



Chandlers Ridge Academy Attendance Policy 2025/26

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Responsible School Officer: Headteacher

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1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation about school attendance through our whole school approach that values good school attendance:

- Promoting good attendance
- Ensuring every child has access to full-time education
- Building and maintaining a strong relationship with families to enable targeted support to better school attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Promoting the importance of arriving to school and lessons on time to support punctuality

2. Roles and Responsibilities

Improving attendance is everyone's business. Each stakeholder has clearly defined roles and responsibilities to promote good attendance for every child.

2.1 The Governing Board of Trustees

The governing board's responsibilities:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy
- The link governor responsible for attendance is Mrs Pam Powell and can be contacted via enquiries@chandlersridge.org.uk or 01642 312741.

2.2 The headteacher

The headteacher's responsibilities:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary
- The Head Teacher is Mr Richard Thompson and can be contacted via 01642 312741 or enquiries@chandlersridge.org.uk.

2.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader's responsibilities:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Mr Richard Thompson and can be contacted via enquiries@chandlersridge.org.uk or 01642 312741.

2.4 The attendance officer

The school's attendance officer's responsibilities:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- Working with relevant school staff to tackle persistent absence.
- Advising the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is Mrs Danielle Moore and can be contacted via enquiries@chandlersridge.org.uk.

2.5 Class teachers

Class teachers' responsibilities:

- Recording attendance daily, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office by 9:00am.
- Build relationships with pupils/parents/carers to allow for the identification of barriers to attendance
- Support families and children where necessary

2.6 School office staff

School office staff will:

- Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Register children with an 'L' code for late if they arrive after 8:55am
- Register children with a 'U' code for unauthorized attendance if they arrive after 9:15am
- Complete first day calls to confirm the reason for absence of any child not in school whose parents have not been in contact. Where feasible, this will be done by 9:30am
- Provide attendance data/information to teachers and senior leaders as needed to support on attendance

2.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time. Lessons begin at 8:45am. The gate will remain open until 8:55am to allow parents to depart the school grounds after dropping off their child.
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the first day of absence and on each subsequent day of absence. If possible, advise when they are expected to return.
- Provide the school with at least two emergency contact numbers for their child
- Ensure that addresses, contact details, medical details, allergies, food intolerances, consents and all other information is updated on your child's Arbor profile.
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

2.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time

3. Recording attendance

3.1 Attendance register

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

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent

- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not. This is true for all children in our school, including Nursery children
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

First Session Each Day

- School gates open: 8:35am
- Pupils must arrive at school to begin scheduled learning: 8:45am
- School gates remain open to allow parents to depart: 8:55am
- Class registers will be completed and submitted by teachers: 9:00am
- The register for the first session legally closes: 9:15am
- Any children arriving after 8:55am will enter through the school's main entrance and will be marked with an 'L' code for late.
- Any children arriving after 9:15am will enter through the school's main entrance and will be marked with a 'U' code for unauthorised absence.

Second Session Each Day

Lunches at Chandlers Ridge Academy are staggered. All teachers are expected to complete their registers within 10 minutes of the end of their class's lunch.

- Nursery: by 12:40
- Reception: by 13:05
- Years1 & 2: by 13:20

- Years 3 & 4: by 13:40
- Years 5 & 6: by 13:00

3.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9:00am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office staff.

Email: enquiries@chandlersridge.org.uk

Absence Line: 01642 312741 – Press 1 to report a pupil absence (voicemail)
– Press 3 to speak to the school office (staffed 8:45am – 3:45pm)

If you are emailing or leaving a voicemail, please state the **child's full name, year group** and a **brief description explaining why they are absent**. If you are able to give an anticipated return date/time, please do so.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or another appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

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

3.3 Planned absence

If your child must be unavoidably absent from school, please complete a Leave of Absence form available from the office. These will be passed to the Headteacher who will decide whether or not the absence is authorised based on the circumstances presented.

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

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

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

3.4 Lateness and Punctuality

A pupil who arrives late

- before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code

- after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code. The school will use the [U] code for arrivals after 30 minutes from the start of the session (i.e. those children arriving after 9:15am).

Addressing issues of punctuality:

1. If a child receives more than two late codes within a half-term, the school will issue a '*Punctuality Concern*' letter. The purpose of this letter is to address an emerging problem before it becomes entrenched.
2. If a lateness persists after the '*Punctuality Concern*' letter has been issued, parents will be invited in to engage with a '*Punctuality Support Plan*' where we can explore barriers and consider support.
3. If a family has received either a Punctuality Concern letter or a '*Punctuality Support Plan*' and the child's punctuality improves within 1 half-term, a letter of celebration is shared.

