

Attendance Policy



Document and Version Control

Document Title	Attendance Policy
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Policy Owner	Vice CEO/Executive Headteacher
Policy Approver	Trust Board

Version	Date	Amended by	Comments
V1	Summer 2022	T Hand	Policy compiled collaboratively by Trust Leaders from all Academies.
V2	Summer 2023	T Hand	Following meeting of Trust Leaders, amendments made: Section added to make clear that, exceptionally, reasonable adjustments will be made to the policy. Updated the list of documents utilised by academies.
V3	Summer 2024	D Shakeshaft T Hand	Amendments have been made throughout to reflect the latest statutory guidance from the Department for Education (2024). Once approved by the Trust Board, each Academy will make the adjustments to reflect their specific context.
V4	Summer 2026	D Shakeshaft T Hand	Updated to reflect DfE Working Together to Improve School Attendance (July 2026), including Targeting Support Meetings, Attendance Contracts, Young Carers, illness-related absence, enhanced data monitoring and formal attendance support arrangements.
V4.1	Summer 2026	I Melloy	Amendments for Heathfields Academy

Section	Changes Made

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Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based upon the Department for Education statutory guidance Working Together to Improve School Attendance (July 2026), the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and the National Framework for Penalty Notices.

The Trust and its academies will have regard to this guidance in all attendance related decision making and intervention.

Attendance is everyone's business and securing good attendance requires a support-first, whole-family approach wherever possible.

Values Underpinning the Policy

Our vision is to inspire all to excellence. This can only be achieved if pupils attend school regularly, benefitting from the curriculum and teaching available. Parents play an intrinsic role inspiring their children to take advantage of all we have to offer as a Trust.

The Trust vision is underpinned by our values:

'We are brave' - in the context of attendance, this means that, without fear or favour, we set high expectations and will relentlessly challenge poor attendance and punctuality seeking all possible solutions.

'We care' - in the context of attendance, this means creating the enabling conditions for children to attend every day, so they achieve.

'We celebrate individuality' - in the context of attendance, this means we will adopt an empathetic approach to individual circumstances and needs whilst remaining uncompromising. *Every child in Fierté genuinely matters.*

'We leave no one behind' - in the context of attendance, this means, we are inclusive of all pupils and families, and we will provide tailored support in response to the need for help.

The Trust recognises that attendance is not a standalone process but an outcome of the quality of education, curriculum engagement, behaviour culture, safeguarding, SEND provision, pastoral support, wellbeing and family partnership. Where attendance concerns arise, academies will seek to understand and remove the barriers preventing attendance rather than focusing solely on the absence itself.

This policy complies with our Funding Agreement and Articles of Association.

This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any individual and it helps to promote equality across Fierté Multi-Academy Trust.

Attendance Aims

The Trust is committed to ensuring that every pupil can access the full-time education to which they are entitled. Regular attendance is essential in promoting educational achievement, wellbeing, safeguarding and positive life outcomes.

Through this policy, the Trust aims to:

- Promote a culture where excellent attendance and punctuality are valued by pupils, families and staff.
- Set high expectations for attendance and establish attendance as everyone's responsibility.
- Ensure all pupils attend school regularly and benefit from the education, opportunities and support available to them.
- Identify emerging attendance concerns at the earliest opportunity and intervene promptly.
- Reduce levels of absence, including persistent and severe absence.
- Work in partnership with parents, carers, pupils, local authorities and external agencies to remove barriers to attendance.
- Provide timely, targeted and proportionate support for pupils whose attendance is affected by medical needs, SEND, safeguarding concerns or other vulnerabilities.
- Ensure attendance arrangements are fair, consistent and compliant with statutory guidance and legislation.
- Promote safeguarding by recognising that poor attendance can be an indicator of unmet need, risk or vulnerability.

Reasonable Adjustments

Some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers including those who suffer from long-term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities, or other recognised vulnerabilities.

Whilst always maintaining the highest expectations of attendance, we will be mindful of any genuine additional barriers a pupil or family may face.

Where appropriate, reasonable adjustments will be made to support pupils whose attendance is affected by SEND, medical conditions or other recognised vulnerabilities. Any adjustments will be proportionate, regularly reviewed and designed to support regular attendance.

Attendance Strategy

The Trust adopts the Department for Education's attendance improvement model below.

