INSPIRE
PARTNERSHIP

Attendance Policy



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Introduction, Purpose & Scope

Schools and academies within our Trust seek to ensure that all its pupils receive an education which enables them to maximise opportunities for each child to reach his or her full potential. Reducing absence from school continues to be a priority both nationally and locally in the Wakefield district.

Research shows there is evidence of a strong link between good attendance and increased attainment. Pupils who regularly attend school progress both socially and academically ahead of pupils who don't attend regularly. Regular attendance enables pupils to adapt better to routines, school work and friendship groups. Therefore, those pupils will have a positive experience of learning and have a successful transition from primary to secondary and beyond to further education and training.

Attendance Target

Target: 2026 - 2027

Each academy within our Trust is set an individual minimum attendance target in accordance with the Department for Education's (DfE) Attendance Baseline Improvement Expectation (ABIE) framework. These individualised targets are based on historical data, location, pupil needs, and deprivation indices to support an urgent return to pre-pandemic attendance baselines. Individual academy targets are published annually on their respective websites.

Objectives

The objectives of our Attendance Policy are:

1. To reduce absence, lateness and raise awareness of the importance of school attendance.
2. To include all school staff, parents, pupils and Governors in our attendance strategies.
3. To develop a robust electronic data handling system which enables school staff, the Trust, the Local Authority and Department for Education to access attendance data to work in partnership with school.
4. To work effectively with parents/carers and partner agencies, using a range of strategies to improve attendance of individual pupils and the whole school.
5. Regularly monitoring and analysing attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require more support.

The Trust has a strategic attendance leader- Emma Johnson , who works across all our academies and every academy has their own specialist attendance officer- details are on all school websites and they can be contacted for any queries around attendance.

The Law

The 1996 Education Act expects all children on roll to attend school every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so.

Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act states that if a child of compulsory school age fails to attend school regularly, the parent is guilty of an offence. Parents, therefore, have a legal responsibility to ensure their child's attendance at school.

Failure to do this can lead to legal action being taken by the Local Authority in the Magistrates Court, or the need to issue Penalty Fines. Since March 2001 there has been a further offence, Section 444 (1A) where a parent knowingly allows their child to be absent from school. This offence can carry a custodial sentence.

A child is compulsory school age at the beginning of the 1st term after their 5th birthday, therefore:

- Children who turn 5 between 1st January and 31st March will be of compulsory school age at the beginning of the school term after 31st March;
- Children who turn 5 between 1st April and 31st August will be of compulsory school age at the beginning of the school term 31st August;
- Children who turn 5 between 1st September and 31st December will be of compulsory school age at the beginning of the school term after 31st December.

A child remains of compulsory school age until the last Friday in June the school year that they turn 16. From September 2013 all 16-year olds must remain in education or training until the end of the academic year and from September 2015 they will be required to continue until their 18th birthday in some form of education, employment or training.

Where parents/carers are not fulfilling this responsibility, the Local Authority has a statutory duty to uphold the rights of children and young people to education. Where necessary, this includes taking legal action.

In order to fulfil our duty to improve children and young people's regular attendance at school, Wakefield Education Welfare Service will continue to issue penalty notices in respect of holidays/leave of absence in term time, in line with the DFE Pupil Registration (England) Regulations 2006. Penalty Notices give parents an opportunity to avoid prosecution. If a Penalty Notice is paid, parents/carers will not be prosecuted. Section 576 Education 1996 defines a 'parent' to include:

- A biological parent of the child (even if they do not have Parental Responsibility and even if the child does not reside with that parent);
- Any person who is not a parent but has Parental Responsibility for the child (for example through a Residence Order, Adoption Order or Care Order);
- Someone who has care for the child.

Therefore, all of these people have the duty to ensure a child of compulsory school age

receives a suitable education. It is possible for this duty to be fulfilled by home educating a child; please see information on “Elected Home Education”.
The Education must be:

- Full time
- Efficient – the education must achieve what it is set out to achieve;
- Suitable – to their age, ability and aptitude and any special education needs they may have. The education must equip the child for life within the community and must not limit a child’s options in later life.

Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- Children’s Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026
- DfE (2024, as amended) ‘Working together to improve school attendance’
- DfE (2026) ‘Keeping children safe in education’ DfE (2026) ‘Children missing education’
- 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 in partnership with, not against families. All partners should work together to:

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.

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.

Listen and understand
When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents to listen to and 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 an attendance 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: a penalty notice in line with the National Framework or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Local Governing Board has overall responsibility for:

- Monitoring the implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Promoting the importance of good attendance through the school's ethos and policies.
- Working with the Attendance Strategic Leader and School Leaders to set goals for attendance and providing support and challenge around delivery against those goals.
- Regularly reviewing attendance data.
- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.
- Having regard to 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Ensuring there is a Children Missing Education Policy in place and that this is regularly reviewed and updated.

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Appointing a member of the Senior Leadership Team to the Attendance Strategic Leader role.
- Appointing a member of staff to the Attendance Officer role.
- Ensuring all parents are aware of the school's attendance expectations and procedures.
- Ensuring that every pupil has access to full-time education and will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence.

Staff are responsible for:

- Following this policy and ensuring pupils do so too.

- Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.
- Have open and supportive conversations with Parents and Carers to remove barriers to attendance.
- Where designated, taking the attendance register at the relevant times during the school day.

The Attendance Strategic Leader is responsible for:

- The overall strategic approach to attendance in school.
- Developing a clear vision for improving attendance.
- Monitoring attendance and the impact of interventions.
- Analysing attendance data reports and identifying areas of intervention and improvement.
- Reporting on attendance trends, strategies, and the impact of interventions to senior leaders and the Local Governing Board.

The Attendance Officer is responsible for:

- Undertaking first day absence processes.
- Following up on incidents of persistent poor attendance.
- Support children and Parents to remove barriers to school attendance
- Communicating with pupils and parents about poor attendance.
- Informing the Local Authority of any pupil being deleted from the admission and attendance registers.
- Involving and working with other agencies, including the Trust Educational Welfare Officer, to support children and families with poor attendance to improve.
- Providing reports and analysis of attendance and absence to the Attendance Strategic Lead.
- Conducting Home visits with another member of staff where necessary.
- Liaising with the Local Authority to issue Penalty Notices to parents/ carers for their child's non- attendance at the Academy and to implement and take the lead on attendance contract to Prosecution.
- Make a sickness return to the local authority if a pupil is recorded in the attendance register as absent using code I (unable to attend because of sickness) and there are reasonable grounds to believe the pupil will have to miss 15 consecutive school days or more for illness or the pupil's total number of school days missed during the current school year because of illness (whether consecutive or cumulative) will reach or exceed 15 school days.

The Trust Educational Welfare Officer is also responsible for:

- Proactively promoting good attendance across Inspire Partnership Multi Academy Trust and acting where there are issues, carrying out the statutory duty of legal action where required.
- Becoming involved with any case where a pupil's attendance drops below **90%**

- Advising on next actions where a pupil's attendance drops below **92%**
- Ensuring that schools effectively implement statutory procedures in relation to attendance, liaising with the Education Welfare Service as required
- Implementing legal proceedings
- Acting as the lead officer in relation to Education Supervision Orders or Academy Attendance Orders to ensure that appropriate action is taken in response to any court direction.
- Ensuring accurate collection and collation of data to enable the production of comprehensive statistics on prosecutions, outcomes, and attendance rates
- Sharing effective practice on attendance management and improvement across schools within the Trust.

The Education Welfare Service is responsible for:

