ATTENDANCE POLICY

This section should be completed following ratification of the Policy.

Audience	Trust Leaders, all staff & all Parents
Ratified	November 2026
Other Related Policies	Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
Policy Owner	Executive Team & Performance Committee
Review Frequency	Within 18 months

Ownership

Preston Hedges Trust is responsible for the production and maintenance of this document. It is issued by the Clerk, clerk@prestonhedges.org to whom any change requests or queries should be directed.

Contents

1	Aims
2	Legal framework
3	Responsibilities
4	Definitions
5	Attendance Expectations
6	Attendance Register
7	Applying for Authorised Absence
8	Performance Activities
9	Religious Observance
10	SEND and Health Related Absence
11	Attendance Intervention
12	Working with Parents & Families to improve attendance
13	Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school
13.1	Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance
13.2	Pupils absent due to mental health
13.3	Pupils absent due to other barriers to attendance
14	Additional Support for children with persistent absence (PA)
15	Penalty Notices & Legal Interventions
16	LA Protocols (Milton Keynes & West Northamptonshire)
17	Attendance Contracts
18	Education Supervision Orders

19	Monitoring and analysing absence
20	Training for staff
21	Deletions of names from the admission register
22.	Senior Attendance Champion Contact Details & Session times

1. Aims

At Preston Hedges Trust our aim is to make sure that all pupils attend school as fully as possible in the times regulated.

We aim to achieve this through our whole-trust culture and ethos that values good attendance, which includes:

- Creating a culture where all children can, and want, to be in school
- Analysing attendance data daily, weekly and monthly and act early to address patterns of absence
- Listening, understanding and working with parents and carers to remove barriers to attendance
- Facilitating support to help parents and carers access external support to overcome barriers outside of school.
- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence

Each school's senior attendance champions name, and email can be found in **section 22** of this policy and on the school website.

Our schools encourage and assist all pupils to achieve the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality, reducing absence and persistent absence. It is important that school staff and parents are aware that good attendance is essential for pupils to maximise their achievement and attainment at school.

2. Legal Framework

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

- Education Act 1996
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- DfE (2026) Working together to improve school attendance
- DfE (2026) Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE) 2026
- DfE (2025) Children missing education
- DfE (2024) Providing remote education

3. Responsibilities

The Trust Performance Committee has responsibility for:

- Ensuring that each of its schools fulfils its duties as defined in this attendance policy.

- Reviewing attendance data at each meeting. This should include analysis of overall attendance, attendance of vulnerable pupils with the explicit inclusion of young carers , late attendance, unauthorised absence and persistent absence at each school.

- Review a school's attendance strategy to ensure the steps taken to **prevent** poor attendance, provide **early intervention** and **targeted support** where attendance levels are falling, below national levels or below the expectation for that school.

- Promote the sharing of effective practice on attendance management and improvement across schools.

- Challenge Trust leaders where a Trust school has declining attendance, either overall or within a vulnerable group, and where their actions have not achieved the desired impact. In such circumstances, ensure that the school is linked with a DfE Attendance Hub.

- Sharing effective practice on attendance management and improvement across the Trust and providing regular opportunities for staff from different schools to come together, learn from each other and share resources

- The committee will also review the Trust's Attendance Policy and ensure the required resources are available to fully implement the policy.

The Principal has responsibility for:

- Creating a culture where all children can, and want, to be in school

- Analysing attendance data daily, weekly and monthly and act early to address patterns of absence

- Listening, understanding and working with parents and carers to remove barriers to attendance

- Facilitating support to help parents and carers access external support to overcome barriers outside of school.

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils

- Ensuring their school has an attendance strategy in place focused on **prevention, early intervention** and **targeted support**

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.

- Appointing a **member of the SLT** to the senior attendance champion 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.

