



BLUE COAT C E (AIDED) INFANT AND JUNIOR SCHOOLS' FEDERATION

Attendance Policy 2025-26

Date agreed by Governors:	
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1. Aims

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

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

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

- Part 6 of the [Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of the [Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment](#)
- It also refers to:
- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
- Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
- Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils needs
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
 - The importance of good attendance
 - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
 - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
 - The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

3.2 The Executive Headteacher

The Executive Headteacher is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices
- Working with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader (also known as the 'senior attendance champion') in conjunction with the Inclusion Team is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Mr D Matthews and can be contacted via school (Infant – 01922720740, or Junior School -01922 720921) or via email on postbox@bluecoatfederation.co.uk

3.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance, and the headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Working with identified families to support and improve attendance alongside the family support worker
- Advising the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- Completing necessary paperwork as part of legal processes connected to attendance

3.5 Class Teacher

Class Teachers are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1), and submitting this information to the school office by 9am each school day for the morning session and by 1:30pm each day for afternoon sessions.

Staff may also notice patterns of absence and/or lateness or have concerns about what a child has shared. This will be reported and recorded as per our safeguarding protocols.

3.6 School Admin staff

School office staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Make contact with parents/carers who have not provided a reason for absence (First day contact)
- Share information from calls from parents/carers with the Inclusion Team/Family Support where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

3.7 Parents

Parents/careers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9:30am on the day of the absence (and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with at least two emergency contact numbers for their child
- Inform us in advance of any medical appointments in school time. (E.g. speech therapy, hospital.) Please ensure that you provide the office with proof of the appointment.
- Ensure that, where possible, routine medical appointments (opticians, dentist, etc.) for their child are made outside of the school day
- Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or local authority
- Seek support at school for maintaining good attendance, by contacting our pastoral team via the email address familysupport@bluecoatfederation.co.uk

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day, on time

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

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

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

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

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment (this will be made on Arbor via Notes)
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment
- Minutes late (where this falls below the threshold for unauthorised absence)

See [Appendix 1](#) for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity, where a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances, where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

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

4.2 How is the School organised?

	Time	Hours
Nursery (AM)	8:30am – 11:30am	(15 hours)
Nursery (PM)	12:30pm – 3:30pm	(15 hours)

	Start Time	Lunchtime	End of Day
Reception	8:40am - 8:50am	11:45am – 1:00 pm	3:10pm
Year 1	8:40am - 8:50am	12:10am – 1:10 pm	3:10pm
Year 2	8:40am - 8:50am	12:10am – 1:10 pm	3:10pm

Time in School per day: 6 hours 30 minutes

Time in school per week: 32 hour and 30 minutes

Total days in School per year: 190

	Start Time	Breaktime	Lunchtime	End of Day
Year 3	8:45 am	10:30 – 10:45	12:20 – 1:10	3:20 pm
Year 4	8:45 am	10:50-11:05	12:20 – 1:20	3:20 pm
Year 5	8:45 am	10:30-10:45	12:20 – 1:20	3:20 pm
Year 6	8:45 am	10:50-11:05	12:20 – 1:20	3:20 pm

Time in school per day: 6 hours 35 minutes

Time in school per week: 32 hours 45 min

Total days in school per year: 190

BCI - The register for the first session will begin at 8:40am and will close at 8:50am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1.10pm for KS1 and will be kept open until 1:20pm.

BCJ - The register for the first session will begin at 8:45am and will close at 8:55am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1.20pm for KS2 and will be kept open until 1:25pm.

4.3 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9:30am, or as soon as practically possible. Parents' can call the school office on the following numbers:

Blue Coat CE Infant School - 01922720740

Blue Coat CE Junior School - 01922720921

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.

Please contact the school before 9:30am on each day giving a reason for your child's absence.

Not all illnesses require your child to take time off school.

The table below shows some common illnesses and whether your child should attend school if they have the illness. If your child is still ok to come into school, it is important that you still let us know if your child has any of the illnesses listed in the table below (further detail can be found in appendix 2).