- Working in partnership to promote and facilitate improved attendance, at an individual level, by supporting the Wakefield Attendance Strategy 23-26; and at a whole school level using proactive strategies and action plans.
- Working with children and families to ensure their school attendance and safeguarding is maintained.
- Providing guidance with regards to Children Missing Education.
- Working in partnership with other agencies and will offer advice and signposting for referrals to appropriate organisations.
- Undertaking legal action on behalf of the school.
- Providing guidance and issuing Performance Licenses, Child Work Permits and Elective Home Education (EHE) information.
- Monitor sickness returns of all pupils of compulsory school age who have been recorded with code I (illness) and who the school has reasonable grounds to believe will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness. This is to help the school and local authority to agree any provision needed to ensure continuity of education for pupils who cannot attend because of health needs, in line with the statutory guidance on arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs.
- Communication and advice: regularly bring schools together to communicate messages, provide advice and share best practice between schools and trusts within the area.
  Targeting Support Meetings: hold regular conversations with schools, using their attendance data to identify pupils and cohorts at risk of poor attendance and agree targeted actions and access to services for those pupils.
- Multi-disciplinary support for families: provide access to early help support workers to work intensively with families to provide practical whole-family support where needed to tackle the causes of absenteeism and unblock the barriers to attendance.

Pupils are responsible for:

- Attending their lessons and any agreed activities when at school.
- Arriving punctually to lessons when at school.

Parents are responsible for:

- Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.
- Providing the school with more than one emergency contact number.
- Updating the school if their details change.
- The attendance of their children at school.
- Promoting good attendance with their children.
- Informing school promptly regarding absences.
- Ensuring their child arrives punctually.
- Ensuring children are not taken out of school during term time for holidays

Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

Absence:

- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Not attending school for any reason

Authorised absence:

- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave
- Religious observances
- An absence due to a family emergency (for example, a bereavement) for which the school has granted leave
- Authorised educational sporting events

Unauthorised absence:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Pupils who have been permitted to stay up late the previous night
- Absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time
- Leaving school for no reason during the day

Persistent absence (PA) and Severe Absence (SA):

- PA is missing 10% or more of schooling across the year for any reason *(equivalent to 1 day or more a fortnight across the school year)*
- SA is missing 50% or more of schooling across the year

Schools are encouraged to invite parents/carers into school to discuss attendance concerns, and referrals may be made to the Educational Welfare Officer. In some cases, partnership working will result in a range of strategies being deployed to improve attendance; including participation in the Wakefield Attendance Strategy, Education Plan development, referral to School Health where relevant, Penalty Fines and parent convictions where appropriate.

The most vital part of encouraging good attendance is to ensure that school is a place where:

- children want to come;
- children are treated with respect and feel valued;
- needs are recognised and addressed;
- all children can experience success within an enriched, relevant and diverse curriculum.

Across our Trust we are committed to ensuring pupils feel a sense of belonging which research evidence has a positive impact on attendance.
Schools should be committed to promoting good attendance to give its pupils the best start in life. To encourage this, it is advised that each school has their own structured reward system to promote good attendance.

Absence from School

Any absence from school is detrimental to a child's education and progress. It disrupts learning, routines and progress. Government research shows that **17 days** lost learning in one school year can lead to a drop of one grade at SAT and GCSE level.
School will follow up any unexplained absences by contacting parents / carers on the first day of absence. The School has the right to conduct home visits on the grounds of non-attendance, or where contact has not been made with a parent/carer. Children with inadequate attendance will become part of our Key Focus Attendance Pupils. These children will have their attendance monitored daily.

Authorised Absence

Some absences are unavoidable, usually due to illness, bereavement or extreme family circumstances. These absences should be supported by medical evidence where possible or a written explanation from the parent / carer. The decision as to whether an absence is authorised or not lies with the Headteacher, and authorisation can only be given in advance of the absence.

For medical and dental consultations, including specialist allergy testing and immunology reviews requested evidence may include an appointment card or letter.

Unauthorised Absence

An Unauthorised absence is an absence which is not permissible in Law. Unauthorised absences include: - birthdays, shopping trips, days out, term time holidays, absences where no explanation has been received and pupils arriving after the register has closed. School will discuss Unauthorised absence with the Education Welfare Officer and further action will be agreed.

Leave of Absence / Term Time Holidays

The Government have issued new regulations in September 2013 regarding leave of Absence; The Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
New guidance comes into force from September 2024 relating to penalty fine notices: Full details can be found:

New regulations for schools in next stage of attendance drive - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) Updated 19th August 2024

Penalty Notice Fines



- Applications for leave of absence must be done in writing, addressed for the attention of the Headteacher, this letter must include the dates of absence, how many school days will be missed and any reason for the absence in detail.
- Headteachers shall not grant any Leave of Absence during term time unless they consider there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application.
- Parents do not have any entitlement to take their children on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must establish that there are exceptional circumstances and the Headteacher must be satisfied that the circumstances

warrant the granting of leave. It is very unlikely that term time holidays will be authorised.

