'Inspiring excellence
to create, discover
and succeed together'

Attendance Policy

Introduction and Background

This policy has been written to adhere to the relevant Children Acts, Education Acts, Regulations and Guidance from the Department of Education (Working Together to Improve School Attendance September 2022) in addition to guidance from the Local Authority.

Other relevant policies include: Children Missing Education, Supporting Children with Medical Conditions at School, Alternative Provision, Safeguarding, Uncollected Children, Behaviour, Anti-Bullying, Peer on Peer Abuse, Exclusion Policy, Equality and Inclusion and SEND.

Great Smeaton Primary School recognises that positive behaviour and good attendance are essential in order to raise standards of pupil attainment and to give every child/young person the best educational experience possible. The designated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance in school is the Head Teacher, Mrs Rebecca Wallace.

This policy is written with the above statement in mind and underpins our school ethos to:

- promote children's welfare and safeguarding
- ensure every pupil has access to the fulltime education to which they are entitled
- ensure that pupils succeed whilst at school
- ensure that pupils have access to the widest possible range of opportunities at school, and when they leave school

For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. It is a rule of this school that pupils must attend every day, unless there are exceptional circumstances and it is the *head teacher*, not the parent, who can authorise the absence.

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

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

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

- Promoting a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure and valued.
- Raising awareness of the importance of good attendance and punctuality

- Ensuring that attendance is monitored effectively and reasons for absences are recorded promptly and consistently.

Promoting Regular Attendance

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

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Promote the benefits of high attendance
- Have high expectations for attendance
- Report to parents/carers annually on their child's attendance with the annual school report
- Contact parents/carers should their child's attendance fall below the school's target for attendance
- Celebrate excellent attendance
- Reward good or improving attendance

Whilst any child may occasionally have time off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If a parent thinks their child is reluctant to attend school, then we will work with that family to understand the root problem and provide any necessary support. We can use outside agencies to help with this such as the School Nurse, The Local Authority or a Child and Family Support Worker.

Working together to improve attendance

Successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance, at home, in school or more broadly requires schools and local partners to work collaboratively with, not against families. All partners should work together to:

MONITOR

Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.

EXPECT

Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.

LISTEN AND UNDERSTAND

When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents to listen to understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.

FACILITATE SUPPORT

Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.

FORMALISE SUPPORT

Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through a parenting contract or education supervision order.

ENFORCE

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

Attendance Register

Schools must also take the attendance register at the start of each morning session of each school day and once during each afternoon session. On each occasion they must record whether every pupil is present, attending an approved educational activity, absent, or unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

Understanding Types of Absence

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parent/carer), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required. Each half-day is known as a 'session'.

Authorised absences are morning or afternoon sessions away from school for a genuine reason such as:

- **Illness** (although you may be asked to provide medical evidence for your child before this can be authorised),
- **Mental Health and Wellbeing**
  Parents who have concerns about their child's mental wellbeing can contact our school's Designated Safeguarding Lead for further information on the support available. Parents should also contact their GP or the NHS Helpline by phoning telephone number 111 for advice if they are concerned. In case of emergency parents should dial 999.
- **Pupils taken ill during the school day**
  If a pupil needs to be sent home due to illness, this should be by agreement with an appropriately authorised member of school staff. In such circumstances, the pupil must be collected from the school office by a parent or another authorised adult and signed out. No pupil will be allowed to leave the school site without parental confirmation.
- **Medical or dental appointments** which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.
- **Religious observance**
  Our school acknowledges the multi-faith nature of the school community and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside of school holidays or weekends. In accordance with the law, the school will authorise one day's absence for a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs. Should any additional days be taken, these will be recorded in the register as unauthorised absence. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body, to confirm whether the day is set apart.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings which may include issuing each parent with a Penalty Notice for £120, reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days or referring the matter to the Magistrates Court whereby each parent may receive a fine up to £2500 and/or up to 3 months in prison. If you are found guilty in court, you will receive a criminal conviction.

