



BRAMFORD AND SOMERSHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL FEDERATION



*How good and pleasant it is when
God's people live together in unity* Psalm 133

Federation Attendance Policy

Bramford CEVC Primary School and Somersham Primary School

TOGETHER WE ARE ACE

"How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity."

Psalm 133

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Rationale

At the heart of our federation lies a commitment to unity, shared purpose and mutual support. In keeping with the spirit of Psalm 133 – *"How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity"* – we recognise that our collective strength is rooted in our ability to come together, to be present for one another and to work in harmony towards our common goals.

Attendance is not merely a matter of record-keeping. It is an important part of our shared mission and values. When children attend school regularly, they are able to learn, develop relationships, participate fully in school life and experience the sense of belonging that comes from being part of our federation family.

Regular attendance enables children to benefit from teaching and learning, friendships, enrichment and the wider experiences of school. It also helps us to identify at an early stage when a child or family may need additional support.

We therefore seek to develop a culture in which every child is welcomed, every day matters and every absence is understood.

Our approach combines high expectations with care, encouragement and appropriate support. We recognise that there are many reasons why a child may struggle to attend school regularly and that absence can sometimes be a symptom of wider difficulties. We will work in partnership with children and families to understand barriers and remove them wherever possible.

At the same time, regular attendance is a legal responsibility and an important part of securing children's education and wellbeing. Where support is not effective, is not engaged with, or where absence is unauthorised and persistent, we will use the appropriate escalation and legal processes.

Through this attendance policy, we seek to honour the spirit of Psalm 133 by cultivating a culture of **presence, encouragement, belonging and accountability**, ensuring that our federation remains a vibrant and unified community.

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1. Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our statutory and moral responsibilities regarding school attendance through a whole-school culture and ethos that values regular attendance and punctuality.

We aim to:

- Set high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils.
- Promote the benefits of regular attendance and punctuality.
- Create a welcoming school environment in which pupils feel that they belong and want to attend.
- Ensure every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled.
- Reduce absence, including persistent and severe absence.
- Identify and address emerging patterns of absence at an early stage.
- Understand and respond sensitively to the individual barriers that may affect a pupil's attendance.
- Work positively and constructively with families to support good attendance.
- Provide appropriate support for pupils experiencing difficulties with attendance, including those experiencing anxiety, mental or physical ill health, special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), or other barriers.
- Work effectively with external agencies and the Local Authority where additional support is required.
- Promote punctuality and minimise the disruption caused by lateness.
- Fulfil our legal responsibilities in relation to attendance registers, absence recording and legal interventions.
- Ensure that attendance is considered alongside safeguarding, wellbeing, behaviour, inclusion and educational outcomes.

Our approach is underpinned by our federation values and our belief that **Together We Are ACE**.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance:

- Working together to improve school attendance: July 2026
- Children missing education: statutory guidance for local authorities, September 2025
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026
- DfE guidance on mental health issues affecting attendance
- DfE school census and attendance recording guidance

The policy is also informed by the relevant legislation and regulations governing school attendance, including:

- Education Act 1996
- Education Act 2002
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007, as amended
- Equality Act 2010
- Children and Families Act 2014

The statutory guidance sets out the respective responsibilities of parents, schools, governing bodies and local authorities and the expectations for supporting pupils to attend school regularly, reducing persistent and severe absence, maintaining accurate attendance registers and using appropriate legal interventions where necessary.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The Governing Board

The Governing Board is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations for attendance across the federation.
- Holding the Executive Headteacher and school leaders to account for the implementation of this policy.
- Recognising and promoting the importance of attendance across the federation's policies and ethos.
- Ensuring that attendance is treated as an important safeguarding, educational and wellbeing issue.
- Ensuring that school leaders fulfil their statutory responsibilities, including maintaining accurate attendance registers and sharing required information with the DfE and Local Authority.
- Ensuring the federation works effectively with local partners to identify and remove barriers to attendance.
- Ensuring that attendance processes provide both high expectations and appropriate support for pupils and families.
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data.

