manisha Khan (Attendance Lead) – attendance@gilesjm.herts.sch.uk

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

To help us all focus on this, we will:

- Ensure teachers support the policy by setting a good example of punctuality and attendance, supporting the office by making contact with parents if a child is absent and helping the child to identify and overcome barriers.

- Submit a daily attendance return to the Department for Education, in line with the legal expectations placed on all schools.
- Build strong relationships and work jointly with families.
- Give parents/carers information on attendance in our newsletters.
- Promote the benefits of high attendance.
- Accurately complete admission and attendance registers and have effective day-to-day processes in place to follow up absence as required by law.
- Celebrate excellent attendance by displaying and reporting individual and class achievements.
- Reward good or improving attendance.
- Report regularly to parents/carers on their child's attendance and the impact on their progress.
- Contact parents/carers if their child's attendance falls below the school's target for attendance.

Understanding Types of Absence

Any absence affects the routine of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning journey and ability to progress. Any pupil's absence or late arrival disrupts teaching routines and may affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parental responsibility and allowing absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

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

Authorised absences are morning or afternoon sessions away from school for a genuine reason such as illness (although parents may be asked to provide medical evidence before this can be authorised), medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable causes.

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

Unauthorised absence includes (this list is not exhaustive):

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily (e.g. because they had a late night, or for non-infectious illness or injury that would not affect their ability to learn).
- Absences which have never been properly explained.
- Children who arrive at school after the close of registration are marked using a "U". This indicates that they are in school for safeguarding purposes; however, it is counted as an absence for the session.
- Shopping trips.
- Looking after other children, or children accompanying siblings or parents to medical appointments.
- Their own or family birthdays.

- Holidays taken during term time not deemed for “exceptional purposes” by the Headteacher, including those arranged by other family members or friends.
 - Day trips.
 - Other leave of absence in term time which has not been agreed.
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Persistent Absenteeism (PA) and Severe Absenteeism (SA)

A pupil is defined by the Government as a **persistent absentee** when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for any reason; this can include authorised and unauthorised absence. Absence at this level will cause considerable damage to any pupil’s education and we need the full support and co-operation of parents to resolve this. All pupils with attendance of 90% or below are considered to be persistent absentees.

A pupil who has missed 50% or more schooling is defined by the Government as **severely absent**. Pupils within this cohort may find it more difficult to be in school or face bigger barriers to their regular attendance, and are likely to need more intensive support.

Absence Procedures

Parents should contact the school office about attendance on a day-to-day basis:
admin@gilesjm.herts.sch.uk

We monitor and review all pupils’ absences, and the reasons given, thoroughly.

If a child is absent from school, parents must:

- Contact the school on the first day of absence before 9.30am (when our register closes).
- Telephone the office, leave a message on the answerphone if no one is available to take the call, or call in personally and speak to the office staff. Please be aware that, if you leave a voicemail to report your child’s absence, you may receive a call from the school so that we may discuss the absence before deciding whether the absence is to be recorded as authorised.
- Contact the school on every further day of absence, again before 9.30am.
- Ensure that their child returns to school as soon as possible and provide any medical evidence requested to support the absence. Medical evidence may be requested (where the school has reasonable doubt as to the authenticity of the absences), particularly where a child has multiple periods of absence reported as due to medical reasons. Parents and school staff may find it helpful to refer to NHS guidance on school absence and childhood illness (see Annex C).

If your child is absent, we will:

- Telephone or text you on the first and every subsequent day of absence if we have not heard from you. However, it remains your responsibility to contact us.

- If we are unable to make contact with parents by telephone, we will telephone emergency contacts, send letters home and a home visit may be made, in the interests of safeguarding.
- Inform the Local Authority if no contact has been made with parents/carers by the 10th day of absence (or sooner if deemed appropriate). The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, Section 13, requires schools to inform the Local Authority of any pupil who is absent from school and whose absences amount to 10 days or more (either consecutively or irregularly) and are unauthorised. This equates to 20 unauthorised am/pm sessions. Schools are also under a safeguarding duty, under Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, to investigate any unexplained or unauthorised absences. At this point, your child will be considered to be “absent from education”.

