Attendance Policy

Unity
Trust
Courage
Curiosity
Respect
Kindness

A community for learning. Raising expectations. Fulfilling high standards.

Policy Revised: **November 2026**
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Headteacher: **Mrs Gemma Hillier**

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1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- We will support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.
- We will work in partnership with our pupils and families.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:
This policy reflects and complies with:

- Education Act 1996 (sections 434, 444, 551, 576)
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended by 2024 Regulations
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance (DfE, 2026 statutory guidance)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2026)

This policy should be read alongside the school's **Child Protection Policy**.

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The Governing Board

The Governing Board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy. The Governing Body usually delegates their decision-making power to the Headteacher on the subject of whether to authorise absence or not, therefore the Headteacher has overall discretion. However, if parents are not satisfied with the decision, they may follow the school's usual complaints procedure and seek to consult the Governing Body. The Local

Authority cannot override any decisions made by the headteacher and therefore any appeals to the Council will be redirected to the school.

3.2 The Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- 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
- Confirming to the Local Authority when they may pursue a fixed penalty notice
- Be the Senior Attendance Champion

The Senior Attendance Champion is expected to play a pivotal role in improving and maintaining high levels of pupil attendance within the school. Their responsibilities include: Leadership and Strategy, Data Analysis, Supporting Students and Families, Collaboration with Stakeholders, Compliance and Reporting, Promoting a Positive Culture.

3.3 The Attendance Officer

The school attendance officer:

- Monitors attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the headteacher
- Works with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Works with the families to understand barriers and support attendance
- Liaises with the Local Authority and provides information for them to pursue Fixed Penalty Notices

3.4 Class Teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information on the school system and for flagging any potential patterns for concern they may have. They are to share any knowledge on children that may impact their attendance with the Pastoral Lead and Attendance Officer.

3.5 School admin/office staff

School admin/office staff are expected to take calls and receive emails from parents regarding absence and record it on the school system. They will complete the daily attendance spreadsheet and follow up any pupils' non attendance with a phone call to all emergency listed numbers held. It is a parents responsibility to inform the school of any absence by 8.30am.

4. Recording Attendance

4.1 Attendance Register

We will keep an 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 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
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

- We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.
- Pupils must arrive in school between 08:30 and 08:43am on each school day.
- The register for the first session will be taken at 08:50 and will be kept open until 09:00. The register for the second session will be taken at 13:00 and will be kept open until 13:05.

4.2 Unplanned Absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 08:30am. (see also section 7).

Notification is to be made by calling school and speaking to a member of the office or by leaving a message on the school absence line: 01494 714371.

You may also email using the following details office@widmerend.bucks.sch.uk. We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern.

If the school has concerns the school will ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide 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.

If the school is not satisfied about the evidence provided of the reported illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Planned Medical Absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment via the appointment leave form. See appendix 2. This is to be completed in advance and sent into the school office.

In the case of an emergency same day appointment, please make sure you speak to the school office team in the first instance using the following details: telephone: 01494 714371.

We encourage parents/carers 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/carer 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.

4.4 Lateness and Punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- After the register has closed at 9.00am the student will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code 'U' pupils are to report to the school office upon arrival.
- Before the register has closed at 9.00am and the pupil arrives after 08.50am, they will be marked as late, using the appropriate code 'L'

Parents will be notified of a child who is late and who walks to school with a welfare phone call. Parents will be notified in regards to persistent lateness, in accordance with the school attendance flowchart - see appendix (a1) and appendix