- Headteachers will determine how many school days a child may be absent from school if the leave is granted.
- Applications for Leave of Absence must be made in advance and failure to do so will result in the absence being Unauthorised.
- The school can only consider applications for Leave of Absence which are made by a person with Parental Responsibility.
- Applications for Leave of Absence which are made in advance and refused will result in the absence being Unauthorised, which may result in legal action against the parent/carer, by Fixed Penalty Notice, if the child is absent from school during that period.
- If a Penalty Notice is issued and is not paid within the timeframe set out in that Notice, the matter will be referred to Wakefield County Council's Legal Services to consider criminal prosecution proceedings under S444 of Education Act 1996
- The National Framework states the following: If in an individual case the Local Authority believes a penalty notice would be appropriate, they retain the discretion to issue the penalty notice before the threshold is met. Wakefield Council retain the right to exercise this discretion. Examples of when such discretion could be used are:
    1. Where a pupil has 4 days of unauthorised absence that are G coded, and, where the absence immediately precedes or includes a 5th day which is a school INSET day, or an enforced school closure, and, where this has previously occurred and a penalty notice was not issued for that absence.*
    2. Where a pupil has had fewer than 5 days of G coded absence, and, where this has previously occurred and a penalty notice was not issued for that absence.*
    3. Where a pupil has had fewer than 5 days of G coded absence, and, where there has been a penalty notice issued for an absence, the Local Authority would issue a further penalty notice or seek a parental prosecution in line with the National Framework for Penalty Notices.*

  *NB. The examples provided are not an exhaustive list and they can be used separately or in conjunction with each other.

- Where a pupil has previously had an extended period of absence (unauthorised term time leave) of 20 (or more) school days, and where a penalty notice was issued for this absence, if the pupil then has a further extended period of absence, the Local Authority may, in agreement with the pupil's school, seek a parental prosecution rather than issue a further penalty notice. Where a pupil has been absent for 20 (or more) school days, the school can liaise with the Child Missing Education Team for advice and for appropriate action to be agreed.

The DFE website is clear that leave of absence is unlikely to be granted for a family

holiday. As such the Governors have made the decision to refuse requests for term time holidays unless there are exceptional circumstances. In order to enforce this decision, the Governors have agreed to the issuing of Penalty Notices for parents taking their children out of school during term time for holidays without permission.

Expectational circumstances

The Government discourages the taking of holidays in term time. Evidence shows that children who miss school do not achieve as well as those who attend regularly.

As of 19th August 2024, the law ceases to include a leave of absence for a family holiday. A leave of absence should not be granted unless there are exceptional circumstances. Generally, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance.

The following will not be deemed to be exceptional circumstances: (this list is not exhaustive)

- Family holiday
- Family weddings
- Availability of less expensive holiday
- Availability of holiday accommodation
- Parent/carer's working commitments
- Holiday pre-booked by another family member

Exceptional circumstances are defined as events that are rare, significant, unpredictable and short. Examples may include : (this list is not exhaustive), Evidence may be asked to be supplied to support this.

- the death of a close relative,
- attendance at a funeral,
- respite care of a child,
- a housing crisis which prevents attendance

As a Trust, our aim is to reduce the number of learning days lost through absence and students are given a minimum target grade of 97% in accordance with our attendance strategy.

The school will work closely with the Education Welfare Service to enforce this policy.
This policy is in line with Wakefield Council Code of Conduct on Penalty Notices and falls under section 44 of the Education Act 1996.

The Education (penalty Notices) Regulations 2007 set the framework for the operation of the Penalty Notice scheme.

The Code of Conduct states that a Penalty Notice may be issued where there are at

least 10 sessions (half days) recorded as Unauthorised absence- these do not now need to be consecutive.
Wakefield Council Penalty notice fines:

www.wakefield.gov.uk

wakefieldcouncil

Children and Young People

PENALTY NOTICE FINES FOR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE ARE CHANGING!