If absence continues, we will:

- Write to you if your child’s attendance is below 95% and/or where punctuality is a concern.
- Arrange a meeting so that you may discuss the situation with our SLT Attendance Lead (Manisha Khan).
- Consider and offer reasonable adjustments.
- Consider a Families First Assessment to ensure appropriate support is considered.
- Create a personalised, robust support plan, such as an attendance contract, to address barriers to attendance and clarify each person’s role in improving your child’s attendance.
- Consider signposting support to other agencies or services, if appropriate.
- Seek advice, guidance and support from the Local Authority Statutory Attendance Support Team and consider appropriate legal sanctions if attendance deteriorates following the above actions.

Specific Categories of Absence

- **Holidays during term time** – Legislation that came into force in September 2013 makes clear that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. If there are exceptional circumstances behind your request, you should discuss these with the Headteacher. (See letter from Jo Fisher, Director of Children’s Services, on HCC Grid when considering a term-time holiday – <https://thegrid.org.uk/admissions-attendance-travel-to-school/attendance/holidays-in-term-time>)
 - **Religious Observance** – A maximum of 2 days’ absence per academic year is allowed for recognised religious observance.
 - **Medical, Dental or Hospital Appointments** – Please ensure these appointments take place out of school time where possible, in order not to disrupt your child’s education (we appreciate many hospital appointments cannot be rescheduled). If appointments are in school time, we require evidence of the appointments.
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Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable and can sometimes lead to irregular school attendance patterns. Good timekeeping is a vital life skill which will help children throughout school and beyond.

Pupils who arrive late disrupt lessons. If a child misses the start of the day, they can feel unsettled and embarrassed and risk missing vital work and important messages from their class teacher.

The start and end times of the school day for all pupils at Giles Junior School are:

- Gates open: 8.40am
- Registration starts: 8.45am
- Registration closes: 9.00am
- End of the school day: 3.15pm

How we manage lateness:

- The school day starts at 8.45am when children begin to come into school.
- Registers are taken at 8.55am.
- Children arriving after 9.00am are required to come into school via the school office.
- At 9.30am the registers will be closed. In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after that time, they will receive a “U” code which shows them to be on site for safeguarding purposes but will count as an unauthorised absence for that session.
- The school may contact parents/carers regarding punctuality concerns.

If your child has a persistent lateness record, you may be asked to meet with the SLT Attendance Lead, but you can approach us at any time if you are having difficulties getting your child to school on time. We expect parents and staff to encourage good punctuality by being good role models, and as a school we celebrate good class and individual punctuality. Unauthorised lateness may result in the school seeking advice and guidance from the Local Authority.

Understanding Barriers to Attendance

Whilst any child may occasionally have time off school because they are too unwell to attend, sometimes pupils can be reluctant to attend school. Any barriers preventing regular attendance are best resolved between the school, parents and the child. If a parent thinks their child is reluctant to attend school, we will work with the family to understand the root problem and provide appropriate support.

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

Under DfE statutory guidance, schools are required to submit a sickness return to the Local Authority for all pupils who have missed or are likely to miss 15 or more school days (consecutive or cumulative) due to medical reasons/illness.

See **Annex A** for DfE summary tables of responsibilities for school attendance.

Local Authority Attendance Support Team

Local Authority Attendance Support Specialists work strategically by offering support to schools to reduce persistent absence and improve overall attendance.

Parents/carers are expected to work with the school and Local Authority to address any attendance concerns. Parents/carers should proactively engage with the support offered, aiming to resolve any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be resolved in this way, the school may consider more formal support and/or refer the child to the Local Authority.

If attendance does not improve, legal action may be taken which may be in the form of a Penalty Notice (see Annex B for the Hertfordshire Code of Conduct) or other legal options available to the Local Authority, such as prosecution in the Magistrates' Court.