Academies will promote attendance through inclusive practice, high-quality teaching, positive relationships, effective behaviour support and a curriculum that enables all pupils to feel successful, safe and a sense of belonging.

Attendance support will always begin with understanding barriers and providing appropriate support. Formal enforcement measures will normally only be considered after support has been offered, reviewed and found not to be effective, except where support is not appropriate due to the nature of the absence.

The Trust will ensure all staff receive appropriate attendance training. This will include attendance processes, attendance coding, safeguarding implications of absence, understanding attendance barriers, SEND and attendance, and effective family engagement.

Expect	Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn.
Monitor	Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (<i>at individual and cohort level</i>) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them.
Listen and understand	When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents to listen to and understand barriers to attendance -agreeing how all partners can work together to resolve them.
Facilitate support	Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents access support to overcome the barriers outside of school. <i>This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.</i>
Formalise support	Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners work together to clearly explain consequences and ensure support is in place to enable families to respond. <i>Depending on the circumstances, this may include formalising support through an attendance contract or education supervision order.</i>
Enforce	Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention: <i>a penalty notice in line with the National Framework or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.</i>

Roles and Responsibilities

Attendance is everyone's responsibility. All leaders, staff, pupils and parents share a commitment to ensuring pupils attend regularly, arrive on time and receive the full benefit of their education.

Each academy will designate a member of the senior leadership team as the Senior Attendance Champion. This individual will have strategic responsibility for attendance, receive appropriate training and work closely with safeguarding, SEND and pastoral colleagues to remove barriers to attendance.

It is the responsibility of the Trust Board and Local Governing Committees to:

- Promote a culture of high attendance and punctuality across the academy.
- Ensure statutory attendance duties are fulfilled, including accurate attendance recording and required reporting to the DfE and Local Authority.
- Provide strategic oversight of attendance arrangements, ensuring appropriate resources, systems and support are in place.

- Monitor attendance trends, patterns and vulnerable groups, using data to challenge and support academy leaders.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of attendance strategies, interventions and support programmes.
- Ensure the academy works effectively with external partners to remove barriers to attendance.
- Support the development of attendance improvement priorities and action plans where required.
- Ensure staff receive appropriate attendance training, including specialist training for those with attendance responsibilities.
- Promote and share effective attendance practice across the Trust.
- Hold the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to:

- Ensure the effective implementation of this policy.
- Maintain a culture of high expectations for attendance and punctuality.
- Monitor attendance data and report trends, concerns and outcomes to the Local Governing Committees and Trust Board.
- Oversee the effectiveness of attendance strategies and interventions.
- Support staff in identifying and addressing attendance concerns.
- Work with families, external agencies and the Local Authority to improve attendance where necessary.
- Ensure appropriate support is in place for pupils with SEND, medical needs or other barriers to attendance.
- Authorise or delegate the issuing of penalty notices in accordance with legislation and local procedures.
- Notify the Local Authority when a pupil's name is added to or deleted from the admission register outside standard transition points.
- Notify the Local Authority where a pupil has been absent without authorisation for a continuous period of 10 school days.
- Notify the Local Authority where a pupil is expected to miss 15 school days or more due to illness.
- Inform the Local Authority where a pupil with an Education, Health and Care Plan experiences falling attendance or additional barriers to attendance linked to their needs.
- Ensure all statutory attendance returns and notifications are completed accurately and within required timescales.

It is the responsibility of the Attendance Champion to:

- Lead and coordinate attendance improvement across the academy.
- Analyse attendance data and identify emerging concerns, trends and vulnerable groups.

- Ensure effective attendance systems, procedures and interventions are implemented consistently.
- Work closely with pupils, families and external agencies to remove barriers to attendance.
- Develop, implement and review attendance support plans, reintegration plans and attendance contracts.
- Deliver targeted support for pupils at risk of persistent or severe absence.
- Lead Targeting Support Meetings and coordinate multi-agency attendance planning.
- Evaluate the impact of attendance interventions and adapt provision accordingly.
- Benchmark attendance outcomes against Trust, local and national data.
- Work closely with the Designated Safeguarding Leader to ensure attendance concerns and safeguarding concerns are considered together where appropriate.