With the introduction of the New National Framework for Penalty Notices, the following changes will come into force on 19th August 2024.

PENALTY NOTICES WILL BE ISSUED FOR

Term time leave: Penalty Notice Fines will be issued for Term Time Leave of 5 or more consecutive days

10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10 week period: A Penalty Notice may be considered/issued when a pupil has had 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10 week* period.

*School Week's

PER PARENT/PER CHILD

Penalty Notice Fines will continue to be issued per parent per child.

For example: 3 Siblings absent for term time leave, would result in each parent receiving 3 separate fines.

FIRST OFFENCE

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for a Term Time Holiday or Irregular School Attendance the Penalty Notice will be charged at:

£160 per parent, per child if paid within 28 days of issue, reducing to £80 if paid within 21 days**.

SECOND OFFENCE (within 3 years of the First Offence)

Where it is deemed appropriate to issue a second Penalty Notice to the same parent for the same pupil within 3 years of the first notice, the second Penalty Notice will be charged at:

£160 if paid within 28 days (no reduced fee for paying early).

(**Unpaid Penalty Notice's after 28 days may result in a parental prosecution)

THIRD OFFENCE (within 3 years of the First Offence)

On the third time that an offence is committed for either a Term Time Holiday and / or Irregular Attendance a Penalty Notice will not be issued, the case may proceed straight to Parental Prosecution under the Single Justice Procedure. If found guilty of the offence of 'Failure to send a child to school' the Magistrates can impose a fine up to £1000.

Attendance Expectations

The school has high expectations for pupils' attendance and punctuality and ensures

that these expectations are communicated regularly to parents and pupils.

Pupils will be expected to attend school punctually every day they are required to be at school, for the full day.
The school day starts at 9.00am, and pupils will be in their classroom, ready to begin lessons at this time; therefore, pupils will be expected to be on the school site by 8.50am

Registers will be taken as follows throughout the school day:

- The morning register will be marked by **9:00am**. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time. Pupils attending after this time will receive a L mark to show that they were on site.
- The morning register will close **30 minutes later** at **9:30am**. Pupils will receive a U mark of absence if they do not attend school before this time.
- The afternoon register will be marked by **1:30pm**.

Pupils will be encouraged to communicate any concerns related to attendance and absence as soon as possible to the relevant member of staff.

Absence Procedure

Parents will be required to contact the school office via telephone before **9:00am** on the first day of their child's absence – they will be expected to provide an explanation for the absence and an estimation of how long the absence will last, for example, one school day. Parents must contact school on each day of their child's absence.

Where a pupil is absent, and their parent has not contacted the school by **9.30am** to report the absence, the Attendance Officer (or a member of the office staff) will send a text message to parents asking them to contact school urgently or they will contact the parent by telephone to ascertain the reason for absence.

If no reason for absence has been established by **10:00am**, this absence will be reported to the Headteacher. If a child is already receiving multi-agency support, this will also be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or allocated social worker/ Early help worker.

School staff may undertake a home visit to establish a reason for the absence.

The school will always follow up any absences in order to:

- Ascertain the reason for the absence.
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is being taken.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
- Identify the correct code to use to enter the data onto the school census system.

Where a pupil is absent for more than **3** days in a row, school staff may undertake a home visit to offer support and check on the child's wellbeing.

Schools and academies within our Trust reserve the right to conduct a home visit at any point to determine the welfare of a child, support reintegration, offer support or to confirm the reason for absence.

The school will not request medical evidence in most circumstances where a pupil is absent due to illness; however, the school reserves the right to request supporting evidence where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness or in accordance with attendance improvement procedures, such as part of an attendance contract.

In the case of pupils who are classed as persistently absent (PA), arrangements will be made for parents to speak to the Attendance Officer.

If a pupil's attendance falls below **90%**, the Trust Education Welfare Officer will be informed.

