The Slough and East Berkshire C. of E. Multi Academy Trust

Colnbrook C. of E. Primary School

Attendance Policy

Owner:	Senior Attendance Lead
Ratified by Governing Body:	
Date Ratified:	September 2025
Date Policy to be reviewed:	September 2026

"Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go." Joshua 1:9

Our Vision Statement

At Colnbrook we want to grow young people who believe in themselves, so they are confident and courageous and not discouraged from their path. They are resilient when faced with challenge. We want our pupils to believe in each other and to feel supported; never alone on their journey.

Our pupils will have the strength of character to set themselves aspirational goals in learning and life. They will achieve their best and create their own inspirational story and memories.

These values are at the heart of everything we do here at Colnbrook Church of England Primary School. They reflect the qualities that staff and governors want the children to develop and display in all that they do.

Aspiration, Resilience, Respect, Responsibility, Community, Compassion.

Contents

1. Aims and Ethos 2
2. Legislation and guidance 3
3. Roles and Responsibilities 3
4. Recording attendance 6
5. Authorised and unauthorised absence 9
6. Strategies for promoting attendance 11
7. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school 13
8. Attendance monitoring 15
9. Graduated Response to Attendance 17
10. Monitoring arrangements 18
11. Links with other policies 18

1. Aims and Ethos

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024), through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- 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
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

The importance of good attendance

Every day of education, and indeed every lesson, matters. In the National Curriculum where there is built-in progression, children who are persistently late or absent soon fall behind with their learning and consequently do not understand current lessons when they return. The introduction to a lesson and to the school day is crucial to the child's understanding of their own learning. Children who miss school frequently will undoubtedly have gaps in their learning which will impede their progress and future ability to engage in lessons. This in turn will have an effect on their ability to concentrate and to behave. Children who do not understand the lesson frequently behave inappropriately to cover their inability to engage with the work. Frequent absence has a profound and cumulative effect on achievement.

At Colnbrook C. of E. Primary school, we want our pupils to be 'strong and courageous' and support them and our families to do this. Having high attendance is a key cornerstone of success. We want to

support pupils to be in school, and on time, every day and work with pupils and their families to raise and maintain standards of attendance.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the DfE's statutory guidance on Working together to improve school attendance and School attendance parental responsibility measures. The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of the Education Act 1996
- Part 7 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Equality Act 2010

It also refers to:

- School census guidance
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools
- Ofsted's 2025 framework toolkit

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties including:
  - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
  - Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure the school's management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritizing staff and resources
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge.
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data
- Sharing effective practice on attendance management and improvement across schools

- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- 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, and/or authorising the assistant headteacher 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
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels
- Sharing information from the school register with the local authority, including:
  - Notifying the local authority when a pupil's name is added to or deleted from the school admission register outside of standard transition times
  - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who fail to attend school regularly, or who have been marked with an unauthorised absence for a continuous period of 10 school days
  - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who the school believes will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader (also known as the 'senior attendance champion') is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving and maintaining attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Tom Brunson, headteacher, and can be contacted via mail@colnbrookprimary.com.

3.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- 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 local authority and home / school link worker to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is Jean McLaughlin and can be contacted via mail@colnbrookprimary.com.

3.5 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 3), and submitting this information to the school office. Registers must be completed on SIMS by 9am every morning and at the beginning of every afternoon session.

3.6 School administration staff

School administration staff will:

- Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents to members of the senior leadership team in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance
- Record any safeguarding concerns on CPOMS in line with the school's child protection and safeguarding policy

3.7 Parents/carers and pupils

Where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult the school and/or local authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- All those who have parental responsibility for a child
- All those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them)

Parents are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day and arrives on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 8:45am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or local authority
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting Dawn Smith, Home / School link worker, who can be contacted via 01753 683661

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day, on time

4. Recording attendance

4.1 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, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, whether every pupil is:

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 3 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- 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 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils in Reception to Year 6 as well as morning or 30 hours nursery must arrive in school by **8:45am** on each school day. Pupils attending the afternoon nursery session only must arrive by **12:15pm**.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8:45am and will be kept open until 9:15am. The register for the second session will be taken at the beginning of the afternoon session in each class.