It is the responsibility of all staff to:

- Promote high expectations for attendance and punctuality.
- Monitor attendance and identify emerging patterns of concern.
- Communicate attendance concerns promptly with parents and appropriate academy leaders.
- Support pupils experiencing attendance difficulties and contribute to agreed support plans.
- Ensure attendance registers are completed accurately and promptly.
- Record and share relevant attendance information in line with academy procedures.
- Escalate safeguarding or attendance concerns without delay.
- Act as positive role models and comply with this policy.

Parents are responsible for:

- Ensuring their child attends school regularly, arrives on time and is ready to learn.
- Notifying the academy of any absence before 9.15am on the first day and maintaining contact on each subsequent day of absence.
- Providing the reason for absence and an expected date of return.
- Ensuring the academy holds at least two up-to-date emergency contacts.
- Arranging medical and routine appointments outside the school day wherever possible.
- Working in partnership with the academy to address attendance concerns and engage with support offered.
- Complying with any attendance support plan, attendance contract or other agreed intervention.
- Seeking support at the earliest opportunity if barriers to attendance arise.
- Parents can seek support from the academy's Attendance Champion, SENDCo, pastoral team, Head of School or Executive Headteacher.

Name	Role	Phone	Email
K Williams	Executive Headteacher	01827 213885	office@heathfields.fierte.org
I Melloy	Head of School	01827 213885	office@heathfields.fierte.org
J Gilbert	Office manager/Attendance Champion	01827 213885	office@heathfields.fierte.org

Pupils are responsible for:

- Attending school every day when they are fit and able to do so.
- Arriving on time and being prepared for learning.
- Engaging positively with any support provided to improve attendance.
- Completing missed learning and catch-up work following periods of absence.
- Speaking to a trusted adult if they are experiencing difficulties that affect their attendance.

Expectations and Daily Routines

Regular school attendance is the key to enabling children to maximise the educational opportunities available to them and become emotionally resilient, confident, and independent learners who thrive in school.

Good attendance is an expectation and a responsibility of parents.

Promoting excellent attendance is also the responsibility of the whole school community.

Improving attendance is in everyone's interests and it is everyone's **responsibility**.

It is our expectation that all pupils, staff, and leaders have a shared responsibility to uphold the expectations set out in this policy.

What are Our Daily Attendance Routines?

Year Group	Registration: after this time, pupils are <u>late</u>	Registers close: after this time, the absence is <u>unauthorised</u>	Lunchtime	End of Day: after this time, pupils will be <u>dismissed</u>
EYFS Reception	8:45am	9:05am	11:45am to 12:45pm	03:15pm

Year 1 and 2	8:45am	9:05am	12:00pm to 1:00pm	3:05pm
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Members of staff will warmly welcome children to school in the morning, greeting them on the gate and as they arrive and enter the classrooms. At Heathfields Infant Academy, gates and doors are open from 8:35am.

Procedures for late arrival or early collection

In Fierté Multi-Academy Trust, we actively discourage late arrival and are alert to patterns of late arrival.

Parents are expected to bring their children to school on time every day.

If your child arrives after 8:45 am, they will be recorded as Late (L code) on the register.

If they arrive 20 minutes after the register has closed, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence for the whole morning (a U code).

When pupils arrive late, they are required to report to the main office and parents are asked to sign them in to record their arrival and provide reasons for lateness.

Children should not sign themselves in. If they are unaccompanied, school will contact parents at the earliest opportunity.

If children are collected from school 30 minutes before the end of the day and the absence is unplanned, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence (U code) for the afternoon session unless there are exceptional circumstances*.

Procedures for unplanned absence

The academy operates a first day contact system where parents are required to telephone and inform school on the morning of the first day of absence before 9.15am or as soon as is practicably possible.

The telephone number is (01827) 213885

If there has been no contact, we will text or telephone parents to identify why their child is not in school. This is part of the academy's commitment to safeguarding the safety and welfare of children.

We expect parents will let us know the reason for any absence by contacting school. If you do not answer or respond, then the academy may visit your home to check on your child's welfare (*these visits may be unannounced*).

When your child is absent for longer than a day, it is important to maintain daily contact with school. If contact is not maintained, academy staff will continue to communicate via telephone.

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.

The Trust will not routinely require medical evidence to authorise illness absence. Parents' explanations will normally be accepted. However, where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of illness, or where illness is prolonged, recurring or significantly affecting attendance, reasonable evidence may be requested to:

- support accurate attendance coding.
- understand the pupil's needs.
- identify reasonable adjustments.
- establish appropriate support arrangements.