Unauthorised absence includes, however is not exhaustive:

- parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily e.g. because they had a late night or for non-infectious illness or injury that would not affect their ability to learn.
- absences which have never been properly explained
- children who arrive at school after the close of registration are marked using a 'U'. This indicates that they are in school for safeguarding purposes however is recorded as an absence for the session.
- shopping trips
- looking after other children or children accompanying siblings or parents to medical appointments
- their own or family birthdays
- holidays taken during term time without leave, not deemed 'for exceptional purposes' by the headteacher- may result in school applying to the local authority to issue a penalty notice or if you have previously been issued a Penalty Notice, the school may request a direct prosecution by the local authority.
- day trips
- other leave of absence in term time which has not been agreed.

Effects of non-attendance

The table below indicates how what might seem like just a few days absence can result in children missing a significant number of lessons.

Attendance during school year	Days lost in a year	Which is approximately	Approximate number of lessons missed
95%	9.5 Days	2 Weeks	50 Lessons
90%	19 Days	4 Weeks	100 Lessons

Safeguarding and Attendance

Our school will monitor trends and patterns of absence for all pupils as a part of our standard procedures. However, we are aware that sudden or gradual changes in a pupil's attendance may indicate additional or more extreme

safeguarding issues. In line with government guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (2022 version, or as updated by the DfE) we will investigate and report any suspected safeguarding cases on to the relevant authorities. As part of our safeguarding duty and our standard procedures, we will inform the Local Authority and/or the Police of the details of any pupil who is absent from school when the school cannot establish their whereabouts and is concerned for the pupil's welfare. (Please see our school's Safeguarding Policy for more information.)

School Attendance and the Law

By law all children of compulsory school age must receive an appropriate full-time education. Parents have a legal duty to ensure their child attends school regularly at the school at which they are registered.

There is no entitlement in law for pupils to take time off during the term to go on holiday. In addition, the Supreme Court has ruled that the definition of regular school attendance is "in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school".

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 were amended in September 2013. All references to family holidays and extended leave have been removed. The amendments specify that Head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are "exceptional circumstances" and they no longer have the discretion to authorise up to ten days of absence each academic year.

It is a rule of this school that a leave of absence shall not be granted in term time unless there are reasons considered to be exceptional by the head teacher, irrespective of the child's overall attendance. Only the head teacher or his/her designate (not the local authority) may authorise such a request and all applications for a leave of absence must be made in writing on the prescribed form provided by the school. Where a parent removes a child when the application for leave was refused or where no application was made to the school, the issue of a penalty notice may be requested by this school in accordance with the Dales Academies Trust procedures**.**

A Penalty Notice may be issued where there have been at least 10 consecutive sessions of unauthorised absence for the purpose of a holiday, however, due to the importance of pupils settling into school at the commencement of the school year, Penalty Notices may also be issued if there have been at least 6 consecutive sessions of unauthorised absence during the first two weeks of September due to a term-time holiday.

At *Great Smeaton Primary School* 'exceptional circumstances' will be interpreted as:

… being of unique and significant emotional, educational or spiritual value to the child which outweighs the loss of teaching time (as determined by the Head teacher). The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are events that are "rare, significant, unavoidable and short". By 'unavoidable' we mean an event that could not reasonably be scheduled at another time.

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

Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

A pupil is defined by the Government as a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level will cause considerable damage to any child's education and we need a parent/carer's fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

We monitor all absence, and the reasons that are given, thoroughly. If a child is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark, we will inform the parent/carer. PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully. We also combine this with academic tracking where absence affects attainment. All our PA pupils and their parents are subject to a school based meeting and the plan may include: allocation of additional support through the School Nurse, Local Attendance Adviser, Home School Liaison Worker, Local Authority, Family Solutions or Social Care. We may also use circle time, individual incentive programmes, individual targets and participation in group activities to support us in raising attendance.

Absence Procedures

If a child is absent from school the parent/carer must follow the following procedures:

- Contact the school office on the first day of absence **before *9.00am***. The school has an answer phone available to leave a message if nobody is available to take your call or come into school personally and speak to the office staff. Telephone 01325 720528, or email admin@Great Smeaton.dalesmat.org
- Contact the school on every further day of absence, again before *9.00am* unless an agreement with school is in place.
- Ensure that your child returns to school as soon as possible and you provide any medical evidence if requested to support the absence.