- Issuing penalty notices, where necessary and/or authorising appropriate staff to be able to do so

- Working with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for

pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers

- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs

The Senior Attendance Champion has responsibility for:

- The overall strategic approach to attendance in school in partnership with the Principal.
- Working with and supporting the Family Support Worker or Pastoral Lead to fulfil the attendance strategy
- Monitoring attendance and the impact of interventions.
- Analysing attendance data and identifying areas of intervention and improvement.
- Benchmarking attendance data against similar schools nationally to identify areas for improvement
- Communicating with pupils and parents about attendance.
- Leading a compassionate approach when listening to parents and pupils regarding barriers to attendance.
- Following up on incidents of persistent poor attendance.
- Enforcing attendance through statutory interventions in cases of persistent poor attendance where other supports have not succeeded.
- Ensuring the LA are informed of any pupil being deleted from the admission and attendance registers.

Staff have responsibility for:

- Creating a culture where all children can, and want, to be in school
- Listening, understanding and working with parents and carers to remove barriers to attendance
- Supporting pupils with complex barriers to attendance to feel valued and supported at school.

- 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.
- Where designated, taking the attendance register at the relevant times during the school day.

Parents have responsibility for:

- All Parents/Carers are responsible for ensuring that their child attends school regularly, punctually, properly dressed in full uniform and in a fit condition to learn.
- By requesting leave of absence only in exceptional circumstances, and in advance.
- Booking any medical appointments around school where possible.
- Following any family-based support implemented by the school to improve attendance.
- If for any reason a child is prevented from attending, **parents must notify the school on the first day of absence before registration**. If the school does not receive notification of a child's absence by the end of registration, the main parent/carer will be contacted by telephone that morning and asked to provide the reason for their child's absence, and giving an indication of when the child is likely to return to school.
- A pupil's absence from school must be considered as unauthorised until a satisfactory explanation has been received from a parent/carer.
- If any pupil's attendance is a cause for concern the parents/carers will be contacted by the Senior Attendance Champion, Principal, another Senior Leader, the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Family Support Worker or Pastroal Lead.
- If this does not lead to an improvement in attendance, the school will refer the matter as appropriate to the education inclusion teams at the council.

Pupils have responsibility for:

- Attending their lessons and any agreed activities when at school.
- Arriving punctually to lessons when at school.
- Following any support provided by the school to improve attendance.

4. Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

Authorised absence:

- Medical – Any appointment resulting in your child missing morning or afternoon registration. Please note there is an expectation medical appointment will be as far as possible arranged outside of school hours.
- Religious or Faith observance
- Bereavement/Compassionate
- Family Wedding/Civil Partnership Date (a maximum of 3 days can be authorised where the wedding is abroad, please see the website for further information)
- Family crisis
- Examination off site
- Educational Activity – Sport or Performance Activity
- Attendance required by another public organisation including a school
- Family relocation visit
- Other exceptional circumstances preauthorised by the Senior Attendance Champion of Principal.

Unauthorised absence:

- Family holiday
- Family trips
- Leaving school early to travel to an event
- Arrival at school after the register has closed

Persistent absence (PA):
Where a child's attendance is less than 90%

Missing in education
Not registered at a school and not receiving suitable education in a setting other than a school

5. Attendance Expectations

Pupils will be expected to attend school punctually every day they are required to be at school, for the full day.

Each of our schools has an attendance target of 95% for their pupils.

The school day **starts at 8.45am**, in all our schools bar **Broughton Fields which starts at 8.30am** and pupils will be in their classroom, ready to begin lessons at this time.

Appendix A contains session times for each school in the Preston Hedges Trust.

Registers will be taken as follows throughout the school day:

- The morning register will be marked by **8.55am and at 8.40am at Broughton Fields**
- Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time. Pupils attending after this time will receive a mark to show that they were on site, but this will count as a late mark.
- Children arriving after the register has closed but before 9:15am will be marked as late (L). Arrival after 9:15am without a valid explanation will be recorded as an unauthorised absence (U)." This procedure will apply from 9am at Broughton Fields.

- The afternoon register will be marked immediately at the start of the afternoon session. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time

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

6. Attendance Register

The school uses Arbor to keep attendance registers to ensure they are as accurate as possible and can be easily analysed and shared with the appropriate authorities.