3.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will take action:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer

If a child's absence is unreported and the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may conduct a welfare visit whereby two members of staff will visit the child's registered address. If there is nobody contactable within the address, Children's Services may be contacted for advice and the matter may be referred to the Police.

3.6 Reporting to parents/carers

At the beginning of the year, all parents will be issued a letter outlining attendance expectations.

The school will then regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels. These reports will be issued half-termly, and attendance data will also be included in your child's annual written report and during parents evening appointments.

Where attendance levels are of concern, support processes will be initiated.

4. Authorised and unauthorised absence

4.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. The headteacher's decision is not subject to appeal. The school will always endeavor to be sympathetic to requests for absence by parents, and will not deny any request without good reason; however, family holidays should not be booked during term time.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least two weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school's office. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for a leave of absence.

Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:

- Immediately before and during assessment periods
- When a pupil's attendance record shows any unauthorised absence
- Where a pupil's authorised absence record is already above 10 percent for any reason
- Leave of absence will not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

If term-time leave is not granted, taking a pupil out of school will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and may result in sanctions, such as a penalty notice. The school cannot grant leaves of absence retrospectively; therefore, any absences that were not approved by the school in advance will be marked as unauthorised.

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the school attendance regulations. These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances

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

- Illness and medical/dental appointments

- Religious observance– where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers.
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

4.2 Term time absence for holidays

Any request for leave of absence due to holidays in term time will not be authorised.

The DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for leisure and recreational circumstances, and therefore there is no entitlement in law to time off in term time. Young people who are absent from school fall behind in their learning. They miss out on school events. Many find it difficult to catch up. In addition, school staff have to divert their attention away from other young people to support those who have fallen behind due to a holiday-related absence.

In the case of unauthorised leave of absence, incurring 10 or more unauthorised sessions (5 days) within 10 school weeks, consideration will be given if a referral should be made to the Local Authority for a fixed penalty notice to be issued or prosecution where repeated penalty notices have been issued. Where the threshold has not been met in the case of persistent avoidance, for example, repeated absence for birthdays or other family events, the school will have discretion to refer the case to the Local Authority. If in an individual case, the Local Authority believes a penalty notice would be appropriate, they retain the discretion to issue one before the threshold is met.

4.3 Extended Leave

When a child is absent from school for an extended period (i.e 15 school days or more) parent/carers should advise the school of the temporary address.

4.4 Legal sanctions

The Local Authority may issue Notices to Improve and penalty notices or refer to court for prosecution in line with the National Framework where absences were unauthorised and support has been provided but not worked or engaged with or would not have been appropriate in the circumstances of the offence (e.g., an unauthorised holiday in term time).

A penalty notice is an out-of-court settlement intended to change behaviour without the need for criminal prosecution. The threshold is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence (1 day = 2 sessions). This can be a combination of any type of unauthorised absence, all taken within any 10-school-week period that may span

different terms or school years (e.g., 2 sessions of unauthorised absence in the Summer Term and a further 8 within the Autumn Term).

From Autumn Term 2024, the Local Authority will only issue 2 penalty notices to the same parent in respect of the same child within a 3-year rolling period and any second notice within that period is charged at a higher rate:

- The first penalty notice issued to a parent in respect of a particular pupil will be charged £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.
- A second penalty notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.
- A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of issue of the first. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead. This will often include consideration of prosecution.

Further information about Middlesbrough Local Authority's attendance procedures can be found [here](#).

5. Strategies for promoting attendance

In order to ensure the school has effective procedures for promoting attendance and managing absence, the attendance officer, supported by school leaders and classroom teachers will:

- Celebrate high attendance through certificates, social medias, newsletters and other parent/carers communications
- Celebrate high attend class-wide attendance through a weekly attendance award in assemblies
- Update attendance displays to celebrate successes
- Establish a range of specific, evidence-based interventions to address barriers to attendance when patterns of absence emerge. These may include communication with home, letters to parents/carers, parent/carers meetings, devising an attendance plan with parents/carers, engaging with Local Authority attendance teams.
- The school will use attendance data in line with the 'Attendance Monitoring' 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 child.

6. Attendance monitoring

6.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

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

6.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

6.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to teachers and other school leaders to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place to modify them and inform future strategies

6.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils whom the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school

- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance

• 6.5 Maintaining and Improving Attendance

See appendix 2 for full flow chart of actions.