School Attendance and the Law

The **School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024** introduced a National Framework in England. By law, all children of compulsory school age must receive an appropriate full-time education (Education Act 1996). Parents/carers have a legal duty to ensure their child attends regularly at the school at which they are registered.

Parents/carers may be recognised differently under education law than under family law. Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 states that a “parent”, in relation to a child or young person, includes any person who is not a biological parent but who has parental responsibility, or who has care of the child.

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

National Framework for Penalty Notices

There is now a single, consistent national threshold for when a Penalty Notice must be considered by all schools in England: **10 sessions** (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10-school-week period. The 10 sessions do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of any

combination of unauthorised absence (G, O and/or U coded within the school's registers). The 10-week period can span different terms, school years or education settings.

Sanctions may include issuing each parent (for each child) with a Penalty Notice for £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days (for the first offence). A second Penalty Notice issued within a three-year period will result in a fine of £160 per parent, per child. If a third offence is committed, the matter may be referred to the Local Authority for consideration of prosecution via the Magistrates' Court. If prosecution is instigated for irregular school attendance, each parent/carer may receive a fine of up to £2,500 and/or up to 3 months in prison. If a parent/carer is found guilty in court, they will receive a criminal conviction.

See **Annex B** for the Hertfordshire Code of Conduct.

There is no entitlement in law for pupils to take time off during term time for holidays or other absence for leisure or recreation, or to take part in protest activity in school hours. The Supreme Court has ruled that the definition of regular school attendance is "in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school."

The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 set out the statutory requirements for schools. References to family holidays and extended leave have been removed. The amendments specify that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**; they no longer have any discretion to authorise up to ten days of absence per academic year.

It is a rule of this school that a leave of absence shall not be granted in term time unless there are reasons considered to be exceptional by the Headteacher, irrespective of the child's overall attendance. Only the Headteacher or her designate (not the Local Authority) may authorise such a request. All applications for leave of absence must be made in writing, in advance, on the prescribed form provided by the school.

The school will usually consider that the parent who has made the application is therefore allowing the leave of absence, and that all parents who are on the holiday are allowing the leave. Where a parent removes a child after their application for leave was refused, or where no application was made to the school, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. It is likely that Penalty Notices will be requested, in line with the National Framework and Hertfordshire Code of Conduct, in respect of each parent believed to have allowed the absence.

At Giles Junior School, "**exceptional circumstances**" will be interpreted as:

Events that are rare, significant, unavoidable and short.

"Unavoidable" means an event that could not reasonably be scheduled at another time, outside of school term time, regardless of who has planned or paid for the holiday or absence (including grandparents or other family or friends).

The Headteacher/school may discuss the leave of absence request with other education settings and/or the Local Authority to determine whether circumstances are exceptional.

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

In line with the DfE guidance *Working together to improve school attendance*, decisions about whether to authorise absence, including requests for leave in term time, will be made on an individual basis, taking into account the specific facts and circumstances of each case. “Exceptional circumstances” are, by definition, rare, significant, unavoidable and short, and the test we apply is whether the event could reasonably be scheduled outside of school term time. **Family holidays, travel abroad for leisure or to visit relatives, and absences for reasons of convenience or cost are not considered exceptional circumstances.**

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are expected to attend school regularly in the same way as all other pupils. The existence of an EHCP, SEND support plan or medical need does not in itself constitute an exceptional circumstance or an automatic reason to authorise absence. Where a pupil has SEND or other vulnerabilities that create genuine barriers to attendance, the school will work with parents and relevant professionals to agree reasonable adjustments and provide support. However, **high expectations for regular attendance remain in place for all pupils**, in line with the DfE guidance and this policy.

Deletion from Roll

For any pupil leaving Giles Junior School other than at the end of Year 6, parents/carers are required to complete a **Removal from Roll** form, which can be obtained from the school office. This provides the school with the following information: child’s name, class, current address, date of leaving, new home address, name of new school and address of new school. This information is essential so that we know pupils’ whereabouts and can appropriately safeguard all our pupils, including those who leave us.