Designated staff members will take the attendance register at the start of each school day and at the start of the afternoon session. This register will record whether pupils are:

- Present.
- Absent.
- Attending an approved educational visit.
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

The school uses the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:

- # = planned whole school closure
- / = Present in the morning
- \ = Present in the afternoon
- L = Late arrival before the register has closed
- C = Leave of absence granted by the school for exceptional circumstances
- S = Study leave
- C1 = Leave of absence for participating in a regulated performance or employment abroad
- C2 = Leave of absence for part-time pupils
- E = Suspended or permanently excluded but no alternative provision made
- J1 = Leave of absence for job or education interviews
- I = Illness
- M = Medical or dental appointments
- K = Attending provision arranged by the LA
- R = Religious observance
- B = Off-site education activity

- G = Unauthorised holiday
- O = Unauthorised absence
- U = Arrived after registration closed
- N = Reason not yet provided
- X = Not required to be in school
- T = Traveller absence
- Q = Absent due to a lack of access arrangements or due to the pupil having to attend a school that does not qualify for travel arrangements and is more than walking distance from where they live.
- V = Educational visit or trip
- P = Participating in a supervised sporting activity, with supervision being physically provided by an appropriately trained and knowledgeable person
- D = Dual registered – at another educational establishment
- W = Attending work experience
- Y1 = Absent due to their regular transport not being available
- Y2 = Absent due to travel disruption
- Y3 = Absent due to part of the school premises being closed
- Y4 = Absent due to the school site being closed
- Y5 = Absent due to being in criminal justice detention
- Y6 = Absent due to public health guidance or law, despite the pupil being well enough to attend
- Y7 = Absent due to any other unavoidable cause, the nature of which must be documented by the school.
- Z = Pupil not on admission register

When the school has planned to be fully or partially closed, the code '#' will be used for the relevant pupils who are absent. This code will also be used to record year groups who are not due to attend because the school has set different term dates for different years, e.g. induction days.

Pupils who are absent from school but are receiving remote education for any reason will be marked as absent in the register.

All amendments made to the attendance register will include the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date of amendment and the name and role of the person who made the amendment.

Every entry received into the attendance register will be preserved for **six years.**

7. Applying for authorised absence

All requests for absence due to exceptional circumstances must be made by completing the 'Trust Absence form' which can be downloaded from our school website.

The Principal will then review each request and decide if it meets the criteria for authorisation. Parents should keep their copy of the authorisation in case they are required to prove their child has authorised absence during term time.

For absence relating to illness of five days or more, schools may request a doctor's note to confirm the absence.

Where the family are travelling abroad – authorised or not – the school may request proof of return travel. (Within Europe when the stay exceeds five days, every time during school time travel is beyond Europe). This will need to be provided to the school promptly upon request. This is more likely if you are travelling for an extended duration. This is a measure that we apply across the Trust to keep children safe.

All requests for leave of absence must be completed on the Trust Absence Request form.

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

- **Immediately before and during statutory 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**

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.

8. Performance Activities

The school will ensure that all pupils engaging in performances or activities, which require them to be absent from school, understand that they will be required to obtain a licence from the LA which authorises the school's absence(s).

Additional arrangements will be made by the school for pupils engaging in performances or activities that require them to be absent from school to ensure they do not fall behind in their education. These arrangements will be approved by the LA who will ensure that the arrangements are suitable for the pupil.

The pupil will receive education that, when taken together over the term of the licence, amounts to a minimum of three hours per day that the pupil would be required to attend a school maintained by the LA issuing the licence. This requirement will be met by ensuring a pupil receives an education:

- For not less than six hours a week; and
- During each complete period of four weeks (or if there is a period of less than four weeks, then during that period), for periods of time not less than three hours a day; and
- On days where the pupil would be required to attend school if they were attending a school maintained by the LA; and
- For not more than five hours on any such day.

Where a licence has been granted by the LA and it specifies dates of absence, no further authorisation will be needed from the school. Where an application does not specify dates, and it has been approved by the LA, it is at the discretion of the Principal to authorise the leave of absence for each day. The Principal will not authorise any absences which would mean that a pupil's attendance would fall below **95 percent.**

Where a licence has not been obtained, the Principal will not authorise any absence for a performance or activity.