Illness	Should my child still come to school?
Coughs and colds	Yes with a minor <u>cough</u> or <u>common cold</u> No with a high temperature
Chickenpox	No. Keep them off school until all the spots have crusted over. This is usually about 5 days after the spots first appeared.
Cold sores	Yes
Conjunctivitis	Yes but do get advice from your pharmacist.
COVID-19	Yes No if they have a high temperature or do not feel well enough to go to school or do their normal activities
Ear infection	Yes No if they have a high temperature or severe earache
Hand, foot and mouth disease	Yes
Head lice and nits	Yes but treat the Headlice without the GP
Impetigo	No keep them off school until all the sores have crusted over and healed, or for 48 hours after they start antibiotic treatment.
Measles	No. See a GP and Keep your child off for at least 4 days from when the rash first appears.
Ringworm	It's fine for your child to go to school once they have started treatment.
Scarlet fever	Your child can go back to school 24 hours after starting antibiotics.
Slapped cheek syndrome (fifth disease)	Yes

Sore throat	Yes
Threadworms	Yes
Vomiting and diarrhoea	No - stay away for 48 hours.

Where the absence is longer than 5 days the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily. Parents should be aware that if their child has more than 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in an academic year then medical proof will be asked for on all occasions of illness.

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

My child is feeling anxious or worried

It's normal for children to feel a little anxious sometimes. They may get a tummy ache or headache, or have problems eating or sleeping.

Avoiding school can make a child's anxiety about going to school worse. It's good to talk about any worries they may have such as bullying, friendship problems, school work or sensory problems. You can also work with the school to find ways to help them.

If your child is still struggling and it's affecting their everyday life, it might be good to talk to your GP or school nurse.

Find information and advice about how to help children with anxiety

Further guidance can be found on the NHS website:

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

We take any unexplained absence seriously and our Duty of Care requires us to take action, if no contact is received.

4.4 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment. This can be done by providing the school admin team with a copy of the medical letter or appointment card.

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

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

4.5 Lateness and punctuality

Children who arrive late should enter school through the front office where the reason for being late will be recorded:

If a pupil arrives within 30 minutes of the start time they will be marked as late, using the appropriate code (L). For any lateness over 30 minutes will be marked as an unauthorised late, using the appropriate code (U).

For pupil's/families where punctuality is a persistent problem the school will arrange a meeting to discuss the cause for this and make a plan to improve the situation.

4.6 Following up response to an unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without contact from a parent/carer, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason.
- Text to parent/carer, by 10:30am.
- Telephone call to second named contact for pupil (if considered necessary).
- If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may ask the Educational Welfare service to visit the home address or carry out a home visit ourselves. Please be aware that schools have a legal duty as part of their safeguarding requirements to know where every child is by 11am on each school day.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session(s) for which the pupil was absent

Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer. - Home visit to parent/carer by School Attendance Officer, if deemed appropriate. If we cannot make contact with a parent/carer and are duly concerned about a pupils' safety or wellbeing, we may contact the Police and Social Care.

- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance.
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals.
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with: issue a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention (see section 5.2 below), as appropriate

For those pupils with an allocated social worker, it may be necessary to notify social worker of any unexplained or unauthorised pupil absence and proportionate action may be taken by the school in agreement with the social worker.

4.7 Reporting to parents

The school will report your child's attendance record annually in their written end of year report. During the year attendance is monitored and rewards are given to children achieving good levels of attendance. On a termly basis parents are made aware if attendance has fallen below 90% to afford them the best possible opportunity to improve attendance by the end of the year.

As a school we promote and reward good attendance. Each term children's individual attendance is rewarded. We aim for children to achieve at least 95% attendance each term to maintain a good level of education.