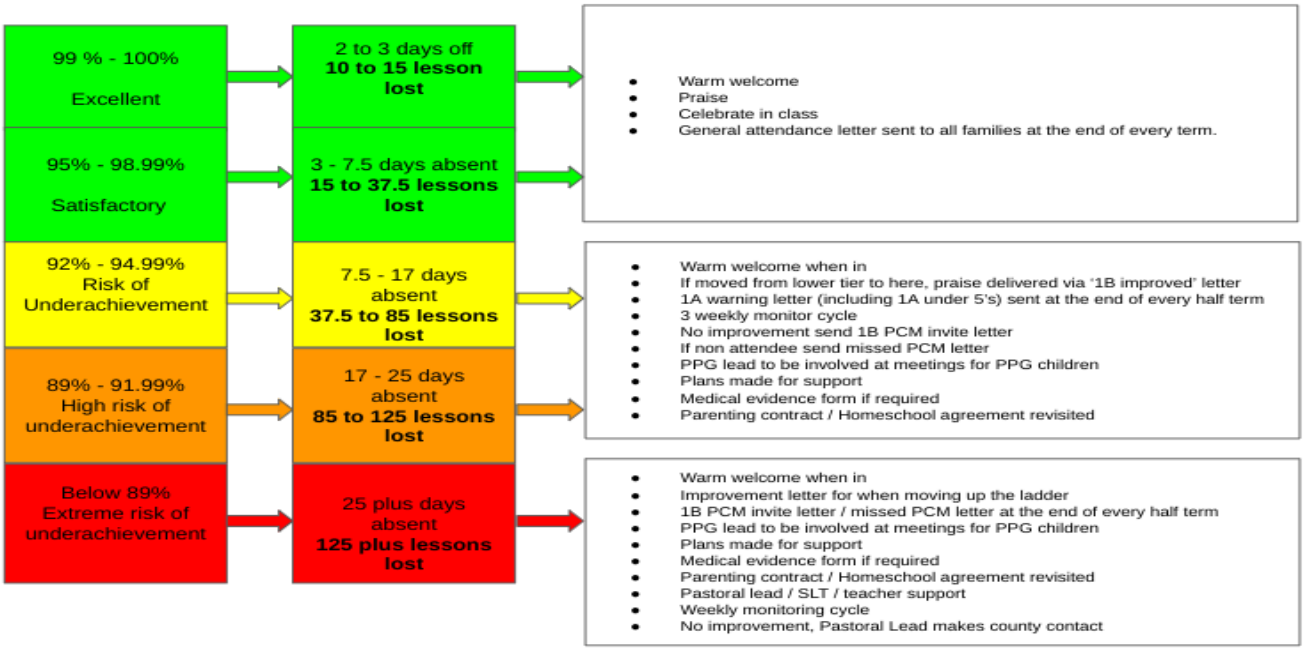
4.5 Following up absence

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending. Attendance Officer to follow up any students who are not marked as present with no reason initially with a phone call home by 09.10.

- If contact is made immediately, Attendance Officer to ascertain reason of absence, to reiterate the importance of parental responsibility for reporting absences referring to attendance policy.
- If contact cannot be made, a voicemail will be left requesting a call back by 09.15 to explain the pupil's absence.
- If contact is made after voicemail being left - Attendance Officer to ascertain reason of absence, to reiterate the importance of parental responsibility for reporting absences referring to attendance policy.
- Further attempts to make contact will be made to other emergency contacts listed on file.
- If contact is not made - Pastoral Lead & DSL to conduct Welfare visit to home if there is a reason for concern for welfare.
- If no visibility of the pupil upon a welfare visit the Pastoral Lead & DSL will contact 101 to report concern for pupil's welfare.

4.6 Reporting to parents

Reporting on lateness and absence will follow procedures as set out below:



5. Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

5.1 Approval for term-time Leave of Absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to pupils during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion. A Leave of Absence for term time absence form must be completed and handed into the school office with at least 5 weeks notice.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as one off events which are unavoidable. The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are "rare, significant, unavoidable, short". By 'unavoidable' we mean an event that could not reasonably be scheduled at another time.

Examples of exceptional circumstances may be as follows:

- death of a close relative / family bereavement
- attendance at a funeral
- respite care of a looked after child
- a housing crisis which prevents attendance.
- Where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue.
- Grandparent or other close relative is seriously ill – and you must leave in an emergency.
- Attending an interview for another school place
- The pupil is attending the pupil referral unit
- The pupil is participating in an approved public performance

(NB:This list is by no means exhaustive)

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

Reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- **Illness and medical/dental appointments** (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- **Religious observance** – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- **Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes** – 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
- **Taking part in a regulated performance or employment abroad:** in line with a licence issued by a local authority or Justice of the Peace or a body of persons approval (BOPA). (For full details please see Code C1)
- **Attending an interview:** for entry into another educational institution or for future employment where requested in advance by a parent the pupil normally lives with.