9. Religious Observance

The Trust acknowledges the multi faith nature of British society and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside school holiday periods or weekends, and this necessitates a consideration of authorised absence or special leave for religious observance.

Parent/carers are requested to give notice to the school if they intend their child to be absent for such occasions.

The school will only accept requests from parents for absence on grounds of religious observance for days that are exclusively set apart for religious observance by the relevant religious body. The school will define this as a day where the pupil's parents would be expected by an established religious body to stay away from their employment to mark the occasion.

The school may seek advice from the religious body in question where there is doubt over the request.

10. SEND and Health Related Absences

The school recognises that pupils with SEND and/or health conditions, including mental health issues, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers, and will incorporate robust procedures to support pupils who find attending school difficult.

In line with the SEND report and Inclusion Policy the school will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for disabled pupils to reduce barriers to attendance, in line with any EHC plans or IHPs that have been implemented. The school will secure additional support from external partners to help bolster attendance where appropriate.

Where the school has concerns that a pupil's non-attendance may be related to mental health issues, parents will be contacted to discuss the issue and whether there are any contributory factors to their child's lack of attendance. Where staff have a mental health concern about a pupil that is also a safeguarding concern, they will inform the DSL and the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy will be followed.

If a pupil is unable to attend school for long periods of time due to their health, the school will:

- Inform the LA if a pupil is likely to be away from the school for more than 15 school days.
- Provide the LA with information about the pupil's needs, capabilities and programme of work.
- Help the pupil reintegrate at school when they return.
- Make sure the pupil is kept informed about school events and clubs.
- Encourage the pupil to stay in contact with other pupils during their absence.

The school will incorporate an action plan to help any pupils with SEND and/or health issues cope with the stress and anxiety that attending school may cause them. Such plans will be regularly monitored and reviewed until the pupil is attending school as normal and there have been signs of significant improvement.

To support the attendance of pupils with SEND and/or health issues, the school will consider:

- Holding termly meetings to evaluate any implemented reasonable adjustments.
- Incorporating a pastoral support plan.
- Carrying out strengths and difficulties questionnaire.
- Identifying pupils' unmet needs through the Common Assessment Framework.

- Using an internal or external specialist.
- Enabling a pupil to have a reduced timetable.
- Ensuring a pupil can have somewhere quiet to spend lunch and breaktimes.
- Implementing a system whereby pupils can request to leave a classroom if they feel they need time out.
- Temporary late starts or early finishes.
- Phased returns to school where there has been a long absence.
- Small group work or one-to-one lessons.
- Tailored support to meet their individual needs.

11. Attendance Intervention

To ensure the school has effective procedures for managing absence, the senior attendance champion, supported by the SLT, will:

- The school has an effective attendance strategy based on **prevention, early intervention and targeted support.**
- 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

The school will use attendance data, in line with the 'Monitoring Attendance" 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.

The school will acknowledge significantly improved attendance and punctuality by providing tailored rewards for pupils and/or families.

12. Working with Parents & Families to improve attendance

The school will work to cultivate strong, respectful relationships with parents and families to ensure their trust and engagement. Open and honest communication will be maintained with pupils and their families about the expectations of school life, attendance and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them. The school will liaise with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, e.g. social services.

The school will ensure that there are two sets of emergency contact details for each pupil wherever possible to ensure the school has additional options for getting in touch with

adults responsible for a pupil where the pupil is absent without notification or authorisation.

If a pattern of absence becomes problematic, the senior attendance champion will work collaboratively with the pupil and their parents to improve attendance by addressing the specific barriers that prevent the pupil from being able to attend school regularly. The school will always take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for pupil absence and will approach families to offer support rather than immediately reach for punitive approaches.

Where these barriers are related to the pupil's experience in school, e.g. bullying, the senior attendance champion will work with the Principal and any relevant school staff, e.g. the DSL and SENCO, to address this. Where the barriers are outside of the school's control, e.g. they are related to issues within the pupil's family, the senior attendance champion will liaise with any relevant external agencies or authorities, e.g. children's social care or the LA, and will encourage parents to access support that they may need.

13. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

13.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

The school will recognise that some children experience complex barriers that cannot be addressed through routine attendance procedures alone. These may include severe medical conditions, bereavement, housing instability or other complex family situations.

The school will seek to adopt an individualised approach that looks to understand the root cause. A support plan may be co-produced with relevant external agencies, including the schools local authority Senior Attendance Champion.

The school will work with pupils, the parents, and external agencies where relevant, to identify any barriers to learning that are preventing them safely accessing school.

School will ensure they capture pupil voice and families voice to develop a personalised reintegration approach. This may include connecting with health services, educational psychologists, and local family hubs or the local authority to tackle and resolve root causes.

13.2 Pupils absent due to mental health

The school recognises that some pupils may experience absence due to mental health, including factors such severe anxiety or panic attacks, separation anxiety, trauma or burnout. In such cases, schools will gain pupil and parent voice and work in partnership with any external agencies who are already involved. In cases where no external support is yet put in place, school will make referrals to relevant external support such as, Mental Health support teams (MHST), CAMHS, Community paediatrics or a medical needs education team.

At a local level, schools will also look to access support through children's mental health charities and organisations inclusion Mind BLMK crisis team, MK wellbeing service (CHUMS) for Milton Keynes based schools or The lowdown, service six or happy heads for Northamptonshire based schools.

An individualised plan will be put in place, with ongoing access to mental health support outlined. This may include a single point of contact (SPOC) who holds the relevant training to support identified need or may be an adult the child feels most comfortable with, safe spaces in school identified or alternative separate entrance at a quieter time to bypass crowded situations, as well as further adjustments throughout the school day as needed to enable the child to access school.

13.3 Pupils absent due to other barriers to attendance

The school recognises that some pupils may face additional barriers to attendance and punctuality. These may include pupils with SEND, disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils, pupils known to (or previously known to) children's social care, and young carers. The school will focus on a child centered and solution focused approach to identify and remove barriers to attendance by working with pupils, parents, carers, and relevant professionals, to understand individual circumstances. Targeted support plans will be offered with a focus on improving attendance through Family Help Conversations (FHC) or Early Help Assessment (EHA).

Pupils with SEND

- Take into account individual needs and provisions outlined within the pupil's individual support plan, EHCP or other relevant supporting documents.

- Consider appropriate further reasonable adjustments that could be implemented to remove any further barriers identified to support attendance.

Disadvantaged Pupils

- Identify any barriers, including practical barriers such as transport issues, breakfast provision, school uniform and resources or access to wider support.

- Engage with referral to Family Hubs (Northamptonshire) Children's Centers (Milton Keynes) and other appropriate support services where required.

Children known to(or previously known to) children's social care

- Attendance will be monitored in collaboration with carers, social workers, designated teacher and virtual school colleagues where appropriate.
- Any support or targeted intervention will be part of their PEP (personalised education plan) which will be discussed PEP professional meetings with virtual schools.

Pupils with other barriers to attendance (e.g. young carers)

- School recongises that caring responsibilities may impact attendance and punctuality, wellbeing and engagement. Appropriate support will be provided, and flexibility will be considered in order to access education successfully, with individualised approaches in place for individual circumstances.

- Referrals to young carers' charities or other relevant agencies will be offered in order to support both the child's and the families well being.

14. Additional support for children with Persistent Absence (PA)

There are various groups of pupils who may be vulnerable to high absence and PA, such as:

- Children in need
- LAC
- Young carers
- Pupils who are eligible for FSM
- Pupils with EAL
- Pupils with SEND
- Pupils who have faced bullying and/or discrimination

The school will use a number of methods to help support pupils at risk of PA to attend school. These include:

- Offering catch-up support to build confidence and bridge gaps.

- Meeting with pupils to discuss patterns of absence, barriers to attendance, and any other problems they may be having.
- Establishing plans to remove barriers and provide additional support.
- Leading **weekly** check-ins to review progress and the impact of support.
- Making regular contact with families to discuss progress.
- Assessing whether an EHC plan or IHP may be appropriate.
- Considering what support for re-engagement might be needed, including for vulnerable groups

The school will prioritise any pupils who have rates of absence over 50 percent, and will work with the LA and other partners to engage all relevant services needed to identify and address the wider barriers to attendance these pupils are facing.