Where a pupil has not returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence or is absent from school without authorisation for 20 consecutive school days, the school will remove the pupil from the admissions register if the school and the Local Authority have failed to establish the whereabouts of the pupil after making reasonable enquiries in line with Child missing in education guidance.

Lateness/punctuality

The law states that children should arrive at school on time, every day. It is expected that pupils should be in their classrooms, ready to learn from the time registers are taken. A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code (L).
A pupil who arrives after the close of register will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code (U). If children are late on a regular basis then the school may meet parents to discuss what measures may be required to ensure that child/ren arrive at school by the appropriate time. Poor punctuality is unacceptable and persistent lateness, i.e. after the close of registration could result in a penalty notice.

Illness and healthcare appointments

Parents will be expected to make medical or dental appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, appointments should be made at the end of the school day to minimise disruption. Parents will be expected to obtain approval for their child's absence to attend such appointments as far in advance as is practicable. Parents will be responsible for ensuring their child misses only the amount of time necessary to attend the appointment and providing a copy of the appointment details for school records.

Allergy and Anaphylaxis Related Absence: In accordance with the school's

commitment to Benedict's Law, the school will not penalise the attendance record of any pupil whose absence is a direct result of:

- An emergency admission or recovery period following an anaphylactic reaction.
- Attendance at specialist allergy or immunology clinics.

These absences will be recorded as **'Authorised Medical' (Code M)**. The school recognises that these appointments are essential for the ongoing safety and Individual Healthcare Plan (IHP) management of the pupil.

Flexible schooling

Inspire Partnership Multi- Academy trust does not grant flexible schooling timetables, we believe they are not compatible with our schools' ethos, as they do not allow for full integration into school life.
A Flexible Timetable will only be considered on the grounds of medical needs, unless used in conjunction with a phased return plan.
Any request must be put in writing to the Headteacher for consideration. Parents may be invited to a meeting to discuss arrangements prior to accepting or rejecting the request, Elective Home Education Officers are able to support at these meetings if required. There is no right of appeal against the decision of a Headteacher not to agree to a flexible schooling request in line with Wakefield Council's guidance.

Elective Home Education (EHE)

Elective Home Education (EHE) is where a parent (which should be taken to include all those with parental responsibility and/or who have care of a child, including guardians and foster carers) chooses to provide their child's education outside the school system, in line with section 7 of the Education Act 1996.

This means that the parent is solely responsible for the approach, structure, content and cost of all education provision (such as private tutors, cost of resources and examination fees); and has a duty to ensure that they are providing an efficient, full-time and suitable education, having regard to age, ability, aptitude and any relevant special educational needs.

EHE is not home tuition provided by the Local Authority or where the Local Authority provides education otherwise than at a school.

Parents are advised to discuss EHE before taking their child out of school. Children who have an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP) can also be educated at home, but parents must inform Wakefield SENART of their wish to EHE. If your child attends a specialist provision, you also need the permission of Wakefield SENART. You can contact them at senart@wakefield.gov.uk.

If you withdraw your child from school to home educate, there is no guarantee you will get a place back at the same school if you decide you no longer wish to home educate.

If your child gets free school meals, they will no longer have access to this service.

Process

Parents consider Elective Home Education – they may consider a discussion with EWS or the child's school and then if the parent decides to continue, they notify the school in writing.
The school then makes a referral to EWS and keeps the child on roll for 10 days as part of a voluntary agreement to ensure that the parent has made an informed decision.
School will continue to conduct home visits inline with this policy during this 10 day period.
EWS then triage the case, via information sent in by school, discussion with parents and checks on internal systems, including Social Care and this is then RAG rated accordingly.
If EHE is to continue, LA ensures parents have all the information and resources needed in order to electively home educate. Depending on the level of the initial Triage, contact is then made either every 3 months or yearly for the parent to provide evidence of a suitable education as per statutory responsibilities of the Local Authority.
Should it be parent does not engage with the process or does not send in evidence of a suitable education within the agreed timescales, then they are firstly given further support to do so and then if not, they are informed that failure to engage with the Local Authority could result in the child having to be returned to school through a School Attendance Order. If a parent does not engage at this stage, then they are made aware that this could result in parental prosecution for failing to provide an education for their child.