The school gates open at 8:35am and children go straight into their classrooms to begin early morning learning. **The bell rings at 8:45am and the school gates close at this time. All pupils should be in class**

by this time. Any pupils arriving after that time will need to sign in at the school's main reception desk. These pupils will be marked as late in the register until 9:15am when the register closes.

Any pupil arriving after 9:15am will be registered as an unauthorised absence for the whole morning session, unless they have a valid reason for being late (e.g. medical/dental appointment with evidence). This will be recorded as 'U' on the register and counted as an unauthorised absence for the whole session.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence **by 8:45am**, or as soon as practically possible, by calling the school.

Parents can notify the school via telephoning the school office (01753 683661) and are requested to leave a voicemail message. Absences can also be reported via email to mail@colnbrookprimary.com.

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised, unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. Where there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence.

We may complete home visits to follow up on absences, particularly pupils who are regularly absent or have patterns of poor attendance. In addition, we may also complete home visits when we have not heard from parents regarding a child's absence, and we can not reach them by telephone.

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

If parents are unsure as to whether their child is well enough to attend school, please see Appendix 2 which is taken from NHS guidance.

4.3 Medical Absence

As a school, we have to satisfy ourselves that absences are genuine. We would not, however, expect any parent to send their child to school if they are genuinely ill. Long-term or recurring medical absence needs to be supported by a Doctor's note. In specific cases, the school will not authorise medical absence unless supported by medical evidence.

Guidance for absence due to sickness:

- Sickness and diarrhoea – we recommend that whilst a child is experiencing sickness or diarrhoea they are kept off school. Generally, a virus needs 48 hours after the last episode to ensure that the child is no longer infectious.
- Coughs and colds do not normally require the child to be absent from school, but this depends on the severity of the illness.
- Conjunctivitis – Once the child is receiving treatment, they should be in school - no exclusion period is necessary.
- Chicken pox – usually this takes about five days from the onset of the rash. Once the spots are dried and scabbed over, then the child can return to school.
- If a child is unwell at school, we may contact the parent to take the child home if we feel that this is necessary.

- If staff consider that the child needs immediate medical attention, then we will contact the emergency services and the parent.

4.4 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment. A leave of absence form must be completed ahead of the appointment and it will be for the headteacher to decide if the absence is recorded as authorised.

We encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary. For example, if a child has a doctor's appointment at 2pm, they should be in school for the morning and start of the afternoon session and only collected with enough time to get to the appointment.

The pupil's parent must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Section 5 outlines which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.5 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed (9:15am) will be marked as late, using the appropriate code, normally 'L'.
- After the register has closed (9:15am) will be marked as an unauthorised absence for that session, using the appropriate code, normally 'U'.

The Home School Link Worker, the SLT and the Headteacher monitor punctuality. For pupils who are persistently late, the school may:

- Contact parents/carers by telephone;
- Send a letter;
- Speak to parents/carers directly.

If punctuality does not improve, then parents/carers will be invited in to school to discuss the concerns with the staff and plan a way forward.

If lateness does not improve following the meeting, then the family may be referred to other agencies who may provide support, such as children's services.

4.6 Following up absence

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason.
- If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, we will ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary which may include a home visit, contact with the local authority attendance service, or a referral to children's services
- 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 on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving support from external agencies including the local authority
- If a pupil's absence exceeds what is deemed necessary or appropriate in relation to the illness/injury, the school will contact the parent of the pupil to discuss the reasons for this
- If a pupil's absence continue to rise after contacting their parent, we will consider involving the local authority
- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to agencies supporting or working with the family including youth offending teams or social workers
- Where appropriate offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful or not engaged with, issue a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention (see section 5.2 below) as appropriate.
- If a pupil on the Child Protection Register is absent without explanation the Social Worker will be notified.
- If a pupil is in public care (CLA) the carer, social worker and Virtual School will be involved appropriately.