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

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

Absence Data

We use data to monitor, identify and support individual pupils or groups of pupils when their attendance needs to improve. Schools are required to submit pupil attendance data to the Department for Education on

a daily basis (Education (Information About Individual Pupils) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024). Persistently and severely absent pupils are tracked and monitored carefully. We also combine this with academic tracking, as increased absence affects attainment.

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

Annexes

- **Annex A:** DfE guidance – *Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024)*
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65e8ae343649a2001aed63aa/Summary_table_of_responsibilities_for_school_attendance_applies_from_19_August_2024_.pdf
- **Annex B:** *Hertfordshire Code of Conduct: Penalty Notices for Parents of Truants and Parents of Pupils Excluded from School – Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 Section 23*
Penalty notices for unauthorised absence | Hertfordshire County Council
- **Annex C:** Illness Absence Guidance
<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/626669cb8fa8f523b7221b98/UKHSA-should-I-keep-my-child-off-school-guidance-A3-poster.pdf>
DfE external document template (childrenscommissioner.gov.uk)
Wellbeing: national resources – Hertfordshire Grid for Learning (thegrid.org.uk)
Illness and your child's education – GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
Is my child too ill for school? – NHS (www.nhs.uk)

Date for Review

December 2026

Distribution

A copy of this policy will be available to:

- a) All school governors
 - b) All staff
 - c) All parents
- b) *lease note all Policies are ratified by the relevant Committee or the Full Governing Body. These are digitally signed and held on Governor Hub.*

All pupils

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

Pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance. Proactively engage with the support offered to prevent the need for more formal support.	Proactively use data to identify pupils at risk of persistent absence. Work with each identified pupil and their parents to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-school barriers to attendance. Where out of school barriers are identified, signpost and support access to any required services in the first instance and act as lead practitioner if attendance is the only issue and/or the local threshold for formal early help is not met. If the issue persists, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the local authority and other partners. If a case meets the local threshold for formal early help/family support, this includes conducting the early help assessment and acting as the lead practitioner where all partners agree that the school is the best placed lead service. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the school, continue to work with the local authority and partners.	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	Hold a regular conversation with every school to identify, discuss and signpost or provide access to services for pupils who are persistently or severely absent or at risk of becoming so. Where there are out of school barriers, provide each identified pupil and their family with access to services they need in the first instance. If the issue persists, and there are multiple needs consider whether the threshold for early help is met and facilitate access where it is. Regardless, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the school and other partners. Provide the lead practitioner in cases where threshold is met and all partners agree that a local authority service is best placed to lead. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the local authority, continue to work with the school and partners.

Persistently absent pupils

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

Severely absent pupils

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

Support for cohorts of pupils with lower attendance than their peers

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
Not applicable.	Proactively use data to identify cohorts with, or at risk of, low attendance and develop strategies to support them. Work with other schools in the local area and the local authority to share effective practice where there are common barriers to attendance.	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	Track local attendance data to prioritise support and unblock area wide attendance barriers where they impact numerous schools.

Support for pupils with medical conditions or SEND with poor attendance

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

Support for pupils with a social worker

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance. Proactively engage with the support offered.	Know who the pupils who have, or who have had, a social worker are. Understand how the welfare, safeguarding, and child protection issues that they are experiencing, or have experienced, can have an impact on attendance – whilst maintaining a culture of high aspiration for the cohort. Provide additional academic support and make reasonable adjustments to help them, recognising that even when statutory social care intervention has ended, there can be a lasting impact on children's educational outcomes. Work in partnership with the local authority at a strategic and individual level, sharing data on attendance including, at an individual level, informing the pupil's social worker if there are any unexplained absences and if their name is to be deleted from the register.	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	Ensure that all Children's Social Care practitioners, understand the importance of good attendance for pupil's educational progress, for their welfare and their wider development – and understand their role in improving it. Through the work of Virtual School Heads, they should: - Undertake systemic monitoring and data sharing of the attendance of children with a social worker in their area: developing and implementing targeted cohort level interventions to improve attendance. - Provide advice, challenge and training to schools on how to promote and secure good attendance for children with a social worker. - Develop whole system approaches, with social care, to support the attendance of children in need.