- **Study leave:** for public examinations, as agreed in advance with a parent the pupil normally lives with. Please note this does not include any internal examinations such as mocks as study leave should not be granted in such cases.
- **A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable:** where the pupil is of compulsory school age, both the parent who the pupil normally lives with and school agree the pupil should temporarily be educated on a part-time basis for exceptional reasons and have agreed the times and dates when the pupil will be expected to attend school as part of that timetable. (For full details please see part-time timetable)
- **Exceptional circumstances:** All schools can grant a leave of absence for other exceptional circumstances at their discretion. In the case of schools maintained by local authorities and special schools not maintained by local authorities, it must be requested in advance by a parent who the pupil normally lives with. Schools are then expected to consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the school to determine the length of the time the pupil can be away from school.

The DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance. Leave of absence should not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

All schools are also able to allow pupils of non-compulsory school age to be absent for sessions they are not timetabled to attend (For full details see code X).

As well as the above leaves of absence, all schools can also allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities or to attend other schools or settings:

- To attend an offsite approved educational activity. (For full details see Code B)
- To attend another school at which the pupil is registered (dual-registration). (For full details see Code D)
- To attend provision arranged by the local authority. e.g. alternative provision or as part of an education, health and care plan. (For full details see Code K)
- To participate in an approved sporting activity. (For full details see Code P)
- To attend an educational visit or trip arranged by the school. (For full details see Code V)
- To attend work experience. (For full details see Code W). As these circumstances are part of delivering a full time education they are not classified as absences for statistical purposes.

5.2 Reducing Persistent Absence

Widmer End Community Combined School expects all students on roll to maintain 100 % attendance unless for authorised reasons (as aforementioned in section 5.1).

Lateness after the close of the school register, will be marked as 'Arrival after registration closes' ("U" code). Repeated unauthorised absence due to lateness meets the criteria to follow the actions laid out in section 4.6. Families will be made aware of this contributing factor to attendance and their child's academic wellbeing.

To support families in reducing persistent absence, the school attendance officer will monitor individual attendance, on a daily basis and on a half termly basis. Using the attendance flowchart documented in section 4.6, processes will be followed and plans made to support families in improving attendance.

In some circumstances, the PPG lead will be brought in to support specific groups that fall within the disadvantaged category, eliciting further support for these families.

If pupil attendance improves this will be celebrated, if it fails to improve, next steps will be taken to provide further support.

At all stages, the intention of WIdmer End Community Combined school, is to provide a supportive role in enabling children to successfully attend school regularly, maximising their learning opportunities.

Only when all efforts to engage families in improving attendance have failed will The Local Authority become involved. They may decide to follow this up with legal sanctions and fines being implemented.

5.3 Legal sanctions

The Local Authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued under the Education Act 1996 and the DfE National Framework (2026).

Penalty Notices will be considered when:

- Intervention has failed to bring about improvement and further unauthorised absence has occurred following written warning to improve.
- A pupil has taken leave of absence i.e. for the purpose of a holiday in term time and the absence has not been authorised by the school.

A Penalty Notice gives the parent the opportunity to avoid a prosecution. A penalty notice is **£80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days**, rising to **£160 per parent, per child if paid between 21 days - 28 days**. If a second notice is issued within 3 years, it will automatically be **£160 per parent, per child**. Unauthorised absence is tracked across a **rolling 3-year period**.