4.7 Reporting to parents

The school will regularly inform parents (see definition of 'parent', as used in this policy, in section 3.7 above) about their child's attendance and absence levels. Each child's attendance will be a topic of discussion at each parent consultation evening and will be recorded on their termly overview which is sent home.
Their final attendance figure will also be reported in their annual end of year report, marked against the following categories:

- Attendance is excellent – 98%+
- Attendance is good – 95%- 97%
- Attendance is cause for concern – 90% - 94%
- Persistent absence- Below 90%

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

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 2024 school attendance regulations. These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance
- Attending an interview
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances.

The headteacher will consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as **one-off, unavoidable events that are unexpected**. Examples may include the death of a close relative, attendance at a funeral, respite care of a looked after child or a housing crisis which prevents attendance.

Leave of absence will not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least one week before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school website (click here for a link to the form). The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

The school can not grant a leave of absence retrospectively. If the parent / carer does not apply for leave in advance, it is unlikely that it will be authorised. This leave will be marked as unauthorised and may result in legal action being taken.

5.2 Other reasons for authorised absence

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

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart for religious observance
- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – a pupil is a mobile child if their parent is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with them. In these circumstances a pupil will be considered as a mobile child, provided they are of compulsory school age and have no fixed abode and whose parent is in a trade or business that requires them to travel from place to place
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

5.3 Absences from the school site (which are not classified as absences)

The headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings. These are not classified as absences. Reasons include (but are not limited to):

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
- Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority

- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

5.4 Unauthorised Absences

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been given. This includes parents removing their child from education unnecessarily for, shopping, birthdays, visiting relatives, unwell parents and family holidays.

Schools have a safeguarding duty, under Section 175 Education Act 2002, to investigate any unexplained absences. For all absences, the school will consider whether any safeguarding action is required or they may seek advice from the local authority and / or children's social care.

Examples of events that may not be considered exceptional are: family holidays, weddings, extended religious holidays, extended mourning periods and any event that does not justify a child being out of school (e.g. parent appointments or medical treatment). These examples are not exhaustive.

Under education law, parents do not have an automatic right to take their children out of school during term time. The school holiday dates are published a year in advance and parents are expected to arrange their family holidays during those times.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

We want all our pupils to succeed and develop their skills. To do this, pupils need to avoid missing lessons and days of school as much as possible. As a school, we want to reward high attendance and not just penalise pupils for poor attendance.

6.1 Weekly Celebration Assemblies

Celebration Assemblies are held every week on a Friday. The class with the highest attendance receive the Attendance certificate.

6.2 Termly Attendance Prizes

All children who have high or improved attendance for that term receive a certificate. Class rewards may be given for attendance in consultation with the Headteacher.

6.3 Parent/teacher Consultation Evenings

These provide an opportunity for class teachers to praise and recognise excellent attendance and discuss barriers to good attendance.

6.4 Raising the Profile of Attendance

To raise the profile of attendance, the school will:

- Regularly remind parents about the procedure for reporting absence;
- Require all parents to complete a request for leave of absence;
- Remind pupils of the importance of attending school, through collective worship and assemblies;
- Promote good attendance through the school newsletter.

7. Supporting pupils with poor attendance

Our school will make use of the full range of support and potential sanctions – including, but not limited to, those listed below – to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

7.1 Attendance contract

We use attendance contracts as a form of attendance support.

An attendance contract is a formal written agreement between a parent and the school to address irregular attendance at school. An attendance contract is not legally binding, but it provides a more formal route where previous support has not worked or would not have been appropriate.

Parents cannot be compelled to enter an attendance contract, and the school cannot agree an attendance contract in a parent's absence.

Where an attendance contract would be an appropriate form of support, the school will arrange a meeting with the parent (and pupil if they are old enough to understand) to discuss how we can work in partnership to improve the pupil's attendance.

Where parents fail to comply with an agreed attendance contract, the school may seek an alternative course of action. In the first instance, this will include discussions with the parents to seek explanations and determine whether the attendance contract remains useful. Where there is further non-compliance following these discussions, the school may take further action.

7.2 Education supervision order

In cases where voluntary early help plans, including attendance contracts, have been unsuccessful, we may work with the local authority to issue an education supervision order. If an education supervision order is considered, the local authority will inform the parent(s) in writing and will set up a meeting.

An education supervision order is a formal intervention but **not** criminal prosecution.

An education supervision order initially lasts for 1 year, but it can be extended within the last 3 months for a period of up to 3 years at a time.