If your child is absent, we will:

- Telephone you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you however it is your responsibility to contact us. School will, if possible, obtain more than one emergency contact number.
- Write to you or invite you into school to discuss the situation if absences persist.
- Refer the matter to the Local Authority for relevant sanctions if attendance deteriorates following the above actions.

First day calling:

The school operates a first day response to absence: we will call you if we have not heard from you in the first instance. **This call will be made by 9.30am on the first day.** If we are unable to make contact with parents/carers by telephone or email; we will telephone emergency contact numbers, send letters home and a home visit may be made in the interests of safeguarding. A note will be made on CPOMS. A referral will be made to Local Authority if no contact has been made with parent/carers by the 10th day of absence, at which point your child will be considered Missing from Education.

Local Authority attendance support services

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the Local Authority. If attendance does not improve, legal action may be taken in the form of a Penalty Notice, prosecution in the Magistrates Court or the application of an Education Supervision Order, designed to strengthen parental responsibilities and ensure improved attendance.

Local Authority Attendance Specialists work strategically with schools, families and other professionals to reduce persistent absence and improve overall attendance.

Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a child misses the start of the day, they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons, can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage absence. Good time-keeping is a vital life skill which will help our children as they progress through their school life and out into the wider world.

Effects of Lateness

Minutes late per Day	**Equates to Days of Teaching Lost in one Year**	**Which means this number of lessons missed**
5 Mins	3 Days	15 Lessons
10 Mins	6 Days	30 Lessons
15 Mins	9 Days	45 Lessons

How we manage lateness:

The school day starts at ***9.00am*** when children can begin to come into school from *8.45am*. Registers are taken at ***8.50am*** **and close at** ***9.00am*** your child will receive a late mark 'L' if they are not in by that time. Children arriving after *9.00am* are required to come into school via the school office. The school may send home 'late notes' in order to keep parents and carers informed. From time to time the Head teacher will undertake a 'Late Gate' check, greeting late arrivals at the main entrance to the school.

At *9.10am* the registers will be closed to lates. In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after that time, they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site 'U', but this will not count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. This may mean that you could face the possibility of being issued with a

Penalty Notice if the problem persists. If your child has a persistent late record, you will be asked to meet with a member of staff, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time. We expect parents and staff to encourage good punctuality by being good role models to our children and celebrate good class and individual punctuality.

Deletion from Roll

For any pupil leaving *Great Smeaton Primary School, other than at the end of year 6* parents/carers are required to complete an in year school transfer application which can be obtained from the North Yorkshire local authority website.

Under Pupil Regulations 2006, all schools are now legally required to notify their Local Authority of every new entry to the admission register within five days of the pupil being enrolled. In addition to this, every deletion from the school register must also be notified to the Local Authority, as soon as the ground for deletion has been met in relation to that pupil, and in any event no later than the time at which the pupil's name is deleted from the register.
This duty does not apply when a pupil's name is removed from the admission register at a standard transition point – when the pupil has completed the final year of education normally provided by that school.
The LA must be informed of the name and address of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly or has missed school for 10 days or more without the absence being recorded as authorised. Local authorities should agree the frequency this must be shared with all schools in their area. This should be no less frequently than once per calendar Month.

Roles and Responsibilities

Class teachers and cover teachers have the responsibility of recording attendance accurately and in a timely manner.

Office staff record information left on the absence line into the school's data system Bromcom. They then follow up any unexplained absences and follow up accordingly.

The Head Teacher and Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) ensure that the office staff know of vulnerable children and the office staff inform the Head Teacher or DSLs in their absence of any concerning absences or unexplained absences of vulnerable groups. If there is no reason given or there is reason to think that a child may be at risk, then the DSL will contact children's social care or the police to do a welfare check.
The Head teacher has the role of monitoring trends and patterns of absence so appropriate actions can be taken e.g.

- Follow-up action-plans for pupils with low attendance
- Timely liaison with home – this may be through letter, phone call or email.
- Referral to outside agencies

The Local Governing Board will:

- Recognise the importance of school attendance and promote it across the school's ethos and policies.
- Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- Regularly review attendance data, discuss, and challenge trends, and help school leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most.
- Ensure school staff receive adequate training on attendance.