Failure to pay the Penalty Notice to the Local Authority may result in a prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

Prosecution: The school has a legal obligation to provide the Local Authority with evidence required for a prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. This is to ensure that parents realise their own responsibilities in ensuring attendance at school and most importantly about returning children to education. The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

To ensure The Local Authority have a consistent delivery of penalty notices, the following criteria will apply:

- There have been at least 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks. A school week means any week in which there is at least one school session. This can be met with any combination of unauthorised absence (e.g. 4 sessions of holiday taken in term time plus 6 sessions of arriving late after the register closes all within 10 school weeks).
- If a headteacher does not authorise a request from a parent/carer for term time leave and the parent takes the leave. (School must advise parents of this and how the action conforms to the school's attendance policy).
- Persistently late after the close of the register (coded U).
- In certain circumstances, including where ten sessions of absence comprise of unauthorised leave of absence in term time, a penalty notice can be issued without a formal warning having been issued previously.
- Where a child who has been excluded is present in a public place during the first five days a penalty notice will be issued on the first occasion if appropriate.
- A penalty notice may also be issued without a formal warning if a formal warning has already been issued to the parent/carer previously.

<u>Two penalty notice limit and escalation in cases of repeat offences</u>

A penalty notice is an out of court settlement which is intended to change behaviour without the need for criminal prosecution. If repeated penalty notices are being issued and they are not working to change behaviour they are unlikely to be the most appropriate tool. Therefore, from autumn term 2024, only 2 penalty notices can

be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within a 3-year rolling period and any second notice within that period is charged at a higher rate:

- The first penalty notice issued to a parent in respect of a particular pupil will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.
- A second penalty notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.

A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of issue of the first. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action should be taken instead. This will often include considering prosecution but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

The school has a series of processes in place with flags for attendance occurring at different points (see 4.6). The Attendance officer monitors the attendance on a daily, half termly and termly basis looking closely at strategies and support to decrease barriers on children attending school. The PPG lead will act upon any flags on a half termly basis and work with the Attendance Officer.

Depending on which category of attendance the pupil falls within, will depend on which series of actions is set in motion. If initial letters (1A letter) do not promote improvement, parents / carers will be invited to a Parent Contract Meeting (1B PAM invite letter) to discuss the pupils' attendance and discover what barriers there may be and then formulate a support plan to enable improved attendance. If the meeting is missed another letter (missed PAM letter) will be sent. Communication and monitoring will be increased. Any student with attendance below 89% will be immediately invited to a meeting with the Attendance Officer to make plans for support and improvement. See appendix 3.

Positive support programmes and monitoring cycles will always be individualised and focused on supporting the pupils' needs, feelings and working in partnership with families to find supportive routes to improve attendance.

<u>Children Who are Unable to Attend School for Physical or Diagnosed Mental Illnesses</u>

For children who are prevented from attending school due to physical or mental health challenges, the school's role starts by ensuring that these pupils continue to have access to education through alternative means. This can include providing home learning with instruction, virtual learning options, or tailored learning materials that align with the pupil's health and abilities. The school individualised learning plan that supports the child's academic and emotional needs during their absence. However, the school's role ends when it comes to delivering specialised

learning, healthcare or long-term therapy, as these fall under the responsibility of medical professionals. In such cases, the school's focus is on maintaining communication with the family and health providers to ensure a smooth transition back to school when the child is ready, while continuing to support their education remotely.

7. Attendance monitoring

The DfE collects our schools attendance information introduced through the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. The attendance officer at our school monitors pupil absence on a daily basis. Every half term full reports are run to monitor who persistent latecomers or absentees are.

A pupil's parent/carer is expected to call the school in the morning by 08:30am, if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 4.2).

Parents / carers are expected to call the school each day their child is ill, unless agreed otherwise with the school office or Pastoral Lead.

If a pupil's absence continues to rise after contacting their parent/carer, we will consider involving an education welfare officer.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases and on the schools website. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

Widmer End Community Combined School collects and stores attendance data using the Arbor database and internal live tracking data systems, shared between the Headteacher, Attendance officer and PPG lead, to:

- Track the attendance of individual pupils
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern
- Monitor and evaluate those children identified as being in need of intervention and support

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, annually (as a minimum) by the Headteacher with the support of the Attendance Officer. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

9. Children Missing from Education

The DfE defines Children Missing Education (CME) as:
"All children of compulsory school age who are not on a school roll, nor being educated otherwise (e.g. at home, privately or in alternative provision) and who have been out of any educational provision for a substantial period of time (usually agreed as four weeks or more)."