Looked after and previously looked after children

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
Work with the school and local authority to help them understand the child's barriers to attendance – including the development of Personal Education Plans. Proactively engage with the support offered.	Have high expectations for the cohort – with expert support and leadership provided by the designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after pupils. Work in partnership with the local authority Virtual School Head to develop and deliver high quality Personal Education Plans for looked-after children that support good attendance. Work directly with parents to develop good home-school links that support good attendance. For previously looked-after pupils this could include discussion on use of the Pupil Premium Plus funding managed by the school.	Designate a member of staff to have responsibility for the promotion of the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after pupils. Monitor and review attendance of the cohort and consider how school policies, including behaviour policies, are sensitive to their needs and support good attendance.	Promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children – doing everything possible to minimise disruption to education when a pupil enters care. (LA that looks after the child:) Appoint an expert Virtual School Head (VSH) – will: - Monitor, report on, and evaluate the education outcomes of looked after children, including their attendance, as if they attended a single school- whenever they live or are educated. - Ensure schools know when they have a pupil looked after by the authority on their role and that information is shared with the school on issues that may impact on their attendance. - Ensure that all looked-after pupils have high quality, up to date, effective Personal Education Plans developed in partnership with schools, social workers and carers – including, where necessary, clear interventions and use of pupil premium plus funding to support good attendance. - Provide expert advice and information on the education of previously looked-after pupils to schools and parents – including their attendance.

Monitoring

Parents:	Schools:	Academy trustees and governing bodies:	Local authorities:
Schools regularly update parents on their child's attendance. (If parents feel the school and or local authority have not delivered what they are expected to they should discuss the case with the school and/or local authority's attendance support team.)	The school's Senior Attendance Champion will ensure all school based staff complete their attendance responsibilities in line with the school's policies and procedures. The governing board or academy trust will hold the headteacher or executive leadership to account for their delegated responsibilities and for compliance with regulatory and statutory requirements. They will review progress and provide challenge when required. The board will help school leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most and ensure that school staff receive adequate training on attendance. Ofsted will expect schools to do all they reasonably can to achieve the highest possible attendance as part of the behaviour and attitudes judgement. This includes, where attendance is not consistently at or above what could reasonably be expected, that schools have a strong understanding of the causes of absence (particularly for persistent and severe absence) and a clear strategy in place that takes account of those causes to improve attendance for all pupils. Ultimately, in cases where a school has not met expectations or statutory duties the Secretary of State can consider a complaint.	DfE Regions Group considers multi academy trusts' efforts on attendance as part of decision making. Ofsted considers governing bodies' efforts as part of inspections.	DfE Regions Group monitors local authority efforts as part of regular interaction. Ofsted may consider the local area partnership's approach to improving attendance of children and young people with SEND as part of the SEND Area Inspection, and the local authority's approach to improving attendance for children with a social worker through inspecting local authority children's services. Ultimately, in cases where a local authority has not met expectations or statutory duties the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman or the Secretary of State can consider a complaint.

Annex B

HERTFORDSHIRE CODE OF CONDUCT: PENALTY NOTICES FOR PARENTS OF TRUANTS AND PARENTS OF PUPILS EXCLUDED FROM SCHOOL ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR ACT 2003 SECTION 23

[Penalty notices for unauthorised absence | Hertfordshire County Council](#)

Annex C – Illness Absence Guidance

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/626669cb8fa8f523b7221b98/UKHSA-should-I-keep-my-child-off-school-guidance-A3-poster.pdf>

[DfE external document template \(childrenscommissioner.gov.uk\)](#)

[Wellbeing: national resources - Hertfordshire Grid for Learning \(thegrid.org.uk\)](#)

[Illness and your child's education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

[Is my child too ill for school? - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)