Where a pupil at risk of PA is also at increased risk of harm, the school will work in conjunction with all relevant authorities, e.g. social services, to support the pupil in line with the school's duty of care.

The school will also bear in mind that the continuation of severe PA following intervention may, in itself, constitute neglect, and will escalate any concerns in this regard in line with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

15. Penalty Notices and Legal Intervention

As absence is so often a symptom of wider issues a family is facing, schools should always work together with other local partners to understand the barriers to attendance and provide support. Where that is not successful, or is not engaged with, the law protects pupils' right to an education and provides a range of legal interventions to formalise attendance improvement efforts, and where all other avenues have been exhausted, enforce it through prosecuting parents.

- There is now a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England of **10 sessions** (a school day is 2 sessions - morning and afternoon) of unauthorised absence within a rolling **10 school week period.**

This includes:

- absence marked in the register as unauthorised
- persistent late arrival at school after the register has been taken and is recorded as an unauthorised absence

- absence in term time which has not been authorised by the Principal - the Government has directed that Principals may only grant leave in exceptional circumstances

When a school becomes aware that the threshold has been met, they are expected to make the following considerations to decide whether to issue a penalty notice in each individual case:

- **Is support appropriate in this case?**

- **A penalty notice can be issued if support has not worked and if a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance and change parental behaviour for this family or would further support or one of the other legal interventions be more appropriate?**

- **Is issuing a penalty notice in this case appropriate after considering any obligations under the Equality Act 2010 such as where a pupil has a disability?**

The school will allow sufficient time for attendance interventions and engagement strategies to improve pupils' attendance, and this should begin within the 10-week cycle.

However, where engagement strategies to improve attendance have not had the desired effect and a child has had 10 sessions of unauthorised absence, the school will issue a Notice to Improve.

The notice to improve will advise parents that they will be issued with a Penalty Notice if there is no improvement in 4 weeks (West Northamptonshire) or 6 weeks (Milton Keynes)

During the 10-week period and the Notice to Improve 4 weeks (West Northamptonshire) or 3-6 weeks (Milton Keynes) schools are expected to have a **"Support First" approach**.

This means they should make a referral to Early Help and investigate the reasons for the poor attendance prior to issuing the Notice to Improve. Some of the interventions listed below should have been attempted:

- Attendance letters.
- Attendance report nominated staff member.
- Attendance Contract which should include a re-integration plan, gathering student voice, review of pupil needs, use of peer mentors, other offers of support and consideration of the EBSA pathway.
- Home Visit.

- Referral to medical support.
- Referral to CAMHS/counselling support services,
- Early Help Assessment and relevant referral to other support services such as Family Centers.
- SEN review/Annual Review (this may be a review of a child's needs without an EHCP).
- Medical review (review of reasons for absence and medical support on offer).
- Consideration of appropriate incentives/rewards for attendance.

First Offence
The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence the amount will be: £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days. Increasing to £160 per parent, per child if paid within 28 days. Any non-payment of the Penalty Notice may be referred to the Magistrates Court

Second Offence (within 3 years)

The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence the amount will be: £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days. Any non-payment of the Penalty Notice may be referred to the Magistrates Court.

Third Offence and Any Further Offences (within 3 years)

The third time an offence is committed a Penalty Notice will not be issued and the case could be presented straight to the Magistrate's Court.

Prosecution under s444 (1) Education Act 1996, where if convicted you may be fined up to £1,000. Prosecution under s444 (1) (a) Education Act 1996 where if convicted you may be fined up to £2,500 and/or 3 months' imprisonment.

Per parent, per child

Penalty Notice Fines are issued to each parent, for each child that was absent. For example: 3 siblings absent for term time leave, would result in each parent receiving 3 separate fines.

16. LA Protocols (Milton Keynes & West Northamptonshire)

Milton Keynes:
The LA protocol relating to fixed penalty notices is here:
School attendance | Milton Keynes City Council (milton-keynes.gov.uk)

West Northamptonshire:
Penalty notices for school non-attendance | West Northamptonshire Council (westnorthants.gov.uk)

17. Attendance Contracts

Is a formal written agreement between a parent and either the school or local authority to address irregular attendance at school.