- Parent support is available at the schools' entrances each morning or they contact school via the family support email.
- Each class competes to win the attendance cup/ Attendance Ted. The class with the highest percentage will have their class celebrated in assembly and on the school newsletter (referred to as Blue Print).
- Attendance certificates (good for 95% and excellent for 100%).
- Improvements to Attendance and punctuality will be celebrated (pupils will receive a certificate).
- Raffle tickets to win a bike for all children who achieve 100% each term (maximum of 3 tickets per year).

Parents can also access their children's attendance data at parents evening or by calling the relevant school office.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

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

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

Leave of absence will not be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

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

5.1. Authorised absences

Authorised absences involve pupils having time out of school for 'exceptional circumstances' for example: significant or recurring illness and with medical 'evidence', urgent/emergency medical appointments, attendance at funerals, religious observance or visits to new schools.

These should be filled in and returned to school, in a timely manner, to give school time to consider and give decision about authorising the request by the Executive Headteacher. Planned absences must be communicated with the office via email or in writing. The Executive Headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Every effort should be made to arrange routine dentist and GP appointments outside school hours. However, it is understood that specialist hospital or clinic appointments may have to be made during school hours.

Please bring an appointment notification into the school office in good time when arranging to collect children in order for relevant preparations to be made and to keep disruption to classroom practice to a minimum. A copy of the notification may be taken and held on the pupil's school file.

If a pupil has a re-occurring health problem and isn't under the care of a health professional, a discussion may be held with parents to consider making a referral to School Health Services or other partner agencies, as considered appropriate.

Authorised absence is coded as appropriate. If the Head Teacher does not authorise the request, and leave of absence is still taken, this will be classified as 'unauthorised' leave. Unauthorised absence is coded as appropriate to the circumstance.

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

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

- Religious observance (Code R) – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes (Code T) – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision
- employment to take part in a regulated performance (or regulated employment abroad) (Code C1)
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (Code E) (and no alternative provision has been made)
- Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable (Code C2)
- attend an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution (Code J1)

5.2. What are unauthorised absences?

Unauthorised absences involve pupils having time out of school without any explanation offered, or where the reason for absence is one that the school cannot authorise, for example: holidays, shopping, birthdays, baby-sitting for younger children, too tired, late night due to birthday, not realising term had started or because other members of the family are ill.

Unauthorised absence of four or more continuous days may lead to the Walsall Education Attendance Support Team (WAEST) issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued. This includes:

- Holiday not granted by the school (Code G)
- Reason for absence not yet established (Code N)
- Absent in other or unknown circumstances (Code O)
- Arrived in school after registration closed (Code U)

Please note this is regardless of your child's attendance level.

Government Policy

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

Policy now places a great deal of emphasis on maintaining high levels of attendance in UK schools. The main points of this policy are highlighted below:-

- All pupils should attend school every day.
- Head Teachers should not grant any leave unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- If you decide to remove your child from school for a period of unauthorised leave of absence (incl. term time holidays) this may result in a referral to Walsall Education Attendance Support Team (WEAST) to consider issuing a fixed penalty fine.

The local authority or the police can fine parents/carers for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

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

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks)
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

Receiving a penalty notice

The Local Authority will send the notice by post to your home address. We allow 2 days for delivery time before your notice period starts. There's no right of appeal.

How much it costs

If you've received a penalty notice, you should pay it as soon as possible to avoid any further charges.

- First notice: £160 if paid within 28 days (reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days)
- Second notice: (issued to the same parent for the same child): £160 if paid within 28 days

What happens after two penalty notices

There will not be a third notice to the same parent for the same child within three years. We may take other action, such as prosecution.

After three years a further notice may be issued, but usually we will pursue prosecution.

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day). These penalty notices are not included in the National Framework, not subject to the same considerations about support being provided, and do not count towards the limit as part of the escalation process.

In these cases, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160.