Buckinghamshire Council is committed to ensuring that all pupils who go missing from schools in the county, or who disappear from other counties and may have arrived in Buckinghamshire, are speedily located. The school will make a referral to the CME team if:

- a pupil has been missing from school for 10 school days, and the school has failed to locate the pupil after carrying out reasonable checks during this time
- a pupil has moved out of Buckinghamshire but does not have a new school place confirmed

The school will not make a referral to the CME team if the pupil is still known to be residing at the Buckinghamshire address but is not attending school. In this situation, the school's usual attendance procedures should be followed.

Summary
The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend school, on time, every day. All school staff and the Governing Body/Trust Board are committed to working with parents and pupils as this is the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance at our schools as possible.

10. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Equality and Cohesion policy

- Home School Agreement
- Parent Code of Conduct
- Positive Behaviour Policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance and are current.

Attendance codes currently in use

Code	Full name	Description
The student is counted as present.		
/ or \	Present am or pm	Present in school during registration.
L	Late	Late arrival before the register has closed
The student is counted as present, at an Approved Educational Activity.		
B	Educated off Site	The student is at an off-site supervised educational activity approved by the school.
K	Education provision provided by LA	Education provision arranged by a local authority, rather than the school
P	Sporting Activity (Approved)	Pupil is taking part in a sporting activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school.
V	Educational trip	A residential trip organised by the school or a supervised strictly educational trip arranged by an approved organisation.
W	Work Experience	A student in the final two years of compulsory education is attending work experience.
The student is counted as absent, authorised.		
C1	Other Authorised Absence	Absence for a regulated performance or employment abroad
J1	Interview	Leave of absence to attend an interview for employment or admission into another educational institution

C2	Other Authorised Absence	Pupils on part-time timetables
E	Excluded	If a student is excluded but still on the admission register, they should be marked E, for up to the sixth consecutive day of any fixed period (referred to as 'suspensions' by the DfE from Autumn 2021) or permanent exclusion.
M	Medical/Dental Appointments	The student is absent due to a medical or dental appointment that could not be made outside of school hours.
R	Religious Observance	The student is absent for religious observance on a day designated by the religious body.
S	Study Leave	Study leave should be used sparingly and only granted to Year 11 pupils for public exams. Students should still be able to come into school to revise.
T	Traveller Absence	Used when Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) or New Travellers are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the school.
I	Illness	This Illness code can be used for any form of illness, if you don't want to distinguish Covid-19 illness.
I01	Illness	This code maps to the statutory mark of I. This is for students absent due to non-coronavirus related illness (unless the truthfulness of the claim is in question). This code should not be used for medical or dental appointments.
I02	Confirmed case of Covid-19	This code maps to the statutory mark of I. This is for pupils who have a confirmed case of coronavirus.
The student is counted as absent, unauthorised.		
G	Family Holiday (Not Agreed)	The Holiday was not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the headteacher.

N	No Reason	The reason for the absence has not been provided. If no reason for an absence is provided after a reasonable amount of time, it should be changed to O.
O	Unauthorised Absence	If the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence they should record it as unauthorised.
U	Late (After Register Closes)	Schools should keep registers open for a reasonable amount of time, after which the student should be marked with a U.
These codes are not counted so will not affect attendance figures.		
D	Dual Registration	The student is registered at another school and attends it during this lesson e.g. students at a pupil referral unit. Schools should only record attendance and absences for sessions the pupil is scheduled to attend at their school.
X	Non-statutory school age absence	Sessions non-compulsory school-age children are not expected to attend. This code should only be used for early years students who have not yet passed the 1st January, 1st April or 1st September following their 5th birthday.
Y1	Unable to attend	Absence due to transport normally provided not being available.
Y2	Unable to attend	Widespread disruption to travel
Y3	Unable to attend	Part of school closed.
Y4	Unable to attend	Unexpected whole school closure (different from # for planned closures).
Y5	Unable to attend	Pupils in the criminal justice system.
Y6	Unable to attend	Absence due to public health guidance or law.
Y7	Unable to attend	Any other unavoidable cause.
Z	Pupil Not On Roll	This code can be used when setting up registers in advance of pupils joining. Schools must take attendance for pupils from the first day the student should be attending the school.