An attendance contract is not legally binding but allows a more formal route to secure engagement with support where a voluntary early help plan has not worked or is not deemed appropriate. An attendance contract is not a punitive tool, it is intended to provide support and offer an alternative to prosecution. Parents cannot be compelled to enter an attendance contract, and they cannot be agreed in a parent's absence.

There is no obligation on the school or local authority to offer an attendance contract, and it may not be appropriate in every instance, but an attendance contract should always be explored before moving forward to an education supervision order or prosecution.

A meeting will be arranged with parents to explain the purpose of an attendance contract and why using one would be beneficial in the family's circumstances.

The parents should be asked to outline their views on the pupil's attendance at school, any underlying issues and how they believe these should be addressed. The meeting should also allow them to share their views on the idea of an attendance contract and what type of support they think would be helpful to secure the pupil's regular attendance.

Where a parent fails to attend the meeting without good reason or notification, further attempts should be made to contact them and arrange another meeting but all attempts at support should be recorded.

All attendance contracts should contain:

- Details of the requirements the parents are expected to comply with.
- A statement from the school and/or local authority agreeing to provide support to the parents to meet the requirements and setting out details of the support
- A statement by the parent that they agree to comply with the requirements for the period of time specified by the contract.

- The requirements specified, and the support provided. This may include:
- Measures to ensure the pupil attends school or alternative provision punctually and regularly
- Requiring the parent to attend meetings with the school and/or local authority
- Accessing or partaking in the support or programmes offered
- Signposting or referrals to wider local authority or health services that might support the family (e.g. housing needs, drug and alcohol support)
- Signposting or referrals to voluntary and community sector programmes or support
- Each individual attendance contract should set out the duration it will be in place, and most are for between 3 and 12 months but can be longer if needed.

18. Education Supervision Orders

Where interventions have not been successful, an ESO can be an alternative to provide formal legal intervention without criminal prosecution.

ESOs are made through the Family or High Court and give the LA a formal role in supporting the pupil and parents to improve their attendance.

LAs will issue parents with a notice of the intention to consider an ESO, set up a meeting to discuss with the parent and pupil, and decide whether the case will be taken forward. Once an SEO is secured, a supervisor from the local authority will decide any actions or requirements.

These may include:

- Requiring the parents to attend support meetings.
- Requiring the parents to attend a parenting programme.
- Requiring the parents to access support services.
- Requiring an assessment by an educational psychologist.
- Review meetings involving all parties to be help every 3 months.

Failing to comply with an SEO will result in a fine and decisions will be made about whether further action is required.

19. Monitoring and analysing absence

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

The school will collect data regarding punctuality, and authorised and unauthorised absence, for:

- The school cohort as a whole.
- Individual year groups and classes
- Individual pupils.
- Demographic groups, e.g. pupils from different ethnic groups or economic backgrounds.
- Other groups of pupils, e.g. pupils with SEND, LAC and pupils eligible for FSM.
- Pupils at risk of PA.
- Young carers
- All vulnerable pupils

The Senior Attendance Champion will conduct a thorough analysis of the above data to identify patterns and trends.

The Senior Attendance Champion will provide regular reports to staff across the school to enable them to track the attendance of pupils and to implement attendance procedures. The Senior Attendance Champion will also be responsible for monitoring how attendance data changes in response to any interventions implemented to increase attendance in future.

With support of the Trust the school will also benchmark its attendance data against national-level data to identify areas of success and areas for improvement and will share practice which has been shown to be effective with other schools.

20. Training for staff

School leaders will ensure that teachers and support staff receive training in line with this policy as part of their induction.

Training will cover at least the following:

- The importance of good attendance
- Creating a culture where all children can, and want, to be in school
- That absence is almost invariably a result of wider circumstances
- The legal requirements on schools, e.g. the keeping of registers
- The school's strategies and procedures for monitoring and improving attendance
- The school's procedures for multi-agency working to provide intensive support for pupils who need it

Staff will receive training to ensure they understand that increased absence from school could indicate a safeguarding concern, and know how such concerns should be managed.