- Ensuring attendance information is considered at pupil, group, cohort and whole-school level.
- Working with school leaders to identify areas for improvement and evaluate the effectiveness of attendance strategies.
- Ensuring staff receive appropriate training so that they understand:
 - the importance of good attendance;
 - that absence can be a symptom of wider issues;
 - the school's legal requirements for maintaining attendance registers;
 - the federation's systems for monitoring, following up and improving attendance;
 - how to recognise when attendance may indicate a safeguarding or welfare concern.
- Ensuring staff with specific attendance responsibilities receive appropriate training in interpreting and analysing attendance data.
- Sharing effective attendance practice across the federation.
- Ensuring that sufficient resources are available to support attendance improvement.
- Monitoring the impact of the federation's attendance strategy and challenging leaders where improvement is required.

3.2 The Executive Headteacher

The Executive Headteacher has strategic, federation-wide responsibility for attendance and is responsible for:

- Ensuring the federation has an effective attendance strategy and systems in place.
- Providing strategic oversight of attendance across both schools.
- Monitoring federation and school-level attendance data and reporting to governors.
- Ensuring that the federation meets statutory attendance requirements.
- Evaluating the effectiveness of attendance strategies and identifying federation-wide priorities for improvement.
- Supporting Heads of School and staff with complex or significant attendance concerns where appropriate.
- Ensuring appropriate systems are in place for identifying persistent and severe absence.
- Overseeing legal intervention, including penalty notices, where appropriate, and authorising Heads of School to undertake delegated responsibilities.
- Ensuring appropriate communication with the Local Authority where a pupil has an EHC plan and attendance is falling or where barriers to attendance relate to the pupil's special educational needs.

- Ensuring attendance practice is equitable and takes account of the Equality Act 2010.
- Ensuring attendance is appropriately connected to safeguarding, SEND, behaviour and wellbeing systems.
- Communicating high expectations for attendance and punctuality across the federation.

The Executive Headteacher's role is **strategic and federation-wide**. Day-to-day operational management of attendance sits primarily with the Head of School at each individual school.

3.3 The Head of School

The Head of School is responsible for the operational leadership of attendance within their school and will:

- Lead, champion and improve attendance within the school.
- Set clear expectations for attendance and punctuality.
- Ensure that attendance systems and procedures are consistently implemented.
- Have a strong understanding of attendance data and emerging patterns.
- Monitor attendance at pupil, group, year-group and whole-school level.
- Identify pupils whose attendance may be a cause for concern.
- Ensure emerging attendance concerns are addressed promptly.
- Build positive and productive relationships with parents and carers.
- Meet with pupils and families to understand barriers to attendance.
- Coordinate appropriate support and intervention.
- Develop attendance support or reintegration plans where appropriate.
- Liaise with external agencies, including the Local Authority, where necessary.
- Ensure safeguarding concerns arising from attendance are acted upon appropriately.
- Monitor the impact of interventions and adjust support where necessary.
- Escalate significant or complex cases to the Executive Headteacher where appropriate.
- Ensure appropriate legal processes are followed when support has not resulted in improved attendance.

3.4 Class Teachers

Class teachers are responsible for:

- Recording attendance accurately for both morning and afternoon sessions every day.
- Using the correct national attendance codes.

- Submitting attendance information promptly following registration.
- Being aware of pupils whose attendance is causing concern.
- Noticing changes in attendance patterns, including intermittent absence or repeated lateness.
- Sharing concerns promptly with the Head of School and/or safeguarding team.
- Welcoming pupils back to school following absence and supporting successful reintegration.

3.5 School Office Staff

School office staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence and record the reason on the school's attendance system.
- Ensure reasons for absence are obtained and appropriately recorded.
- Follow first-day response procedures where a pupil is absent without explanation.
- Notify the Head of School where contact with a parent/carer has not been possible.
- Share attendance concerns promptly with the Head of School and/or Executive Headteacher.
- Maintain accurate attendance records.
- Prepare attendance information and reports for parents and carers.
- Support the administration of attendance meetings and correspondence.
- Ensure attendance information is kept up to date on the school's electronic system.

3.6 Parents and carers

Where this policy refers to a parent, this includes:

- all natural parents, whether married or not;
- anyone who has parental responsibility for a child or young person;
- anyone who has day-to-day responsibility for the child.

Parents and carers are legally responsible for ensuring that their child attends school regularly.