#	School Closed To Pupils	This code should be used for whole or partial school closures that are known or planned in advance such as if the school is used as a polling station.

Appendix 2: **Appointments Leave Form**

Pupil Name ……

Class…… Date of Appointment……

Date of request……

Leave school at…… Return to school at……

Name and address of medical/dental/hospital

……

……

……

Please give details of reason for this appointment - if required the school may ask for evidence, such as doctors note, appointment card, etc

……

……

……

Parent Contact Name

……

Parent signature

……

Appendix 3: Example 1A

Dear, Date

Re: **DoB:**

By law, parents are responsible for ensuring their child's regular school attendance, and as a school we are obliged to monitor the attendance of all our pupils. I am writing to you as we are concerned that ……'s attendance at school is currently irregular. Their attendance has been monitored over the last **five** weeks and is currently only …%.

Only the Head teacher has the authority to authorise absence, and may not authorise any further absences without supporting evidence that your child was unable to attend school with good reason. If you would like to discuss the reasons for …… recent absences, please do get in touch. I will continue to monitor xxxxx's attendance for a further three weeks, during which time I hope to see a significant improvement.

I must make you aware of the following notice from the County Attendance Team:

> *"The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 came into effect on 27 February 2004. Under Section 23 of this Act, the Education Act 1996 was amended with the introduction of two new subsections under Section 444 (subsections 444A & 444B) which has made it possible for Penalty Notices to be used as an alternative to prosecution in cases of unauthorised absence from school.*
>
> *This means that Parents/ carers may be subject to a fine of £80.00, per parent/carer, per child, if paid within 21 days rising to £160.00, per parent/carer, per child, if paid between 21 and 28 days, if their child is absent from school without a valid reason (i.e. the school does not approve the reason given for the absence)."*

Should xxxx's attendance remain irregular, I will ask you to attend a Parenting Contract Meeting at school to address any issues. The Attendance Contract Meeting gives us the opportunity to work together to improve your child's attendance, and provides evidence that you are engaged in a process to ensure your child attends school regularly. We may not be aware of significant difficulties impacting on your child's attendance, and every effort will be made to support you and …… to improve their attendance before making any referral to the County Attendance Team.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs S Munn

Pastoral Lead and Attendance Officer

Appendix 3: Example 1B Attendance Improvement

Dear …….

Re: DoB:

Further to my letter dated <date of 1a>, I am pleased to inform you that following the **three**-week monitoring period, <forename's> attendance has improved significantly. ……. attendance for the last three weeks has been …..%

The minimum attendance expected by Bucks County Council for children in Primary Education is 90% and (I would encourage you to continue to work towards this figure.) or (I am pleased that name's attendance is now above this figure.)
Given that <forename's> attendance is no longer irregular, I will not be referring to the County Attendance Team on this occasion.
However, should ……. attendance become irregular again during this academic year, I will invite you to attend an Attendance Contract Meeting at school to address any issues. The Attendance Contract Meeting gives us the opportunity to work together to improve your child's attendance, and provides evidence that you are engaged in a process to ensure your child attends school regularly. We may not be aware of significant difficulties impacting on your child's attendance, and every effort will be made to support you and ……. to improve their attendance before making any referral to the County Attendance Team.

I would like to thank you for your support in this matter.

Yours sincerely

Mrs S Munn
Pastoral Lead and Attendance Officer

Appendix 3: Example - 1B - No improvement - Medical Evidence

Dear …….

Re: …….. **DoB: ……..**

Further to our letter dated , we have now been monitoring ……..'s attendance for three weeks and, unfortunately, there has been no significant improvement. ……..s attendance for the past three weeks is ……., which is well below the national average figure of 95%.

We noticed that her absence was linked to illness and/or medical reasons. Therefore, I must ask that if ……. has any further absence linked to medical reasons, evidence must be received by the school that shows that the ……. is being supported by a Doctor. Some examples of evidence that could be used are: Prescriptions, Appointment Cards, Doctor's Notes, e.t.c.