Improving school attendance begins at board level, therefore all academy governing bodies should take an active role in attendance improvement, support their school(s) to prioritise attendance, and work together with school leaders to set whole school attendance cultures. This should include:

- Setting high expectations of all leaders, staff, pupils, and parents.
- Recognising that attendance improvement does not happen in isolation and therefore ensuring it is prioritised in wider improvement strategies, such as raising attainment, behaviour, special educational needs and disabilities, wellbeing, and safeguarding. This may include having a link governor or trustee that focusses on attendance.
- Ensuring the schools' attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent attendance support is provided for pupils who require it most by prioritising the staff and resources needed.

This includes ensuring schools engage and work effectively with the local authority School Attendance Support Team and wider local partners and services.

- Ensuring high aspirations are maintained for all pupils, but that processes and support are adapted to the individual needs of particular pupils. This includes those with long term illnesses, special educational needs and disabilities, pupils with a social worker and pupils from cohorts with historically lower attendance such as those eligible for free school meals.
- Repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of their school(s)' processes and improvement efforts to ensure they are meeting the needs of pupils as experiences and barriers to attendance evolve.

Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
All trusts and governing bodies should therefore ensure their schools:

- Have an attendance policy which is published and publicised regularly so that it is easily accessible to pupils, parents and staff.
- Record attendance accurately in the register (see section 8) and share the required information with DfE and local authorities.
- Work effectively with local partners to help remove the barriers to attendance that go beyond the school gates, including building strong links with local statutory services (including social care, health and police) and the voluntary and community sector.

The Head teacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors. The head teacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and requests fixed-penalty notices, where necessary. The head teacher has responsibility for investigate attendance by group, such as pupils entitled to Free School Meals, Pupil Premium pupils, pupils with SEND, Children in Care, attendance by Ethnicity and Language (English/EAL).

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) The Early Help process will be instigated for families with issues that impact on attendance and support put in place to improve attendance. This may be in conjunction with other professionals such as the PFSA. The DSL regularly checks attendance data for children on CIN (Child in Need) or CP (Child Protection) plans and takes appropriate action based on any concern. Regular liaison with parents should include the implementation of timely action plans and regular meetings to review progress against targets. The DSL may also refer to education safeguarding, Team Around the School, the police or children's social care for additional support.

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 are committed to working with parents and pupils as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

Date for Review	Sept 2026
Signed – Head teacher	Rebecca Wallace
Signed - Chair of Governors	Helen Audritt

Attendance and Absence Codes

Present

Relevant regulation: 6(1)(a)(i)

Code / \: Present in school / = am \ = pm

Pupils must not be recorded as present if they are not in school during registration. If a pupil were to leave the school premises after registration, they will still be counted as present for statistical purposes**.**

Code L: Late arrival before the register is closed

Schools should actively discourage late arrival and be alert to patterns of late arrival. All schools are expected to set out in their attendance policy the length of time the register will be open, after which a pupil will be marked as absent. This should be the same for every session and depending on the structure of the school day not longer than either 30 minutes after the session begins, or the length of the form time or first lesson in which registration takes place. **A pupil arriving after the register has closed should be recorded as absent using code U, or another absence code that it is more appropriate.**

Absent

Authorised Absence from School

Relevant regulation: 6(1)(ii), 6(1)(b), 6(2), 7(1) and 7(2)

Authorised absence means that one of a specific set of circumstances applies, as set out below:

Code C: Leave of absence granted by the school

Only exceptional circumstances warrant granting a leave of absence. Wherever referred to in this guidance a leave of absence should not be, and from certain types of school must not be, granted unless it has been applied for in advance by the parent who the pupil normally lives with and the headteacher believes the circumstances to be exceptional. Schools must consider each application for a leave of absence individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind each request. Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days a pupil can be absent from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion.