Parents are expected to:

- ensure their children attend school every day that they are able to;
- support good attendance through appropriate home routines;
- keep requests for absence to a minimum;
- not assume that requests for absence will automatically be agreed;
- notify the school on the first day of absence and provide the reason;

- notify the school of absence by 9.30am, or as soon as practically possible;
- avoid making medical and dental appointments during school hours wherever possible;
- ensure their children arrive at school on time and properly prepared for the school day;
- follow school procedures if their child arrives late;
- work openly and positively with the school when attendance becomes a concern;
- attend meetings or engage with support offered by the school or other agencies;
- tell the school at the earliest opportunity about any difficulties that may affect their child's attendance;
- provide information or evidence where this is reasonably requested to help the school understand the reason for absence;
- make arrangements for prompt collection at the end of the school day or following an after-school activity.

We recognise that families can experience circumstances that make attendance difficult. Parents should contact the school as early as possible so that we can work together to identify appropriate support.

3.7 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- attend school every day;
- arrive on time and ready to learn;
- attend all lessons and activities as required;
- talk to a trusted adult if they are worried about coming to school or are experiencing difficulties that may affect their attendance;
- follow school procedures if they arrive late;
- contribute positively to the welcoming and inclusive culture of their school.

We want every pupil to understand that **their presence matters** and that they are an important part of our federation family.

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

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

the second session.

We will use the appropriate national attendance and absence codes set out in the DfE attendance guidance.

The register will record whether every pupil is:

- present;
- attending an approved educational activity;
- absent;
- unable to attend because of an unavoidable or exceptional circumstance, where an appropriate code applies.

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.

We will retain attendance register entries for the required statutory period.

Bramford CEVC Primary School

- Pupils must arrive by **8.45am** each school day.
- The morning register is open from **8.45am to 9.00am** and is taken at **8.50am**.
- The afternoon register is open from **1.15pm to 1.25pm** and is taken at **1.15pm**.
- Pupils arriving after the register has been taken but before it closes will be recorded as late using the appropriate code.
- Pupils arriving after the register has closed will normally be recorded using the appropriate absence code unless there is an acceptable reason for the lateness.

Somersham Primary School

- Pupils must arrive by **8.45am** each school day.
- The morning register is open from **8.45am to 9.00am** and is taken at **8.50am**.
- The afternoon register is open from **1.05pm to 1.15pm** and is taken at **1.05pm**.

- Pupils arriving after the register has been taken but before it closes will be recorded as late using the appropriate code.
- Pupils arriving after the register has closed will normally be recorded using the appropriate absence code unless there is an acceptable reason for the lateness.

4.2 Unplanned absence

Parents must notify the school of the reason for an unplanned absence on the first day of absence by **9.30am**, or as soon as practically possible.

Parents should contact:

Bramford CEVC Primary School: 01473 741958

Somersham Primary School: 01473 831251

Where absence is due to illness, the school will normally record the absence using the appropriate illness code.

The school may request appropriate evidence where:

- absence due to illness is frequent or prolonged;
- there is a genuine and reasonable concern about the reason for absence;
- clarification is required to understand the pupil's circumstances;
- the evidence is necessary to support an attendance plan or other intervention.

The school will not routinely or unnecessarily require medical evidence for ordinary childhood illnesses.

Where a pupil has a chronic or long-term health condition, we will work with the family and relevant health professionals to understand the pupil's needs and agree appropriate arrangements for attendance.

Where evidence is requested, this will be proportionate to the circumstances. Examples may include an appointment letter, prescription, medication information or other appropriate evidence.

The school will consider each case individually and will take account of relevant medical, SEND, mental-health and safeguarding information.

4.3 Planned absence

Medical and dental appointments should, wherever possible, be arranged outside school hours.

Where this is not possible:

- parents should notify the school in advance;
- pupils should attend school before and/or after the appointment wherever reasonably possible;
- the pupil should be absent for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The school may request reasonable evidence of a medical appointment where appropriate.

Parents must apply in advance for other planned term-time absences. Further information is provided in Section 5.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

Pupils are expected to arrive at school on time every day.

A pupil who arrives:

- before the register closes will be recorded as **late** using the appropriate code;
- after the register closes will be recorded as absent using the appropriate code, normally **U**, unless another code applies.

Where lateness becomes a pattern, the school will work with the pupil and family to understand the reasons and identify appropriate support.

We recognise that occasional lateness may result from circumstances outside a family's control. Our response will therefore consider the individual circumstances rather than assuming that all lateness has the same cause.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where a pupil is absent and the school has not received an explanation, the school will follow up the absence promptly.