If this evidence is not supplied when your child returns after an illness or medical absence, your child's absence will be recorded as an "unauthorised" absence.

If ……'s attendance remains irregular, you will be invited to attend an Attendance Contract Meeting. The Attendance Contract Meeting gives us the opportunity to work together to improve your child's attendance, and provides evidence that you are engaged in a process to ensure your child attends school regularly. We may not be aware of difficulties that are impacting on their attendance, so we will explore a range of possible issues and problem solve together. Whilst your involvement in a Attendance Contract Meeting is voluntary, you should be aware that **if you decline the offer of support and ……'s attendance remains irregular, the school will refer the matter to the Local Authority who may take formal action against you.**

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states:-

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable-

(a) to his age, ability and aptitude, and

(b) to any special educational needs he may have; either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

Failure to do so may result in a Penalty Notice and/or Prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, which if convicted could result in a maximum fine of £2,500 or a term of imprisonment not exceeding 3 months.

Every effort will be made to support you and …… to improve their attendance before making any referral to the County Attendance Team.

Yours sincerely
Mrs S Munn
Pastoral Lead & Attendance Officer

Appendix 3: Example 1B PCM Invite

Dear .....

Further to our letter dated xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx, we have now been monitoring xxxxxxxxxx's attendance for three weeks and, unfortunately, there has been no significant improvement. Xxxxxxxxxxxxxx's attendance for the past three weeks is xx%, which is well below the national average figure of 95%. To further address this, we would like to invite you to attend an Attendance Contract Meeting on:

Date:

Time:

Venue:

The Attendance Contract Meeting gives us the opportunity to work together to improve your child's attendance, and provides evidence that you are engaged in a process to ensure your child attends school regularly. We may not be aware of difficulties that are impacting on their attendance, so we will explore a range of possible issues and problem solve together. Whilst your involvement in an Attendance Contract Meeting is voluntary, you should be aware that **if you decline the offer of support and xxxxxxxxx's attendance remains irregular, the school will refer the matter to the Local Authority who may take formal action against you.**

> *Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states:-*
> *The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable-*
> *(a) to his age, ability and aptitude, and*
> *(b) to any special educational needs he may have; either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.*
>
> *Failure to do so may result in a Penalty Notice and/or Prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, which if convicted could result in a maximum fine of £2,500 or a term of imprisonment not exceeding 3 months.*

Every effort will be made to support you and ..... to improve their attendance before making any referral to the County Attendance Team.

Yours sincerely
Mrs S Munn
Pastoral Lead and Attendance Officer

Appendix 3: Example Punctuality Letter

Dear,

Re: DoB:

I am writing to inform you that ..... has been late for school on .....occasions since the start of the school term. The law requires pupils to attend school regularly and this includes arriving on time each day as laid out in our Attendance Policy.

Teaching begins as soon as the children walk into the classroom. Being 5 minutes late to school every day adds up to 3 days of school lost each year. 10 minutes adds up to 6 days lost, 15 minutes adds up to 10 days lost, 20 minutes adds up to 13 days lost and 30 minutes adds up to 19 days lost each year.

Not only is your child missing out on time to learn, there are other consequences too:

- Pupils are not introduced to the structure of the day ahead, which can leave them feeling unsettled and make it harder for them to be ready to learn.
- Pupils might feel awkward and embarrassed going into the classroom when everyone else is already settled.
- The whole class is disrupted and the teacher must take time away from the other pupils to explain what is going on in the lesson.

Every effort will be made to support you in getting your child to school on time if you are experiencing significant issues which are impacting punctuality. Should xxxx continue to be late to arrive at school, I will ask you to attend an Attendance Contract Meeting at school to address any issues. The Attendance Contract Meeting gives us the opportunity to work together to improve your child's punctuality, and provides evidence that you are engaged in a process to ensure your child attends school regularly and on time. We may not be aware of difficulties impacting on your child's attendance, and every effort will be made to support you and ..... to improve their punctuality.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely
Mrs S Munn
Pastoral Lead & Attendance Officer