5.3. Poor school attenders and persistent absentees.

- Any pupil who has an attendance level that drops to 96% is at risk of not making expected academic progress.
- Any pupil who has an attendance level that drops to 94% is at risk of becoming a 'poor attender' or 'persistent absentee'.
- Any pupil who has an attendance level that drops below 92% is known as a 'poor attender'.
- Any pupil who has an attendance level that drops below 90% is known as a 'persistent absentee'.

Any child, who is at risk of becoming a poor school attender, is a poor school attender or persistent absentee will be supported by the Family Support Worker (FSW) and School Attendance Officer via a tiered system.

TIER 1 - Universal Strategies

Role of school	Role of Child	Role of Parents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Meet and greet children •Create a positive classroom environment •Monitor daily attendance •Implement evidence-based teaching strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Attend school regularly and on time •Engage actively in activities •Support others •Share when you have concerns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Ensure your child attends regularly and on time •Communicate with the school regarding absence •Recognise their achievements and engage in their learning •Communicate your concerns with the school

TIER 2 - Individualised Strategies

Role of school	Role of Child	Role of Parents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Use data to identify student at risk of PA •Work with children and families to identify barriers to attendance •Monitor progress and recognise achievements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Participate in targeted interventions •Share concerns with the staff •Engage in school life •Recognise personal achievements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Work with the school to understand barriers to attendance •Engage with support offered •Communicate with the school regarding absence

TIER 3 - Higher Needs Strategies

Role of School	Role of Child	Role of Parents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Multi-agency efforts with LA and external partners •Use data to identify and monitor students at risk of SA •Assess and adapt strategies •Recognise achievements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Participate in interventions •Continue to engage in school life •Share concerns with staff •Recognise personal achievements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Work with the school to implement interventions •Communicate with the school •Take an active role in multi-agency efforts

Attendance below 94%

Parent/carer may receive initial contact from the school informing them that their child's attendance level has dropped below this figure and is being closely monitored.

Attendance below 92%

Parent/carer will receive a second contact from the school informing them that their child's attendance is being jointly monitored by the FSW and School Attendance Officer.

Parent/carer will be invited by (FSW) and/or School Attendance Officer to discuss interventions to deal swiftly with any attendance issues, in a supportive and proportionate manner.

Any absence through illness may not be authorised without medical evidence such as an appointment notification, receipt for medication from a pharmacy or copy of prescription/medication labels showing child's name and date dispensed.

In certain circumstances Fixed Penalty Notices may be issued depending on individual circumstances

5.4 Notices to improve

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

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

They will include:

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

- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

6. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

6.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

We recognise that some pupils may have complex barriers to attendance due to very specific and personalised family circumstances. In these cases, the member of the Admin team who first receives information will share this with the Inclusion Lead. A member of the Inclusion Team will contact parents to sensitively discuss the specific needs of the family and offer support through signposting to appropriate agencies. This may include a referral to Families First (Walsall Early help). All information shared between staff and parents is treated with strict confidence and only shared on a need to know basis.

6.2 Pupils absent due to mental or physical ill health or SEND

Physical ill health

Some pupils face more complex barriers to attendance. This can include pupils who have long term physical or mental health conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Their right to an education is the same as any other pupil and therefore the attendance ambition for these pupils should be the same as it is for any other pupil but additional support may need to be provided... The need for additional support may also arise if a child is experiencing

- an accident or trauma
- mental health issues
- chronic long-term, life-limiting or life-shortening conditions
- Health conditions that mean a lot of time spent in hospital.

It does not apply to children with common childhood illnesses (such as a cold or chickenpox) that would be expected to be back at school quickly.

If your child cannot attend because of illness or injury, your school and local council will provide support to make sure their education does not suffer.

The school's role

The school should:

- let the local council know if your child is likely to be away from school for more than 15 school days
- give the local council information about your child's needs, capabilities and the programme of work
- help them reintegrate at school when they return
- make sure they're kept informed about school events and clubs
- encourage them to stay in contact with other pupils, for example through visits or videos

The local council's role

If your child's going to be away for a long time, the local council will make sure they get as normal an education as possible. This could include arranging:

- home teaching
- a hospital school or teaching service
- a combination of home and hospital teaching
-

The local council must make sure your child continues to get a full time education - unless part time is better for their health needs.