The school will:

- contact the parent/carer on the first day of unexplained absence;
- establish the reason for absence;

- identify whether the absence is authorised;
- use the correct attendance code;
- continue to make appropriate contact where absence continues without explanation;
- consider safeguarding implications;
- consider whether wider support is required;
- involve the Education Welfare Service or other agencies where appropriate.

If the school cannot make contact with a parent/carer or any emergency contact and there are concerns about the child's welfare, the school may contact relevant external agencies, including Children's Services or the Police.

The school will ensure that the correct attendance code is entered as soon as the reason for absence is established and, in accordance with statutory requirements, no later than five working days after the session.

Unexplained, prolonged or patterned absence may be a safeguarding concern. Attendance information will therefore be considered alongside other safeguarding information.

4.6 Reporting to parents

Parents and carers will receive attendance information:

- termly, through attendance information and school communications;
- annually, through the written end-of-year report.

Where attendance is causing concern, the school will contact parents directly.

We will not rely on a single percentage threshold to determine whether attendance is a concern.

Instead, we will consider:

- the pupil's overall attendance;
- patterns of absence;
- repeated lateness;
- the reasons for absence;
- the impact of absence on learning and wellbeing;
- whether attendance is improving or deteriorating;
- whether the pupil is at risk of persistent or severe absence;
- any relevant SEND, health, mental-health, safeguarding or family circumstances.

Our aim is to identify concerns early, before absence becomes entrenched.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

Parents should not normally take children out of school during term time.

The headteacher may grant leave of absence during term time only where the request falls within the circumstances permitted by the relevant regulations and statutory guidance.

These include, where applicable:

- taking part in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad;
- attending an interview;
- study leave;
- a temporary part-time timetable;
- exceptional circumstances.

Leave of absence is granted at the discretion of the headteacher, including the length of time authorised.

The federation considers exceptional circumstances on an individual basis, taking account of the specific facts and relevant background.

Examples may include significant family circumstances such as bereavement. This is not an exhaustive list.

A request for leave of absence will be considered individually. The fact that leave has been granted to another family does not mean that the same request will automatically be granted.

Leave of absence will not normally be granted for family holidays during term time.

Leave of absence will not be granted for protest activity during school hours.

Parents should submit requests as early as possible and, where possible, at least two weeks before the proposed absence using the school's leave of absence request process.

The school may request reasonable evidence to support a request.

Other reasons for authorised absence

Other valid reasons may include:

- illness, including mental-health-related illness;
- medical or dental appointments;
- religious observance;
- absence relating to parents travelling for occupational purposes, where the statutory criteria are met;
- suspension or exclusion where no alternative provision has been made;
- other circumstances specifically permitted by the national attendance regulations.

Attendance that is not recorded as absence

Some circumstances are not recorded as absence because the pupil is attending an approved activity or otherwise meets the criteria for a relevant attendance code. These may include:

- approved educational visits and trips;
- approved sporting activities;
- work experience, where applicable;
- attendance at another school where the pupil is dual registered;
- provision arranged by the Local Authority;
- other approved off-site educational activity;
- unavoidable circumstances covered by the appropriate national attendance code.

5.2 Sanctions

The federation's approach to attendance is based first on support, partnership and early intervention.

However, regular school attendance is a legal responsibility and, where appropriate, the federation will use the full range of statutory interventions available.

All decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

Penalty notices

The national framework requires schools to consider a penalty notice when a pupil has accumulated 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling period of 10 school weeks.

Ten sessions is normally equivalent to five school days.

Meeting this threshold does not mean that a penalty notice will automatically be issued. Before requesting a penalty notice, the school will consider:

- the individual circumstances of the pupil and family;
- whether the national threshold has been met;
- whether a penalty notice is the most appropriate tool to improve attendance;
- whether support has been offered and engaged with;
- whether further support is appropriate;
- whether a Notice to Improve would be appropriate;
- whether another legal intervention would be more appropriate;
- whether any duties under the Equality Act 2010 affect the decision.

Penalty notices are issued by the Local Authority in accordance with the applicable local code of conduct.

The national penalty notice framework currently provides that:

- a first penalty notice is £80 if paid within 21 days, increasing to £160 if paid within 28 days;
- a second penalty notice for the same parent and child within three years is £160;
- a third penalty notice cannot normally be issued to the same parent for the same child within three years of the first notice;
- where the threshold is met for a third time within that period, alternative legal action may be considered.