Where a parent or carer intends to withdraw a child from school for Elective Home Education (EHE), or where a child is missing education, the school must immediately notify the Local Authority. In compliance with the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026, if a pupil is classified as a "relevant child" (e.g., subject to active child protection investigations, safeguarding action, or in a special school setting), they cannot be removed from the school roll until the Local Authority has formally granted written consent to the parent and served notice to the school.

Children Missing Education (CME)

When a child goes missing from education, which includes within the school day,

unauthorised absences will be monitored and followed up in line with procedures, particularly where children go missing on repeated occasions. In the case of a child in care, the social worker must be informed in line with safeguarding
Should the parent remove the child from school for a period of absence without prior permission, the school should also put this in writing, explaining the consequences for doing so.
Where a pupil has not returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence or is absent from school without authorisation for 20 consecutive school days, the school will remove the pupil from the admissions register if the school and the Local Authority have failed to establish the whereabouts of the pupil after making reasonable enquiries in line with Child missing in education guidance.

Absence through child participation in public performances, including theatre, film or television work and modelling

Parents/carers of a child performer can seek leave of absence from school for their child to take part in a performance. They must contact the Headteacher to discuss the nature and frequency of the work, whether the child has a valid performance license and whether education will be provided by the employer during any future leave of absence. It is, however, down to the Headteacher's discretion as to whether to authorised this and they will wish to discuss with you the nature and frequency of the absence and how learning will continue if absence occurs. Any absence recorded as part of a child's participation in a public performance is recorded as C, an authorised absence.
Performance licenses are applied for from the Education Welfare Service by the appropriate agency/company.

Absence through competing at Sporting events

Parents of young people who are engaged in recognised sporting activities can seek leave of absence from school for their child to take part in regional, county, national and international events and competitions. It is, however, down to the Headteacher's discretion whether to authorised this and they will wish to discuss with you the nature and frequency of the absence and how learning will continue if absence occurs.
Permission for your child to leave early or arrive late to attend coaching and training sessions is also at the discretion of the Headteacher and is not likely to be approved if it is a regular event, unless the sports club or association is providing an education tutor as part of their coaching.

Gypsy, Roma, Traveller and Showman families

Traveller pupils include Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers.
Absence of a child from a Traveller community family that has left the area may be authorised if the absence is for work purposes only and it is believed that the family

intends to return. This must be agreed with the school prior to the departure to travel, with a date of return.
To ensure the continuity of learning for Traveller children, dual registration is allowed. That means that a school cannot remove a Traveller child from the school roll while they are travelling. When the Traveller is away the home school holds the place open and records the absence as authorised through the T code. Distance learning packs for Traveller children are not an alternative to attendance at school.

Attendance Intervention

In order to ensure the school has effective procedures for managing absence, the Attendance Officer, supported by the Attendance Strategic Leader and Trust Education Welfare Officer, will:

- Establish a range of evidence-based interventions to address barriers to attendance.
- Monitor the implementation and quality of escalation procedures and seek robust evidence of the escalation procedures that work.
- Attend or lead attendance reviews in line with escalation procedures.
- Establish robust escalation procedures which will be initiated before absence becomes a problem by:
    - Sending letters to parents.
    - Engaging with Local Authority attendance teams
    - Engaging with other services and professionals
    - Using fixed penalty notices and other legal interventions such as Fast Track referrals, Supervision orders or parent prosecutions.
    -

The school will use attendance data, in line with the 'Monitoring and analysing absence' section of this policy, to develop specific strategies to improve attendance where patterns of absence are emerging. These strategies will be developed on a case-by-case basis and will consider the particular needs of the pupils whom the intervention is designed to target.

If a pupil's attendance falls **below 97%,** the school will write to the pupil's parents to alert them that they have dropped below the attendance target. The pupil's attendance will be closely monitored.

If a pupil's attendance falls **below 95%,** the school will write to the pupil's parents to alert them of their concerns and falling level of attendance and may be invited to have a conversation with the class teacher . The pupil's attendance will be closely monitored.