The local council should also:

- have a senior officer in charge of the arrangements and a written policy explaining how they'll meet their responsibilities

- make sure your child is not without access to education for more than 15 school days
- arrange education from the start of your child's absence if it's clear they're going to be away from school for long and recurring periods

Some children with long term serious health needs may still be able to access school with Additional Learning Support in place. Pupils with a condition covered by the list above are entitled to 'Additional Support for Learning'. This may be long term or short term and each situation will be considered on an individual basis.

Additional Support for Learning may include:

- changes to the curriculum or the way a pupil is taught
- support from a learning assistant
- use of technology or changes to learning materials
- Input from specialist teachers or health professionals.

Mental Ill Health

It is important to recognise that, in many instances, attendance at school will help to deal with many underlying issues and that being absent from school may exacerbate concerns. Long periods of absence from school can increase feelings of anxiety. Many children will experience normal but difficult emotions that make them nervous about attending school, such as worries about friendships, schoolwork, exams or variable moods. It is important to note that these pupils are still expected to attend school regularly. School staff will work quickly to communicate this expectation to parents/carers, and work together with them to ensure that such circumstances do not act as a barrier to regular attendance. Any associated anxiety about attending should be mitigated as much as possible by creating a plan to implement reasonable adjustments to alleviate specific barriers to attendance. These adjustments will be agreed by and regularly reviewed with all parties, including parents/carers. In developing a plan to support attendance through reasonable adjustments, school staff will take into account the individual circumstances of the child, being mindful of safeguarding responsibilities as set out in the most recent version of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Where a pupil has an education health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that related to the pupil's needs, the school will inform the local authority. As a school we will work in partnership with parents/carers to develop specific support approaches for attendance, including where necessary a review of the provision outlined in Section F of the child's EHCP to ensure this is sufficiently meeting the needs of the pupil. School will be responsible for strategies for removing the in-school barriers these pupils face, including considering support or reasonable adjustments for uniform, transport, routines, access to support in school and lunchtime arrangements.

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

A reintegration plan will be established with parents of children who have been unavoidable absent for more than 15 days. A reintegration plan will consider the needs of the child and support put in place to ensure a smooth transition back to school. Support may include:

- A gradual return using a part-time timetable
- Extra help within small groups or 1-1 support to cover key areas of missed learning
- Increased pastoral support to provide check-ins and monitoring of emotional well-being

7. Attendance monitoring

The Admin staff monitors pupil absence on a weekly basis using the school's register system **Arbor**.

7.1 Monitoring attendance

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

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

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

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

7.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

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

7.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
- Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence, and their families (see section 8.4 below)
- Provide regular attendance reports to the class teacher, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinator, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium lead)
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

7.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

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

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
 - Discuss attendance and engagement at school
 - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
 - Explain the help that is available
 - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
 - Review any existing actions or interventions
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
- Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 5.2, above)

We publish our attendance statistics on the school website (see school newsletter). We fully support all initiatives from our Local Authority and comply with all of Walsall Children's Services guidance and expectations.

8. Monitoring arrangements

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

9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

If you would like to access any of the Federation's other policies, please visit the link below:

<https://www.bluecoatfederation.co.uk/blue-coat-c-e-junior-school/key-information/policy-documents/>

Appendix 1: Attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's [guidance on school attendance](#).

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school

Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

Appendix 2: Is my child too ill for school?

It can be tricky deciding whether or not to keep your child off school, nursery or playgroup when they're unwell.

There are government guidelines for schools and nurseries about [health protection and managing specific infectious diseases at GOV.UK](#). These say when children should be kept off school and when they shouldn't. If you do keep your child at home, it's important to phone the school or nursery on the first day. Let them know that your child won't be in and give them the reason.

If your child is well enough to go to school but has an infection that could be passed on, such as a cold sore or head lice, let their teacher know.