Specific leaves of absence may also be granted where:

A pupil is participating in a performance

A school maintained by a local authority or a special school not maintained by a local authority can grant leave of absence for a pupil to undertake employment during school hours for the purpose of taking part in a performance, within the meaning of section 37 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1963 if the local authority have given the pupil a licence for that performance.
Schools should be sympathetic to requests for leave of absence that are supported by a licence or a BOPA; as long as the school remains satisfied that this will not have a negative effect on a pupil's education. Where the licence specifies the dates that a pupil is to be away from school to perform, the school should record the absence for those days as if a leave of absence had been applied for and granted. However, where the terms of the licence or BOPA do not specify dates, it is at the discretion of the headteacher to grant leave of absence.

A pupil is subject to a temporary part-time timetable.

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package. A part-time timetable should not be used to manage a pupil's behaviour.

A part-time timetable must only be in place for the shortest time necessary and not be treated as a long-term solution. Any pastoral support programme or other agreement should have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend fulltime, either at school or alternative provision. There should also be formal arrangements in place for regularly reviewing it with the pupil and their parents. In agreeing to a parttime timetable, a school has agreed to a pupil being absent from school for part of the week or day and therefore must treat absence as authorised.

A pupil is pregnant

Leave for maternity is treated like any other leave of absence. We would expect schools to act reasonably and grant a sufficient period of leave from school, taking into consideration the specific circumstances of each case. Ultimately it is at the headteacher's discretion how much leave to grant.

Code H: leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday granted by the school.

Parents should plan their holidays around school breaks and avoid seeking permission from schools to take their children out of school during term time unless it is absolutely unavoidable.

An application for leave of absence should (and from certain schools must) not be granted unless it is made in advance by a parent the pupil normally lives with and the school is satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstance of the case which justify the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days a pupil can be absent from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion.

Code E: Excluded but no alternative provision made.

If no alternative provision is made for a pupil to continue their education whilst they are suspended from school or excluded from school, but their name is still entered in the admission register.

When a pupil of compulsory school age is suspended or permanently excluded from a maintained school, pupil referral unit, academy, city technology college, or city college for the technology of the arts, alternative provision must be arranged from the sixth consecutive day of any suspension or exclusion. Where alternative provision is made schools should record this using the appropriate code for attending an approved educational activity.

Code I: Illness (not medical or dental appointment).

Schools should advise parents to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness. Schools must record absences as authorised where pupils cannot attend due to illness (both physical and mental health related).
In the majority of cases a parent's notification that their child is ill can be accepted without question or concern. Schools should not routinely request that parents provide medical evidence to support illness. Schools are advised not to request medical evidence unnecessarily as it places additional pressure on health professionals, their staff and their appointments system particularly if the illness is one that does not require treatment by a health professional. Only where the school has a genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness should medical evidence be requested to support the absence.

Pupils with long term illness or other health needs may need additional support to continue education, such as alternative provision arranged by the local authority. Local authorities are responsible for arranging suitable education for children of compulsory school age who, because of health reasons, would otherwise not receive suitable education. This applies whether or not the child is registered at a school and whatever type of school they

attend. The education must be full-time or as close to full-time as the child's health allows. DfE's statutory guidance on ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs sets out that local authorities should provide education as soon as it is clear that the child will be away from school for 15 days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative. Local authorities should have a named officer responsible for the education of children with additional health needs.

Code M: Medical or dental appointment.

Schools should encourage parents to make appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, they should get the school's agreement in advance and the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.

If a pupil is present at registration but has a medical appointment during the session in question, no absence needs be recorded for that session.

Code R: Religious observance.

Schools must record absence as authorised when it falls on a day that is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the parents' religious body (not the parents).

As a general rule, we would interpret 'a day exclusively set apart for religious observance' as a day when the pupil's parents would be expected by the religious body to which they belong to stay away from their employment in order to mark the occasion. If in doubt, schools should seek advice from the parent's religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance.

If a religious body sets apart a single day for a religious observance and the parent applies for more than one day, the school may only record one day as authorised on this basis; the rest of the request would be a leave of absence, and this is granted at the school's discretion as set out under Code C.

Schools and local authorities may seek to minimise the adverse effects of religious observance on a pupil's attendance and attainment by considering approaches such as:
• Setting term dates around days for religious observance;
• Working with local faith groups to develop guidance on absence for religious observance;
• Schools taking INSET days that coincide with religious observance days; and
• Providing individual support for pupils who miss sessions on days exclusively set apart for religious observance.