- Setting Expectations
All parents/carers receive a letter outlining the school's attendance expectations in the September of the school year
- Providing Regular Updates
At the end of each half-term, all parents/carers will receive an attendance update letter for their child.
 - If attendance is 96%+, the letter will congratulate attendance efforts.
 - If attendance is between 93-95.9%, the letter will advise that attendance has fallen below the school target of 96%.
- Attendance Concern Letter 1
At any point in the school year, if attendance drop below 93%, Letter 1 is issued. This prompts parents to work to raise their child's attendance.
- Attendance Concern Letter 2
If attendance does not improve following the issue of Letter 1, or if attendance drops below 90% (threshold for 'persistent absenteeism'), a Letter 2 is issued. This invites parents to engage in an informal plan to identify barriers and provide support. Plans are reviewed every 4 weeks for 12 school weeks.
- Attendance Concern Letter 3
If an informal support plan fails to facilitate substantial, sustained improvement in attendance, or if parents/carers have not engaged in an informal support plan and attendance remains a concern, they will be invited to attend an Attendance Case Conference (ACC). Here, a formal contract is set up to stipulate expectations for improvement and offer support. Following this meeting, a copy of the contract along with a 'Notice to Improve' (Letter 4) is issued. Attendance is monitored for a period of 12 months. If significant, sustained, improvements are noted in the first three 4-weekly review meetings, no further review meetings are called and the situation is monitored for the remaining 9 months.
- Refer to Local Authority
Continued failure to engage in formal support or continued issues of attendance beyond formal support will be referred to the local authority for a Level 3 response. This is an escalation beyond school involvement and could result in fixed penalty notices, ESOs, prosecution etc.

7. Monitoring arrangements

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

8. Support

The school will:

- Build relationships with students and families to encourage regular school attendance.
- Analyse and use data and relationship knowledge to prevent regular absence.
- Using resources (School-based and external services) to intervene early with support.
- Use targeted support for persistent/severe absences.

9. Truancy

Truancy will be considered as any absence of part, or all, of one or more days from school, during which the school has not been notified of the cause behind such absence.

All staff will be actively engaged in supporting the regular attendance of pupils, and understand the importance of continuity in each pupil's learning. Any pupil with permission to leave the school during the day must sign out at Visitors' reception and sign back in again on their return. Immediate action will be taken when there are any concerns that a pupil might be truanting. If truancy is suspected, school will contact the parent in order to assess the reasons behind the pupil not attending school.

The following procedures will be taken in the event of a truancy:

- In the first instance, a letter of warning will be sent to the parents of the pupil, informing them of the truancy and stating that any future occurrences could result in further action being taken.
- If any further truancy occurs, then the school will consider a penalty notice.
- A penalty notice will be issued where there is overt truancy, inappropriate parentally-condoned absence, excessive holidays in term-time and persistent late arrival at school.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will be involved where an instance of truancy may be linked to a safeguarding concern. Any safeguarding concerns will be dealt with in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

10. Children reported missing in school

Pupils will not be permitted to leave the school premises during the school day unless they have permission from the school. The following procedures will be taken in the event of a pupil going missing whilst at school:

- The member of staff who has noticed the missing pupil will inform the DSL immediately. In the absence of the DSL, inform the Deputy DSL.
- The office staff will also be informed as they will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search.
- An available member of staff will conduct a thorough search of the school premises.
- The following areas will be systematically searched:
 - Classrooms
 - Toilets
 - Any outbuildings
 - The school grounds
- Available staff will begin a search of the area immediately outside of the school premises, and will take a mobile phone with them so they can be contacted.
- If the pupil has not been found after 10 minutes, then the parents of the pupil will be notified.
- The school will attempt to contact parents using the emergency contact numbers provided.
- If the parents have had no contact from the pupil, and the emergency contacts list has been exhausted, the police will be contacted.
- Relevant information relating to the pupil's absence would be recorded by the most appropriate member of staff to the situation. For example, using CPOMS.
- If the missing pupil has an allocated social worker, is a looked-after child, or SEND, then the appropriate personnel will be informed.
- When the pupil has been located, members of staff will care for and talk to the pupil to ensure they are safe and well.
- Parents and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the pupil has been located.

The headteacher/ head of school/ senior leaders will take the appropriate action to ensure that pupils understand they must not leave the premises, and sanctions will be issued if deemed necessary. Appropriate disciplinary procedures will be followed in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

11. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

12. Legislation and guidance

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

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\)\(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\)\(England\)\(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\)\(England\)\(Amendment\) Regulations 2024](#)

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

- [Summary of responsibilities where a mental health issue is affecting attendance](#)
- [Support for pupils where mental health issues are affecting attendance \(Effective practice examples\)](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024](#)