In cases where parents persistently fail to meet the directions given under the education supervision order, they may be liable to a fine of up to £1,000 upon conviction.

7.3 Notice to improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

A notice to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

It will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under section 7 of the Education Act 1996
- Details of the support provided so far
- Opportunities for further support or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with

- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued, or prosecution considered, if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

7.4 Penalty notices

The headteacher (or a deputy or assistant headteacher, authorised by the headteacher), local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

If the school issues a penalty notice, we will check with the local authority before doing so, and send the local authority a copy of any penalty notice issued.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions – half days - of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks)
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

Each parent who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence. This means that two children who are absent with two parents, could receive four penalty notices for one period of absence.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

If a **second** penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £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 the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day). These penalty notices are not included in the National Framework, not subject to the same considerations about support being provided, and do not count towards the limit as part of the escalation process.

In these cases, the parent must pay £60 within 21 days, or £120.

8. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

8.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

The school will seek to understand specific and complex barriers to pupils attending school. The Home / School Link Worker is available to meet with parents and discuss ways in which the school can support attendance. The school has high expectations for attendance for all pupils and will work with families to create bespoke support, where appropriate. This may include earlier or later drop off and pick ups, phonecalls home through the day or a time-limited part-time timetable.

8.2 Pupils absent due to mental or physical ill health

The school will seek to work with parents and medical professionals to ensure pupils who are absent due to medical reasons are able to access the most amount of education possible. This may include forming Team Around the Child (TAC) meetings with medical professionals and parents, or viewing medical evidence related to the pupil's condition. The school has high expectations for attendance for all pupils and will work with families to create bespoke support, where appropriate.

Where a pupil has an education health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that related to the pupil's needs, the school will inform the local authority.

8.3 Pupils absent due to other barriers to attendance

We recognise that some pupils may have barriers to attending school regularly. These can include pupils with SEND, those in receipt of free school meals, pupils who are young carers or are known (or previously known) to children's services.

The flow chart in appendix 4 outlines our approach of monitoring attendance of children, but children in these groups will be closely monitored. Bespoke support may be required to improve attendance when it is required. Our home/school link worker will liase with families to ensure that any barriers to attendance are removed or reduced.

The school will ensure that support for these groups is provided in a timely manner and is closely targeted. Senior leaders will closely monitor any bespoke intervention that is in place to ensure that it has a positive impact.

8.4 Pupils returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence

Where a pupil has been absent due to an unavoidable period of absence, a meeting may be arranged to co-ordinate support between parents and the school that will facilitate a positive return to school. A bespoke support package may be created that enables pupils to return to school quickly.

8.5 Prolonged absence for children in the EYFS

In cases of prolonged absence, or when a child is absent without notification, we will attempt to contact the child's parents and alternative emergency contacts.

When deciding whether a child's absence should be considered prolonged, we will consider the:

- Patterns and trends in the child's absences and their personal circumstances
- Vulnerability of the child and their parents, as well as the circumstances of their home life

We will also implement our safeguarding procedures (see our child protection/safeguarding policy available on the school website) and refer any concerns to local children's social care and/or request a police welfare check.

9. Attendance monitoring

9.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level.

Specific pupil information will be shared with Slough Borough Council, the local authority where the pupil resides and the DfE on request.

The school has granted the DfE and Slough Borough Council access to its management information system so the data can be accessed regularly and securely.

Data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics.

The school will benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement, and share this with the governing board.

9.2 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
- Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly and full-year data to identify patterns and trends
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

9.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
- Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severed absence, and their families (see section 8.4 below)
- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinator, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium lead)
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

9.4 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. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's strategy for improving attendance.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
    - Discuss attendance and engagement at school
    - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
    - Explain the help that is available
    - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
    - Review any existing actions or interventions
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
- Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 5.2, above)
- Complete home visits to follow up on absences, as appropriate, and provide support to families

See the flowchart in appendix 4 for detail of how attendance concerns will be managed. These include regular meetings with school and review period targets.

Children have the right to a full-time education and parents must ensure children have good school attendance to allow them to succeed.