Evidence may include appointments, prescriptions, hospital letters, care plans or other appropriate documentation.

The academy will adopt a proportionate approach and will not place unnecessary demands upon families or medical professionals.

Where possible, medical appointments should be made and booked before the start and after the end of the school day. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary and details of the appointment shared.

Unexplained periods of absence will be followed up by the school office. If no evidence is provided that will allow us to authorise the period, absences will be marked as unauthorised.

Where a pupil's absence is unexplained and contact cannot be established, the academy will assess the level of safeguarding risk. This may include home visits, consultation with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, notification to the Local Authority, Children's Social Care, police or other agencies where appropriate.

Leave of absence requests

The academy looks at each application for term-time absence individually, considering the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request, however, a leave of absence during term time is rarely authorised.

Holidays are almost never authorised and are most likely to result in a fixed penalty notice.

If a request is made, it should be as far in advance as possible of the planned absence and, where possible, at least 7 weeks (half a term) before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the attendance page on our website or from the school office. The Headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of 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 regulations:

- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable.
- Taking part in a regulated performance (e.g. in line with a license issued by the local authority, for example - to perform in a show).
- Exceptional circumstances.

Exceptional circumstances are situations deemed by the Headteacher to be out of the ordinary and warrant a pupil's absence from school.

These circumstances are not prescriptively defined, allowing a degree of discretion based on individual facts and circumstances in each case. In Fierté Multi-Academy Trust, headteachers routinely consult on individual requests with peers and the Executive Leadership Team to quality assure decisions and ensure a consistent process.

Factors that may be considered exceptional could include:

- Serious illness or bereavement of a family member.
- Important religious observances.
- Service personnel returning from active deployment.

Religious Observance

Absence for recognised religious observance will be authorised where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil or their family belongs.

The academy expects pupils to attend school on the days immediately before and after the period of religious observance unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Parent Travelling for Occupational Purposes

A pupil may qualify for authorised absence where they meet the statutory definition of a mobile child and are travelling with a parent whose trade or business requires them to travel from place to place.

Requests will be considered in line with current attendance regulations and supporting evidence may be requested.

Promoting Good Attendance

Recognition may be given for improved attendance, positive engagement with support plans, punctuality and commitment to learning.

At this academy: Stickers from Little Heroes campaign, certificates at the end of terms, class names recorded on weekly newsletters, text messages of well done and good attendance termly

Attendance Monitoring and Review

Safeguarding and Attendance.

The Trust recognises that poor attendance may be an indicator of unmet need, vulnerability, neglect, exploitation, domestic abuse, county lines involvement, mental health concerns or other safeguarding risks. Unexplained or extended absence will always be considered as a potential safeguarding concern and responded to accordingly.

How will we track the attendance of children?

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

Attendance analysis will extend beyond overall attendance percentages and will include:

- attendance patterns.
- frequency of absence.
- punctuality.
- attendance codes.
- persistent absence.
- severe absence.
- attendance of vulnerable groups.
- comparisons against Trust, local authority, regional and national benchmarks where available.

Analysis will be used to identify emerging concerns and evaluate the impact of intervention strategies.

Attendance data will be routinely analysed for:

- SEND pupils.
- Pupils with medical needs.
- Pupils with a social worker.
- Looked after children and previously looked after children.
- Young carers.
- Disadvantaged pupils.
- Pupils who are in receipt of free school meals.
- Any locally identified vulnerable cohorts.

Attendance data will be reviewed alongside pupil premium information to identify any disproportionate absence. Support will be targeted to ensure disadvantaged pupils are not further disadvantaged by poor attendance.

Additional cohorts may be added based upon the academy's context and emerging attendance trends.

The academy recognises that poor attendance may be an indicator of wider safeguarding concerns. Attendance concerns will be considered alongside all available safeguarding information and may result in referrals to Early Help, Children's Social Care or other agencies where appropriate.

Daily

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session.

It will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, whether every pupil is:

- Present.

- Attending an approved off-site educational activity.
- Absent.
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

Every effort is made to establish the reason for a pupil's absence. When the reason for absence has not yet been established before the register closes, the absence must be recorded with code N. After the registers have closed, a report is run to check on any absentees. The member of staff responsible for running these reports must share concerns with a member of the Senior Leadership Team – *e.g., high numbers of absences in one class, contagious infections, safeguarding concerns or absence of siblings.*

This is then cross-referenced and confirmed with class teachers prior to sending out a 'safe and well' text to parents.