What to do about other conditions

High temperature

If your child has a [high temperature](#), keep them off school until it goes away.

Feeling anxious or worried

It's normal for children to feel a little anxious sometimes. They may get a tummy ache or headache, or have problems eating or sleeping.

Avoiding school can make a child's anxiety about going to school worse. It's good to talk about any worries they may have such as bullying, friendship problems, school work or sensory problems. You can also work with the school to find ways to help them.

If your child is still struggling and it's affecting their everyday life, it might be good to talk to your GP or school nurse. [Find information and advice about how to help children with anxiety](#)

Coughs and colds

It's fine to send your child to school with a minor [cough](#) or [common cold](#). But if they have a high temperature, keep them off school until it goes. Encourage your child to throw away any used tissues and to wash their hands regularly.

Chickenpox

If your child has [chickenpox](#), keep them off school until all the spots have crusted over. This is usually about 5 days after the spots first appeared.

Cold sores

There's no need to keep your child off school if they have a [cold sore](#). Encourage them not to touch the blister or kiss anyone while they have the cold sore, or to share things like cups and towels.

Conjunctivitis

You don't need to keep your child away from school if they have [conjunctivitis](#), unless they are feeling very unwell. Do get advice from your pharmacist. Encourage your child not to rub their eyes and to wash their hands regularly.

COVID-19

If your child has mild symptoms, such as a runny nose, sore throat, or slight cough, and feels well enough, they can go to school.

Your child should try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people if they have [symptoms of COVID-19](#) and they either:

- have a high temperature
- do not feel well enough to go to school or do their normal activities
- What to do if your child has tested positive

Your child is no longer required to do a COVID-19 rapid lateral flow test if they have symptoms. But if your child has tested positive for COVID-19, they should try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for 3 days after the day they took the test.

Ear infection

If your child has an [ear infection](#) and a high temperature or severe earache, keep them off school until they're feeling better or their high temperature goes away.

Hand, foot and mouth disease

If your child has [hand, foot and mouth disease](#) but seems well enough to go to school, there's no need to keep them off. Encourage your child to throw away any used tissues straight away and to wash their hands regularly.

Head lice and nits

There's no need to keep your child off school if they have head lice. You can treat [head lice and nits](#) without seeing a GP.

Impetigo

If your child has [impetigo](#), they'll need treatment from a pharmacist or GP, often with antibiotics. Keep them off school until all the sores have crusted over and healed, or for 48 hours after they start antibiotic treatment. Encourage your child to wash their hands regularly and not to share things like towels and cups with other children at school.

Measles

If your child has [measles](#), they'll need to see a GP. Call the GP surgery before you go in, as measles can spread to others easily. Keep your child off school for at least 4 days from when the rash first appears. They should also avoid close contact with babies and anyone who is pregnant or has a weakened immune system.

Ringworm

If your child has [ringworm](#), see your pharmacist unless it's on their scalp, in which case you should see a GP. It's fine for your child to go to school once they have started treatment.

Scarlet fever

If your child has [scarlet fever](#), they'll need treatment with antibiotics from a GP. Otherwise they'll be infectious for 2 to 3 weeks. Your child can go back to school 24 hours after starting antibiotics.

Slapped cheek syndrome (fifth disease)

You don't need to keep your child off school if they have [slapped cheek syndrome](#) because, once the rash appears, they're no longer infectious. But let the school or teacher know if you think your child has slapped cheek syndrome.

Sore throat

You can still send your child to school if they have a [sore throat](#). But if they also have a high temperature, they should stay at home until it goes away. A sore throat and a high temperature can be symptoms of [tonsillitis](#).

Threadworms

You don't need to keep your child off school if they have [threadworms](#). Speak to your pharmacist, who can recommend a treatment.

Vomiting and diarrhoea

Children with [diarrhoea or vomiting](#) should stay away from school until they have not been sick or had diarrhoea for at least 2 days (48 hours).