The school will work with Suffolk County Council in accordance with its current procedures and code of conduct.

Notices to Improve

Where support is appropriate and the national threshold has been met, but parents have not engaged sufficiently with support, a *Notice to Improve* may be appropriate.

A Notice to Improve provides a final opportunity for parents to engage with support and improve

attendance before a penalty notice is considered.

Where used, it will be issued in accordance with the Local Authority's current procedures and will include:

- the pupil's attendance record;
 - details of the relevant offences;
 - the benefits of regular attendance;
 - details of support already offered;
 - opportunities for further support;
 - the improvement required;
 - the timescale for improvement;
 - the circumstances in which a penalty notice may subsequently be issued.
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6. Strategies for promoting attendance

Regular attendance is a federation-wide priority.

Our approach is based on the principle that good attendance begins with belonging.

We will therefore:

- create welcoming and inclusive school environments;
- celebrate and promote regular attendance;
- communicate clearly with parents about the importance of attendance;
- ensure pupils know that they are valued members of our school communities;
- promote positive relationships between pupils, staff and families;
- use assemblies, newsletters, school communications and other appropriate channels to promote attendance;
- monitor attendance daily;
- identify emerging patterns early;
- communicate with families promptly when concerns arise;
- provide targeted support where barriers are identified;
- review the effectiveness of interventions;

- work with external agencies where necessary.

Early identification

We will not use a single attendance percentage as an automatic trigger for intervention.

Instead, we will look for emerging patterns, including:

- increasing absence;
- repeated short periods of absence;
- particular days of the week being missed;
- repeated lateness;
- absence linked to particular lessons, situations or school experiences;
- anxiety or emotional distress linked to attendance;
- illness-related absence that is becoming more frequent;
- attendance difficulties associated with SEND;
- attendance patterns associated with family or social circumstances.

Where a concern is identified, the school will seek to understand the reason before deciding what action is appropriate.

Working with families

Where attendance is becoming a concern, the school will seek to work in partnership with the family.

This may involve:

- a conversation with the parent/carer;
- discussion with the pupil;
- exploration of barriers;
- an attendance support plan;
- agreed actions and review dates;
- adjustments or reasonable adjustments where appropriate;
- support from school staff or external services;
- attendance meetings;
- reintegration planning following absence.

Where support does not result in improved attendance, or where absence is unauthorised and

persistent, the school may escalate the matter in accordance with statutory guidance.

Lateness

Punctuality is important because late arrival can affect a child's learning, relationships and sense of belonging, as well as disrupting the learning of others.

Where lateness becomes a pattern, the school will work with the family to understand the reason and identify appropriate support.

All pupils arriving after the school day has begun must report to the school office and follow the school's signing-in procedures.

7. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

7.1 Pupils experiencing complex barriers to attendance

We recognise that there can be many reasons why a child may struggle to attend school regularly.

These may include:

- anxiety or emotional distress;
- mental or physical health difficulties;
- SEND;
- difficulties with friendships or relationships;
- bullying;
- difficulties at home;
- bereavement or family circumstances;
- transport difficulties;
- caring responsibilities;
- unmet additional needs;
- negative experiences associated with school;
- other social, emotional or practical barriers.

We will seek to understand the individual circumstances rather than assuming that all absence has the same cause.

Support will be proportionate and tailored to the needs of the child and family.

Where appropriate, we may work with other professionals and agencies to remove barriers.

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

We recognise that mental and physical ill health can affect attendance.

Where a pupil is experiencing anxiety, school-related distress or other mental-health difficulties, we will work sensitively with the pupil and family to understand the underlying barriers and identify appropriate support.

This may include:

- a named trusted adult;
- a supported arrival;
- adjustments to routines;
- a phased or supported reintegration;
- access to pastoral support;
- reasonable adjustments;
- liaison with SEND and/or safeguarding staff;
- referral to appropriate external services;
- regular review with the family.

Where a temporary part-time timetable is considered necessary, it will only be used in accordance with statutory guidance and will be reviewed regularly with the aim of supporting a return to full-time education.

Where a pupil has an EHC plan and attendance is falling, or where the school identifies barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs, the school will communicate with the Local Authority as appropriate.

Our priority is always to help the pupil remain connected to school and return to full-time education as

soon as this is appropriate and practicable.