Attendance Register Amendments

Any amendment made to the attendance register will record:

- The original entry.
- The amended entry.
- The reason for the amendment.
- The date the amendment was made.
- The name and role of the person making the amendment.

The academy will maintain appropriate audit trails for all attendance register amendments in accordance with statutory requirements.

Retention of Attendance Records

Attendance registers and associated records will be retained for a minimum of six years following the date of entry.

Weekly

Attendance, punctuality and engagement with learning may be promoted and discussed during assemblies and other whole-school events.

Information shared with pupils will focus on whole-school, phase or class attendance trends, the importance of attending school regularly and the positive impact attendance has on learning, wellbeing and achievement.

Individual pupils' attendance information will remain confidential and will not be shared publicly.

A weekly attendance meeting is held where all absences are reviewed and discussed. If it is noted that any local or national thresholds have been met, then referrals to the Local Authority are considered.

Any remaining N codes (*no explanation provided for absences*) are followed up.

If no reason for any absence is provided or we have not been able to get in contact with parents, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Families of pupils who have previously been persistently absent or are at increased risk of persistent absence are contacted and early school-based support offered if applicable.

During the weekly attendance meeting, if it is noted that any local or national thresholds have been met then referrals to the Local Authority are considered.

Half Termly

The number of lates and absences are also monitored half termly.

When a pupil's data identifies them as being at moderate risk of persistent absence, staff make a call home or meet parents to discuss any concerns and enquire about any support we can offer - explaining how much learning has been lost and the impact of this. Children *may* be included in these discussions where appropriate.

Data includes the number of sessions or days missed, spells of absence and other risk and protective factors.

A record of these meetings is kept and stored on the academy's Management Information System; these are further reviewed half termly. Attendance support plans will be implemented throughout the term as appropriate and reviewed half termly which may include offering an Early Help Assessment.

Termly

Recognition may be given to pupils who demonstrate improvements in attendance, sustained punctuality, positive engagement with attendance support plans, resilience in overcoming barriers to attendance and commitment to learning.

The academy will ensure that any attendance-related recognition is fair, inclusive and does not disadvantage pupils whose attendance is affected by genuine medical needs, disabilities, SEND or other exceptional circumstances. Recognition will focus on progress and commitment rather than attendance percentages alone.

If attendance is a concern, this will be raised in termly parent/teacher consultation meetings.

Data is analysed including analysis of vulnerable groups which is shared with governors.

Attendance is also monitored in each Academy through termly meetings with the Trust CEO and Vice CEO. The impact of any support put in place is determined and any further strategies identified.

Trustees also evaluate attendance figures on a termly basis identifying any support required or offering challenge to members of the Executive Team where necessary.

End of Year

An annual attendance record is sent home with the end of year school report.

Reporting Attendance to Parents

Attendance information will be shared regularly with parents throughout the academic year through attendance letters, meetings, reports and other communication channels.

Where possible, attendance will be communicated in both percentages and the number of days of learning missed to support parental understanding of the impact of absence on education.

Targeting Support Meetings

The academy will work closely with the Local Authority School Attendance Support Team.

Where attendance concerns require multi-agency involvement, attendance cases may be discussed within Targeting Support Meetings.

These meetings may:

- Identify emerging attendance concerns.
- Review pupils at risk of persistent absence.
- Review persistently absent pupils.
- Review severely absent pupils.
- Agree multi-agency support plans.
- Identify lead practitioners.
- Evaluate impact of existing support.
- Facilitate earlier access to specialist services.

The Trust recognises these meetings as a key part of safeguarding and attendance improvement practice.

Information will be shared lawfully and proportionately with relevant agencies where this supports safeguarding, attendance improvement or the welfare of the child. The academy recognises that data protection legislation does not prevent the sharing of information where safeguarding concerns exist.

Attendance Support and Intervention

Attendance concerns will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Decisions regarding support and intervention will take account of attendance levels, patterns of absence, frequency of absence, punctuality, known barriers, safeguarding considerations, vulnerability factors and previous support offered.