9.5 Children Missing in Education

Children Missing in Education (CME) are children of compulsory school age (5-16). The DfE defines CME as: 'Children of compulsory school age who

- Are not registered pupils at a school
- Are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school
- Who have been out of any educational provision for a substantial period of time (usually four weeks or more)

If a child has not attended school for ten days, without any reason for the absence and reasonable enquiries have been done by the school a CME referral will be sent to the local authority. When a child leaves Colnbrook C. of E. Primary School to go to another school or have moved out of the area, a Pupil Tracking referral will be sent to the local authority, to notify them of this.

Reasonable steps to be taken by school staff may include:

- Telephone calls to all known contacts (parents are asked to provide a minimum of two emergency contacts in the event of children not arriving at school without prior notification and also for other emergency purposes).
- Letters home (including recorded delivery)
- Contact with other schools where siblings may be registered
- Possible home visits
- Enquiries to friends, neighbours etc. through school contacts
- Enquiries with any other Service known to be involved with the pupil/family

If there are 20 days of a child's continued absence, then the information will be passed on to the Local Authority Attendance Improvement Service with a Child Missing from Education (CME) referral. Prior to doing so, the school should have made reasonable enquiries to ascertain whether the child is still residing at the home address and is not attending or whether the child is missing.

The child will remain on the school roll while local authority enquiries take place. Once these are complete and the school is informed these are satisfactory, the child will be removed from the school roll.

9.6 Removal of a pupil's name from the school roll

A school can only remove a child's name from the school roll in particular circumstances, as set out in Regulation 9 of Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. When any of the situations set out in regulation 9 occurs, the pupil's name must be deleted. A pupil's name must not be removed for any other reason and doing so could constitute off-rolling.

In accordance with regulation 13(4) to (6), a school must make a return to the local authority when a pupil's name is deleted from the admission register (a Deletion Return). This does not apply where the pupil's name is deleted at or after the end of the last term of the school year when they are in Year 6, or Nursery where the pupil does not have an allocated Reception place.

9.7 Data Collection

The school will collect and store attendance data over time, for the purpose of:

- Tracking the attendance trends of individual pupils
- Identify any groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern
- Monitor and evaluate any children who may be in need of intervention or support
- Ensuring effective safeguarding of children.

10. Graduated Response to Attendance

At Colnbrook C. of E. Primary School we have a graduated response to dealing with attendance. In the first instance, a phone call and text message will be sent asking for a reason for the absence. If your child's attendance falls below 95%, they will become a Cause for Concern. This means:

1. Your child's attendance will be monitored weekly by the Attendance officer. You will be notified of our concerns.

2. You will be invited into school to discuss the attendance issues.
3. After a period of time you will be invited to a review meeting
4. Legal action will be taken if there is no improvement.

It is important that we work together to achieve good attendance. Any issues which impact on attending school should be discussed at the earliest opportunity with The Attendance Officer, your child's class teacher, or the home/school link worker.

More detail into our graduated approach can be found on the flow chart diagram in Appendix 4.

11. 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 local governing board.

12. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour Regulation policy
- Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy
- Supporting Children with Medical Needs Policy

Appendix 1

Request for Leave of Absence during Term Time

This is an application for you to request permission for your child to be absent from school during term time. Before completing the application form, please read these notes carefully.

- **The law states that parents do not have the right to take your child out of school during term time. The school works closely with the local authority to ensure children attend school regularly.**
- **If you wish to take your child out of school during term time, you must apply for permission in writing using the form below in advance. The headteacher will authorise such absences only in exceptional circumstances.**
- **Department for Education guidelines are clear that family holidays cannot be authorised.**
- **A request for leave of absence during term time may trigger some form of investigation from the school and / or a referral to Children's Social Care if we have safeguarding concerns.**
- **If the school refuses your application and you still take your child out of school, the absences will be unauthorised. Unauthorised absences may lead to a Penalty Notice or a Summons for irregular school attendance because poor attendance puts your child's academic and social progress at risk. No holiday can ever make up for time lost at school.**
- **This application form and subsequent letters sent to you by the school may be forwarded to Slough Borough Council if we have concerns about your child's attendance at school.**

Having read these notes, if you still wish to apply for a leave of absence, then please complete the application and return **IN ADVANCE** of the requested dates.