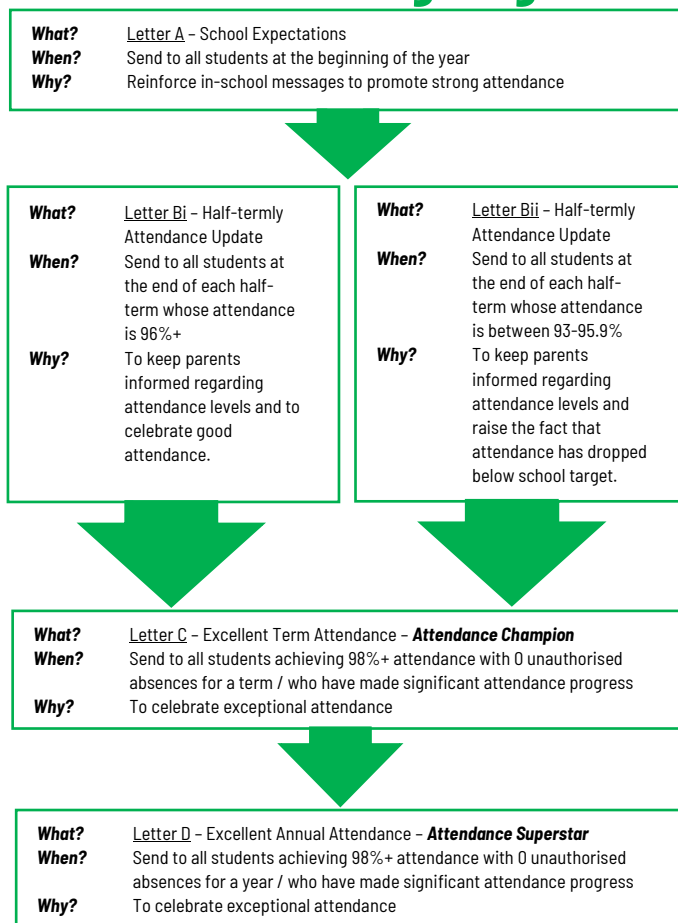
Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following registration is effective from the 19th of August 2024 - '[Working Together To Improve School Attendance 2024](#)'

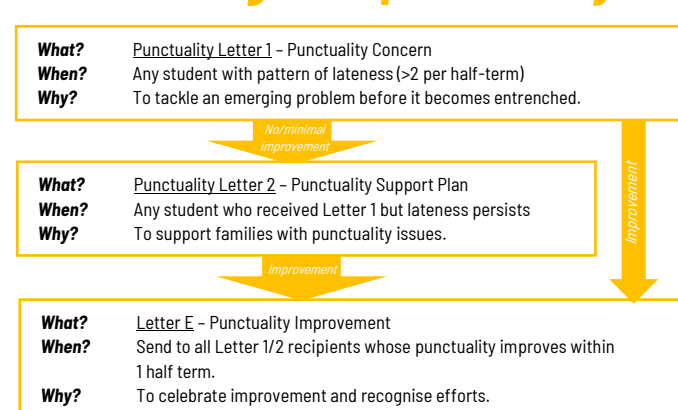
Present Codes	
/ \	present during registration
B	educated off site and for taster days and do not fit K, V, P or W codes
K	attending provision arranged by the local authority under Section 19 of the EA 1996
L	arrived after the register has started but before it has closed
P	participation in a sporting activity with prior agreement from school
V	educational visit or trip supervised by a member of the school staff
W	attending work experience under arrangements by the school or local authority
Absent Codes	
Authorised Absences	
C	absence due to exceptional circumstances, agreed by the headteacher
C1	in a regulated performance/undertaking regulated employment abroad
C2	absent due to part-time timetable, agreed by the headteacher and parent(s)/carer(s)
D	dual registered
E	suspended or permanently excluded, and no alternative provision made
I	illness (both physical and mental health related; not medical or dental appointments)
J1	job/school/college interview
M	medical or dental appointment
Q	unable to attend because of a lack of access arrangements
R	religious observance (only 1 day allowed; any more coded as C if agreed)
S	study leave
T	parent travelling for occupational purposes
X	non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
Y1	unable to attend due to transport provided not being available
Y2	unable to attend due to widespread transport disruption
Y3	unable to attend due to part of the school premises being unexpectedly closed
Y4	unable to attend due to unexpected whole school closure
Y5	unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Y6	unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	unable to attend due to other avoidable cause (must affect the pupil NOT the parent)
Unauthorised Absences	
G	holiday or absence for leisure-related purposes (not agreed by the headteacher)
N	reason for absence not yet established (must be corrected within 5 days)
O	absent in other or unknown circumstances
U	late after register has closed
Administrative Codes	
Z	prospective pupil not yet on register
#	planned whole school closure (e.g., holidays, Insets and polling station days)

Appendix 2: Our Attendance Monitoring/Improvement Process

If attendance is going well...



Intervening with punctuality...



"The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age... It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education by attendance at school."

Intervening with attendance...