Code S: Study leave.

Study leave should not be granted by default once tuition of the exam syllabus is complete, it should be used sparingly and only granted to Year 11 pupils during public examinations. If schools do decide to grant study leave, provision must still be made available for those pupils who want to continue to come into school to revise.
As study leave is unsupervised it must be recorded as absence.

Code T: Traveller absence.

A number of different groups are covered by the generic term traveller – Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people)an d Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers.
This code should not be used for general absences by those groups. It must only be used when the pupil's parent(s) is travelling for occupational purposes and the school has granted a leave of absence following a request from the parent. This code should not be used to record any other types of absence by these groups.

Pupils from these groups whose parent(s) do not travel for occupational purposes are expected to attend school as normal. They are subject to the same rules as other pupils in terms of the requirements to attend school regularly once registered at a school.

Where a pupil has no fixed abode because their parent(s) is engaged in a business or trade that requires them to travel, there is an expectation that the pupil attends at least 200 sessions per year. The pupil must attend school as regularly as the business permits and therefore, if the business or trade permits the pupil to attend for more than 200 sessions per year, they should do so.

To help ensure continuity of education for pupils, when their parent(s) is travelling for occupational purposes, it is expected that the pupil should attend school elsewhere when their parent(s) is travelling and be dual registered at that school and their main school**.**

Unauthorised Absence from School.

Relevant regulation: 6(1)(ii) and 6(3)

Unauthorised absence is where a pupil's absence is not one of the types of absence listed as authorised in regulation 6(2) or where the reason for a pupil's absence has not been provided and cannot be established.

Code G: Holiday not granted by the school or in excess of the period determined by the school.

Where the school has not granted a leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday but the parents still take the child out of school, or the child is kept away longer that the period of leave granted.

A school cannot grant a leave of absence retrospectively. If the parent did not apply in advance, leave of absence should not (and from certain types of school cannot) be granted.

Code N: Reason for absence not yet provided.

Schools must follow up all unexplained and unexpected absence in a timely manner.

Every effort should be made to establish the reason for a pupil's absence. When the reason for absence has been established the school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant code.

Where absence is recorded as unexplained in the attendance register, the correct code should be inputted as soon as the reason is ascertained, but no more than 5 working days after the session. Code N should not therefore be left on the pupil's attendance record indefinitely; if a reason for absence cannot be established after 5 working days, schools should amend the pupil's record to Code O.

Code O: Absent without authorisation.

Where no reason for absence is established or the school is not satisfied that the reason given is an authorised absence.

Code U: Arrived in school after registration closed.
Where a pupil has arrived late after the register has closed and the school is not satisfied that the reason for lateness is an authorised absence.
Schools should actively discourage late arrival, be alert to patterns of late arrival and seek an explanation from the parent. All schools are expected to set out in their attendance policy the length of time the register will be open, after which a pupil will be marked as absent. This should be the same for every session and depending on the structure of the school day not longer than either 30 minutes after the session begins, or the length of the form time or first lesson in which registration takes place.

Attending an approved educational activity.

Relevant regulation: 6(1)(a)(iii), 6(1)(c), and 6(4)

An approved educational activity is where a pupil is attending another school at which they are registered or taking part in off-site activity such as field trips, educational visits, work experience or unregistered alternative provision.

Pupils can only be recorded as attending an off-site activity if it is approved by the school, of an educational nature and supervised by someone authorised by the school. Ultimately, school are responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils taking part in an off-site educational activity so it would be reasonable to expect that the school would only authorise someone who was answerable to the school to supervise an activity.
The activity must take place during the session for which it is recorded and for pupils of compulsory school age the school must record the nature of the activity.

Attending another school at which the pupil is registered.

Relevant regulation: 6(1)(a)(iii) and 6(4)(b)

Code D: Dual registered at another school

The law allows for a pupil to be registered at more than one school. This code is used to indicate that the pupil was not expected to attend the school in question because they were scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered.
The main examples of dual registration are pupils who are attending a pupil referral unit, a hospital school or a special school on a temporary basis.
Each school should only record the pupil's attendance and absence for those sessions that the pupil is scheduled to attend their school. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby all unexpected and unexplained absence are promptly followed up.