21. Deletions of names from the admission register

The school will ensure that it only deletes names from the admission register for a reason set out in regulation 9 of the School Attendance Regulations. A pupil's name will never be removed for any other reason, and the school is aware that doing so could constitute off-rolling.

The school will make returns to the LA when pupils' names are deleted from the admission register. This will be with the exception of pupils whose name has been deleted from the register at or after the end of the last term of the school year when they are in the most senior year group, unless the LA has requested this information.

When the school is notifying the LA that a pupil's name is being deleted from the admission register, the following information about the pupil will be provided:

- Full name
- Address
- The full name and address of any parent the pupil normally lives with
- At least one telephone number by which any parent the pupil normally lives with can be contacted in an emergency
- If applicable, the pupil's future address, the full name and address of the parent who the pupil is going to live with and the date the pupil will start living there
- If applicable, the name of the pupil's other school and when the pupil began or will begin to attend the school
- The reason under which the pupil's name has been deleted from the admission register

Names will never be retrospectively deleted from the admission or attendance register – these registers will remain an accurate record of who is a registered pupil and their attendance at any given time. Pupils' attendance will be recorded up until the date that their name is deleted from the admission register.

22. Senior Attendance Champion Contact Details

The following information is also on the school website.

Broughton Fields Primary School
Steve Rae – Senior Attendance Champion
Office@broughtonfieldsprimary.org.uk

Buckton Fields
Hannah Rogers – Senior Attendance Champion
principal@buckton.school

Preston Hedges Primary School
Rachel Winstanley – Senior Attendance Champion
rachel.winstanley@prestonhedges.org

Pineham Barns Primary School
Ian Sinnamon – Senior Attendance Champion
Ian.sinnamon@pineham.org

Holne Chase Primary School
David Killick – Senior Attendance Champion
Office@holnechase.org

Parklands Primary school
Georgie Robinson – Senior Attendance Champion
Georgie.Robinson@parklandsprimary.org

Appendix A

Individual school session times

Broughton Fields Primary School:
Morning Session: 8:30am – 12pm
Afternoon Session: 1pm – 3pm (EYFS & KS1); 1pm – 3:05pm (LKS2); 1pm – 3:10pm (UKS2)

Buckton Fields Primary School:
Morning Session: 8:45am – 12pm (EYFS, Y1) 8:45am – 12:15pm (Y2) 8:45am – 12:30pm (Y3)
Afternoon Session: 1pm – 3:15pm (EYFS, Y1) 1:15pm – 3:15pm (Y2) 1:30pm – 3:30pm (Y3)

Holne Chase Primary School:
Morning Session: 8:40am – 12pm
Afternoon Session: 1pm – 3pm (EYFS & KS1); 1pm – 3:10pm (KS2)

Parklands:
Morning session: 8:45am – 12:00pm (EYFS, Y1,Y2) 8:45am – 12:30pm (Y 3-6)
Afternoon Session: 1pm – 3:15pm (EYFS, Y1, Y2) 1:30pm – 3:15pm (Y3-6)

Pineham Barns Primary School:
EYFS Morning Sessions: 8:45am – 11:45am. Afternoon Session: 12:45pm – 3:15pm
Year One Morning Sessions: 8:45am – 12pm. Afternoon Session: 1pm – 3:15pm
Year Two Morning Sessions: 8:45am – 12:15pm. Afternoon Session: 1:15pm – 3:15pm
Years 3-6 Year Morning Sessions: 8:45am – 12:30pm. Afternoon Session: 1:30pm – 3:15pm

Preston Hedges Primary School:
EYFS Morning Session: 8.45 am – 11.45am p Afternoon Session: 12:45pm – 3:15pm
Year One Morning Session: 8:45am – 12pm. Afternoon Session: 1pm – 3:15pm
Year Two Morning Session: 8:45am – 12:15pm. Afternoon Session: 1:15pm – 3:15pm (
Years 3-6 Morning Session:8.45am - 12.30pm.Afternoon Session: 1.30pm - 3.15pm