Intervention may begin at any stage where attendance data or professional judgement indicates that a pupil is at risk of persistent absence.

How will we ensure that our work is effective?

This will be through:

- Meetings with families gathering their feedback.
- Reviewing the implementation of support plans.

- Measure the impact of strategies to improve attendance and/or punctuality.
- Monitoring individual, group, class, and whole-school attendance over time including comparing these to Trust and national benchmarks.

Tailored Support

The academy's MIS (Arbor) is used to regularly analyse pupils' attendance and punctuality by administrative staff, class teachers and our Attendance Champion. Where attendance and punctuality are not as expected, we adopt an empathetic approach to individual circumstances and needs whilst remaining uncompromising, providing tailored support in response to the need for help.

As poor attendance contributes to significant amounts of lost learning, which impacts negatively, we have a responsibility to ensure children are attending school regularly. However, we endeavour to listen, understand, empathise and support your child to be in school.

Disadvantaged Pupils

The Trust recognises the strong relationship between disadvantage and attendance. Attendance data will be considered alongside Pupil Premium strategy planning to ensure that disadvantage-related barriers are identified and addressed through evidence-informed interventions.

Pupils absent due to mental or physical ill health or SEND

The attendance ambition for pupils with SEND or medical needs remains the same as for all pupils. However, additional support, reasonable adjustments and tailored approaches may be required to enable attendance. Any adjustments will be regularly reviewed with pupils and families and, where appropriate, linked to EHCP provision, healthcare plans or wider support plans.

Where anxiety-based attendance difficulties or emotionally based school avoidance are identified, support will focus on reintegration, pastoral intervention and graduated attendance improvement rather than immediate enforcement.

Attendance barriers linked to SEND will be considered through the graduated approach of Assess, Plan, Do and Review, ensuring support is informed by need and regularly reviewed.

The academy will distinguish between absence resulting from barriers connected to SEND and absence where support has not been engaged with, ensuring enforcement activity remains proportionate and appropriate.

Decisions regarding attendance support, attendance contracts or legal intervention will take account of the Equality Act 2010 and any reasonable adjustments required.

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

We will work closely with children and their families to identify the worries they have and the strategies that can be put in place to address these. Regular empathetic and open communication will always be adopted.

Strategies could include:

- Home visits.
- Orientation visits

- Phased returns
- Tutoring/catch-up programmes
- Pastoral support e.g. *check-ins throughout the day with a trusted adult*.

Support Plans will be co-developed, implemented and reviewed, adapted as required to changing circumstances.

Pupils returning to school following suspension.

Where a pupil returns following suspension, an appropriate reintegration meeting will be held to identify support required and reduce the risk of future absence.

Transport and Access Barriers

Where attendance is affected by transport difficulties, distance from school, mobility needs, SEND-related transport requirements or other access barriers, academies will work collaboratively with families and relevant agencies to identify appropriate solutions.

Remote Education

Remote education is not a substitute for regular attendance and will only be used as a last resort.

Where remote learning is provided, it will form part of a wider reintegration plan designed to support a return to full attendance.

The academy will always consider reasonable adjustments and support strategies before long-term reliance on remote education

Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

We will work closely with families to build a strong relationship over time.

We will listen to and understand barriers to attendance.

Working with each family and their unique situation, we will work with families to remove barriers adopting an open-minded and solution-focused mindset.

Pupils who are Young Carers

The Trust recognises that some pupils undertake care responsibilities at home which may impact attendance.

Where a pupil is identified as a young carer, the academy will:

- Collaborate with the pupil and family.
- Identify attendance barriers linked to caring responsibilities.
- Provide appropriate pastoral support.
- Access Early Help where appropriate.
- Refer to specialist Young Carer support services when required.
- Monitor attendance as part of vulnerable group analysis.

Attendance of young carers will be reviewed regularly alongside other vulnerable cohorts.

Pupils with Social Workers

We will identify pupils who have or have previously had a social worker; share attendance concerns and notify social workers of unexplained absences.

We will work with Virtual School colleagues where appropriate and consider additional academic and pastoral support.

The academy will take account of information received through Operation Encompass and ensure appropriate support is provided where domestic abuse incidents have been reported.

Attendance concerns relating to pupils who have, or have previously had, a social worker will be considered as a potential safeguarding indicator and reviewed alongside wider safeguarding information.