If a pupil's attendance falls **below 92%,** the school will write to pupils' parents, and parents may be expected to meet with the Attendance Officer to discuss the pupil's attendance and agree strategies to improve this, as they are at risk of becoming PA.

If further absence occurs and the pupil's attendance falls **below 90%,** the school will write to pupils' parents, and a meeting to discuss barriers to attendance with the

Attendance strategic leader/ SLT .
A referral to the Trust Education Welfare Officer will be made, with next steps agreed. This may result in a Penalty Notice being issued, or other actions being taken such as an attendance contract .

Medical Mitigations: Before initiating formal attendance interventions or issuing penalty notices, the school will review whether the absences are linked to a managed chronic medical condition or severe allergy identified in an Individual Healthcare Plan (IHP). Absences directly related to the management of life-threatening allergies may be mitigated during the review process to ensure the pupil is not unfairly disadvantaged by their medical needs. dd

Monitoring and Analysing Absence

The school will monitor and analyse attendance data regularly to ensure that intervention is delivered quickly to address habitual absence at the first signs.

The school will analyse attendance and absence data on a **biweekly basis** including punctuality and authorised and unauthorised absence, for:

- The school cohort as a whole.
- Individual year groups.
- Individual pupils.
- Other groups of pupils, e.g. pupils with SEND, CIC and pupils eligible for FSM.
- Pupils at risk of PA.

The school will conduct a thorough analysis of the above data on a **half-termly, termly and full-year** basis to identify patterns and trends. This will include identifying, for each group:

- Patterns in uses of certain codes.
- Particular days of poor attendance.
- Historic trends of attendance and absence.
- Barriers to attendance.

The Attendance Strategic Lead who will share analyses with teachers and support staff to enable them to track the attendance of pupils and to implement attendance procedures. The Attendance Strategic Lead will also be responsible for monitoring how attendance data changes in response to any interventions implemented to increase attendance in future.

The Local Governing Board will regularly review attendance data, including examinations of recent and historic trends, and will support the Headteacher in setting goals and prioritising areas of focus for attendance support based on this data.

The school will also benchmark its attendance data against local, regional and national data to identify areas of success and areas for improvement and will share practice which has been shown to be effective with other schools.

The Board of Trustees will ensure staff from different schools within the Trust regularly share expertise and collaborate on interventions though regular networking opportunities.

Monitoring and Review

Attendance and punctuality will be monitored throughout the year.

This policy will be reviewed **annually** by the Trust.

Appendices

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
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
B	Off-site educational activity (not dual registered)	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
C	Other authorised circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances If any service children require Holidays in term time than schools should use the code C.
C1	Leave of Absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance	Leave of Absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance paid or unpaid In line with performance license guidance.
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable, this is to be in agreement of all parties and approved by the LA. Part-time timetables should be for the least amount of time possible.
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
J1	Authorised absence	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment or other authorised absence
K	LA provision	Attending education provision arranged by the Local Authority
L	Late arrival	Pupils arrives late before register has closed
M	Medical/Dental	School has been notified that a pupil will be

	appointment	absent due to medical appointment or intervention
N	No reason of absence yet provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with the reason for the pupil's absence.
P	Sporting Activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
Q	Unable to attend the school because of access arrangements.	The LA has failed to arrange transport for the student, Y1 is used if the organised transport is not available
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study Leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Travellers Absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
U	Late (after registration has closed)	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
X	Not compulsory	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
W	Work Experience	Pupil experiencing working environment.
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available	Where a pupil is unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel	Where a pupil is unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed	Where a pupil is unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Y4	Unable to attend due to whole school being closed	Where a pupil is unable to attend due to whole school being closed
Y5	Unable to attend	Where a pupil is unable to attend due as pupil is

	due as pupil is in criminal justice detention	in criminal justice detention
Y6	Absent in accordance with public health guidance or Law	Where a pupil is absent in accordance with public health guidance or Law
Y7	Unable to attend because of other unavoidable Cause	Where a pupil is unable to attend because of other unavoidable Cause
#	Planned whole or partial school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day
Z	Pupil not on roll	
-	All pupils should attend	

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