7.3 Reintegration following absence

Returning to school following a period of absence can sometimes be difficult for a child.

Where appropriate, the school will agree a reintegration plan with the pupil and family.

This may include:

- a named adult to welcome the pupil;
- a quiet or supported arrival;
- an agreed timetable;
- access to a trusted adult;
- opportunities to talk about worries;
- support to catch up with missed learning;
- regular communication with parents;
- review meetings.

The aim is to ensure that pupils feel welcomed back and able to reconnect with school.

8. Attendance monitoring

8.1 Monitoring attendance

Attendance is monitored daily through the school's electronic attendance system.

The federation uses attendance information to:

- track individual pupil attendance;
- identify groups or cohorts whose attendance may be a cause for concern;
- identify pupils at risk of persistent or severe absence;
- monitor pupils receiving additional support;
- identify patterns of absence;
- evaluate the impact of interventions;

- inform school improvement priorities.

Parents are expected to contact the school by 9.30am on the day of absence.

Where absence continues to increase or concerns remain, the school may involve the Education Welfare Service or other appropriate agencies.

The federation will follow current statutory procedures for Children Missing Education (CME).

This includes notifying the Local Authority where required when pupils join or leave the school roll and following the appropriate procedures where a pupil's whereabouts or educational provision becomes uncertain.

Where a parent chooses to educate a child at home, this will be managed in accordance with the legal framework for elective home education and the Local Authority's CME procedures. The school will not treat a lawful decision to electively home educate as the same as unexplained absence or a child going missing from education.

8.2 Analysing attendance

The school will regularly analyse attendance and absence data to identify:

- pupils requiring additional support;
- pupils at risk of persistent or severe absence;
- groups or cohorts with emerging patterns;
- patterns by day, week, term or reason;
- patterns of lateness;
- links between attendance and attainment;
- links between attendance and safeguarding, SEND or wellbeing concerns;
- the impact of interventions.

Analysis will take place at least half-termly, termly and annually.

We will consider both historic and emerging patterns so that action can be taken early.

8.3 Using data to improve attendance

The federation will:

- develop targeted actions to address attendance concerns;
- provide appropriate support to pupils and families;
- share relevant attendance information with class teachers and appropriate leaders;
- provide regular attendance information to school leaders, including the SENDCo, DSL and pupil premium lead where relevant;
- report attendance information to governors;
- monitor and evaluate interventions;
- adapt strategies where they are not achieving the intended impact;
- work collaboratively with the Local Authority and other partners where appropriate;
- identify and share effective practice across the federation.

Attendance data will be used as a tool for understanding and improving attendance, not simply as a means of identifying pupils for sanctions.

8.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is defined as absence of 10% or more.

Severe absence is defined as absence of 50% or more.

Reducing persistent and severe absence is an important part of our attendance strategy.

The school will:

- identify pupils at risk of persistent or severe absence at an early stage;
- analyse patterns and underlying causes;
- consider safeguarding implications;
- work with pupils and families to understand barriers;
- agree appropriate support;
- monitor the impact of interventions;
- involve wider services where appropriate;
- review support regularly;
- use statutory interventions where appropriate and proportionate.

Where a pupil is persistently or severely absent, meetings with parents may be used to:

- discuss attendance and engagement;

- listen to and understand barriers;
- explain available support;
- review actions already taken;
- agree further actions;
- explain the potential consequences of continued unauthorised absence.

We will always seek to understand why a child is absent before determining the most appropriate response.

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed in response to changes in statutory guidance and, as a minimum, annually by the Executive Headteacher.

The policy will be approved by the Full Governing Board.

The Executive Headteacher will monitor the implementation and effectiveness of the policy across the federation.

The Heads of School will monitor operational attendance within their individual schools and report relevant information and actions to the Executive Headteacher.

Governors will receive attendance information through the federation's established monitoring and reporting arrangements and will provide appropriate challenge and support.

10. Links with other policies

This policy should be read alongside the federation's:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Medical Needs Policy
- Mental Health and Wellbeing procedures
- Children Missing Education procedures
- Exclusions/Suspension procedures

- Equality Policy
- Home Education/Elective Home Education procedures, where applicable.

Appendix 1: Attendance Codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's national attendance guidance and must be used appropriately when recording attendance. [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	Every pupil absent as the school is closed

	closed	unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
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