Transitions

Attention will be given to attendance during key transition points including:

- Entry to Reception.
- Movement between Key Stages.
- Transition to secondary education.
- Pupils joining the academy mid-year.
- Pupils returning following prolonged absence.

Attendance information will be shared appropriately to ensure continuity of support.

Attendance Support Plans

Research shows that children with good attendance throughout their school years reach their full potential and achieve highly.

Attendance Support Plans are collaborative documents developed with pupils and families to identify barriers to attendance, agreed actions, support arrangements, review dates and expected outcomes.

If your child's attendance is a concern, you will have a meeting with the academy's Attendance Champion to support you in enabling your child to be in school. The meeting will explore the reasons for absence alongside strategies to support and improve attendance. The plan will be in place for 4 weeks, monitored and then reviewed with parents for impact, where the expectation is to see a significant improvement.

The expected improvement will be recorded on the plan.

Where attendance concerns relate to taking a holiday during term time, a meeting will be arranged to discuss the impact holidays have on academic attainment and progress.

Attendance Contracts

Where voluntary support has not secured sufficient improvement, the academy and/or Local Authority may offer an Attendance Contract.

Attendance Contracts:

- Are formal written agreements.
- Set out expectations for improvement in attendance.

- Identify support available to the family.
- Include review arrangements.
- Provide a structured alternative to legal intervention.

Attendance Contracts are intended to support rather than punish families, but failure to engage may result in consideration of further legal intervention.

Education Supervision Orders (ESO)

Where voluntary support, Attendance Support Plans and Attendance Contracts have not secured sufficient improvement in attendance, the academy may work with the Local Authority to consider an Education Supervision Order (ESO).

An ESO is a formal intervention available through the Family Court which places a pupil under the supervision of the Local Authority.

The purpose of an ESO is to support families in improving attendance whilst ensuring that appropriate services are coordinated around the child and family.

An ESO is not a criminal sanction. However, failure to comply with requirements attached to the Order may result in further legal action.

The academy will work collaboratively with Local Authority colleagues whenever an ESO is being considered and will continue to provide support to the pupil and family throughout the process.

Penalty Notices

Except where support is not appropriate due to the nature of the absence, the academy will continue to seek to understand barriers and offer support before requesting legal intervention.

The national threshold for issuing penalty notices is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks.

All Fierté Multi-Academy Trust academies must consider whether a penalty notice is appropriate in each individual case where one of their pupils reaches the national threshold.

Academies should not have a blanket position of issuing or not issuing penalty notices and should make judgements on each individual case to ensure fairness and consistency across the Trust

Considerations

- Could the academy offer support or increase its support to the child and family to address the barriers to attendance?
- Is a penalty notice the best tool to improve attendance?
- Would a Notice to Improve be appropriate?
- Should the academy use another legal intervention?

- Has the academy made all reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010 to facilitate attendance.

Notice to Improve

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

Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for Staffordshire.

They will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences.
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under [section 7 of the Education Act 1996](#)
- Details of the support provided so far.
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with.
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance does not 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 period of between 3 and 6 weeks for improvement.
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period.

Two penalty notices in a three-year period

The three-year rolling period starts when the first penalty notice is issued.

The first penalty notice for leave in term time will increase to £160 per parent, per child but can be reduced to £80 per parent per child if paid within 21 days.

If a second penalty notice is issued within three years of the first penalty notice, then this will be at a fixed rate of £160 per parent per child, with no reduction for early payment.

A third penalty notice cannot be issued within the three-year period; therefore, the county council will deal with any further unauthorised leave through prosecution in the Magistrates Court. If the parent is found guilty, the potential fine is up to £1000.

Discretionary powers

The national threshold provides a consistent approach across England for issuing fines to parents over unauthorised absences. However, if in an individual case the academy and local authority believe a penalty notice would be appropriate, they retain the discretion to issue one before the threshold is met. *For example - where parents are avoiding the national threshold by taking several term time holidays below threshold (long weekends), or for repeated absence for family events or days trips.*

Fierté Trust Multi-Academy academies will advise the authority of all unauthorised leave in term time and jointly consider if it meets the criteria for use of discretion to issue a penalty notice under the threshold.

Persistent and Severe Absence Definitions

Persistent absence is defined as a pupil missing 10% or more of their possible sessions.