Attending an educational activity that takes place outside the school.

Relevant regulation: 6(1)(iii), 6(1)(c) and 6(4)(a)

Code B: Off-site educational Activity

Attending an off-site educational activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school.
For pupils of compulsory school age, schools must also record the nature of the activity, examples are:
• attending taster days at other schools;
• attending courses at college;
• attending unregistered alternative provision arranged or agreed by the school.
The educational activity must take place during the session for which it is recorded.
Ultimately schools are responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils educated off-site. Therefore, by using code B, schools are certifying that the education is supervised, and measures have been taken to safeguard the pupil. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the educational activity notifies the school of any absences by the pupil. The school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.
This code must not be used for any unsupervised educational activity i.e., when a pupil is at home doing some schoolwork.

Code J: At an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment

Attending an interview with prospective employers or another educational establishment. Schools should be satisfied that the interview is linked to employment prospects, further education, or transfer to another school.
This must take place during the session for which it is recorded.

Code P: Participating in a supervised sporting activity

Taking part in a sporting activity that has been approved by the school. If schools have concerns about the appropriateness of an activity, they can seek advice from the sports' national governing body. However, the final decision on approving the activity rests with the school and they should take the effect on the pupil's general education into account.
The sporting activity must take place during the session for which it is recorded.

Approved educational activity must be supervised by a person authorised by the school. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the sporting activity notifies the school of any absence by the pupil. The school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

Code V: Educational visit or trip

Attendance at an organised visit or trip, including residential trips organised by the school, or attendance at a supervised trip of a strictly educational nature arranged by an organisation approved by the school.
The educational visit or trip must take place during the session for which it is recorded.
Approved educational activity must be supervised by a person authorised by the school. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the organiser of the visit or trip notifies the school of any absence by the pupil. The school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

Code W: Work experience

Work experience is for pupils in the final 2 years of compulsory school age.
The work experience must take place during the session for which it is recorded.
Approved educational activity must be supervised by a person authorised by the school. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the work experience notifies the school of any absence by the pupil. The school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Relevant regulation: 6(1)(iv), 6(1)(d), 6(5), 6(7) and 6(2)(b)(i)

Code Y: Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Where a pupil is unable to attend school because:

- the school site or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause at a time when pupils are due to attend; or
- the transport provided by the school or a local authority is not available and the pupil's home is not within safe walking distance; or
- a local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the pupil from attending school.

Schools must also record the nature of the circumstances in which a pupil is unable to attend school.

Walking distance
In relation to a child under the age of 8, means 2 miles, and for a child of 8 or above, means 3 miles. In each case measured by the nearest available safe route.

Pupil in custody

Code Y is also used where the pupil is in custody; detained under a court order for a period of less than 4 months or is returning to the school at the end of their custodial period.

Administrative codes

Code X: Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to be in school.

Where a pupil not of compulsory school age is attending school part-time.
For example, where parents have chosen for their 4 year-old child to attend parttime until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which the child reaches compulsory school age**.**

Code Z: Prospective pupil not on admission register.

To enable schools to set up registers in advance of pupils joining the school to ease administration burdens.

Schools must enter a pupil's name on the admission register from the first day that the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school.
In the normal admissions round, when parents have accepted the school place offered, the local authority can inform schools on behalf of the parents and notify the school when the parent has agreed that the pupil will attend school. This can also be the case where the local authority co-ordinates in-year applications for school places.
If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed starting day, the school must establish the reason and record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

Code #: Planned whole or partial school closure.

Whole school closures that are known and planned in advance such as:

- days between terms;
- half terms;
- occasional days (for example, bank holidays);
- weekends (where it is required by the management information system);
- up to 5 non-educational days; and
- use of school as a polling station.

Partial school closures that are known and planned in advance such as:

- 'staggered starts' or 'induction days' where different term dates have been agreed for different year groups - this code is used to record the year group(s) that is not due to attend; and
- Use of part of the school as a polling station**.**