The academy recognises that persistent absence may be an indicator of unmet safeguarding needs, including neglect, exploitation, mental health difficulties, domestic abuse, county lines involvement, young carer responsibilities or other vulnerabilities.

Severe absence is defined as a pupil missing 50% or more of their possible sessions.

Severe absence should be treated as a safeguarding priority and may warrant:

- Children's social care involvement.
- Whole-family plans.
- Intensified multi-agency responses.

Where a pupil is severely absent, the academy will consider whether the absence indicates unmet safeguarding needs and whether a referral to Children's Social Care, Early Help or other safeguarding services is required.

Intervention will always begin well before these thresholds are reached where attendance patterns indicate risk of future absence becoming entrenched.

Children Absent from Education Due to Medical Needs

Where a pupil is unable to attend school because of physical or mental health needs for a prolonged period, the academy will work with health professionals, parents, the Local Authority and other agencies to ensure suitable education arrangements are considered and attendance support remains in place.

Children Missing Education

The academy will comply with statutory Children Missing Education duties and will promptly notify the Local Authority where pupils meet the threshold for CME enquiries.

EYFS Prolonged Absence Procedures

The Trust recognises that establishing strong attendance habits from the earliest stages of education is fundamental to children's learning, development, wellbeing and future attendance patterns. Good attendance in the Early Years Foundation Stage supports children's social development, communication skills, routine and readiness for learning.

Parents are expected to notify the academy of any absence on the first day of absence and maintain contact with the academy throughout any continued absence. Wherever possible, the academy will hold more than two emergency contact numbers for each child in the EYFS.

Where a child is absent without explanation, the academy will make reasonable enquiries to establish the reason for absence and confirm the child's welfare. This may include:

- Telephone calls, text messages or emails to parents or carers.
- Contact with alternative emergency contacts.

- Discussions with professionals already working with the child or family where appropriate.
- Home visits where the academy considers this necessary.
- Consultation with the Designated Safeguarding Lead regarding any safeguarding concerns.

Where a period of absence is prolonged, the academy will seek to understand the reasons for absence, maintain contact with the family and offer appropriate support to facilitate a return to regular attendance. Decisions regarding what constitutes prolonged absence will take account of:

- The age and vulnerability of the child.
- Previous attendance patterns.
- Known family circumstances.
- Any safeguarding, welfare, medical or SEND considerations

Where concerns remain regarding a child's welfare, whereabouts or safety, the academy will follow safeguarding procedures and may make referrals to Children's Social Care, the Local Authority, Health Services or request a welfare check from the police where appropriate. Attendance concerns will always be considered alongside wider safeguarding information to ensure children receive timely support and protection

The Trust recognises that persistent absence in the early years may be an indicator of wider family needs. Wherever possible, support will be offered at the earliest opportunity through partnership working with families and relevant external agencies.

Elective Home Education

Where attendance concerns are linked to discussions regarding Elective Home Education, the academy will follow Staffordshire and Trust procedures and ensure parents receive impartial information regarding their legal responsibilities.

Appendix 1 Coding attendance in line with DFE guidance 2026:

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupils are present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupils are present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupils arrive late before register has closed
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupils are 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	Pupils are on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupils are 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	Pupils are attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupils are 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	Pupils are undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupils are at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupils have an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupils have been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
X	Not required to be in school	Pupils of non-compulsory school age are not required to attend

C2	Part-time timetable	Pupils are not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupils have 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	Pupils are taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupils are 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	Pupils are unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national, or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupils are 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 is absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g., due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupils are unable to attend as they are: ○ In police detention ○ Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial, or sentencing, or

		○ Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent - unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupils are 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 is not satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupils arrived late, after the register closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupils have not joined school yet but have been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole school closures that are known and planned, including school holidays

Appendix 2 Trust Attendance Thresholds

Percentage Attendance	Annual Attendance	Category	Response
98% and above	No more than 4 days of learning missed across the academic year	Strong	Universal Promotion
95% to 97.9%	Between 4 and 9.5 days of learning missed across the academic year	Expected	Routine Monitoring
90% to 94.9%	Between 10 and 19 days of learning missed across the academic year	At Risk	Early Interventions
Below 90%	More than 19 days of learning missed across the academic year	Persistent Absence	Attendance Support Planning
Below 50%	More than 95 days of learning missed across the academic year	Severe Absence	Multi-Agency Response