Pupil name (s):_____ Year(s): _____

I request permission for my child to be absent from school between the following dates:

Dates of absence _____ Total number of school days missed: _____

Reasons for absence from school: _____

_____

_____

I understand that if this is absence not agreed then any absence will be treated as unauthorised and may lead to the issue of a Penalty Notice or Summons for irregular school attendance.

Name of Parent/Carer making application: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

FOR THE SCHOOL OFFICE TO COMPLETE

Attendance year to date: _____%

Previous year attendance: _____%

Number of previous absence requests this year: _____

FOR THE HEADTEACHER TO COMPLETE:

Leave of absence authorised: YES / NO / PARTIAL

Reason: ……..

Issue accept / partial accept / decline letter: YES / NO

Inform Local Authority: YES / NO

Signature of Headteacher: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 2

Is my child too ill for school?

https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/

It can be tricky deciding whether or not to keep your child off school or nursery when they're unwell. There are government guidelines for schools and nurseries about managing specific infectious diseases at GOV.UK. These say when children should be kept off school and when they shouldn't.
If you do keep your child at home, it's important to phone the school or nursery on the first day. Let them know that your child won't be in and give them the reason. If your child is well enough to go to school but has an infection that could be passed on, such as a cold sore or head lice, let their teacher know. Please see the table below for further guidance.

Important: Coronavirus (COVID-19)	**Keep your child off school if they have any of the main symptoms of COVID-19:** • **a high temperature** • **a new, continuous cough** • **a loss or change to their sense of smell or taste** **Stay at home and get a test for your child.**
Coughs and colds	It's fine to send your child to school with a minor cough or common cold. But if they have a fever, keep them off school until the fever goes. Encourage your child to throw away any used tissues and to wash their hands regularly.
High temperature	If your child has a high temperature, keep them off school until it goes away. (Ensure a COVID test has taken place)
Chickenpox	If your child has chickenpox, keep them off school until all the spots have crusted over. This is usually about 5 days after the spots first appeared.
Cold sores	There's no need to keep your child off school if they have a cold sore. Encourage them not to touch the blister or kiss anyone while they have the cold sore, or to share things like cups and towels.
Conjunctivitis	You don't need to keep your child away from school if they have conjunctivitis. Do get advice from your pharmacist. Encourage your child not to rub their eyes and to wash their hands regularly.
Ear infection	If your child has an ear infection and a high temperature or severe earache, keep them off school until they're feeling better or their high temperature goes away.
Hand, foot and mouth disease	If your child has hand, foot and mouth disease but seems well enough to go to school, there's no need to keep them off. Encourage your child to throw away any used tissues straight away and to wash their hands regularly.
Head lice and nits	There's no need to keep your child off school if they have head lice. You can treat head lice and nits without seeing a GP.
Impetigo	If your child has impetigo, they'll need treatment

	from a GP, often with antibiotics. Keep them off school until all the sores have crusted over and healed, or for 48 hours after they start antibiotic treatment. Encourage your child to wash their hands regularly and not to share things like towels and cups with other children at school.
Ringworm	If your child has ringworm, see your pharmacist unless it's on their scalp, in which case you should see a GP. It's fine for your child to go to school once they have started treatment.
Scarlet fever	If your child has scarlet fever, they'll need treatment with antibiotics from a GP. Otherwise they'll be infectious for 2 to 3 weeks. Your child can go back to school 24 hours after starting antibiotics.
Slapped cheek syndrome (fifth disease)	You don't need to keep your child off school if they have slapped cheek syndrome, because once the rash appears, they're no longer infectious. If you suspect your child has slapped cheek syndrome, take them to see a GP and let their school know if they're diagnosed with it.
Sore throat	You can still send your child to school if they have a sore throat. But if they also have a high temperature, they should stay at home until it goes away. A sore throat and a high temperature can be symptoms of tonsillitis.
Threadworms	You don't need to keep your child off school if they have threadworms. Speak to your pharmacist, who can recommend a treatment.
Vomiting and diarrhoea	Children with diarrhoea or vomiting should stay away from school for 2 days after their symptoms have gone.

Appendix 3

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

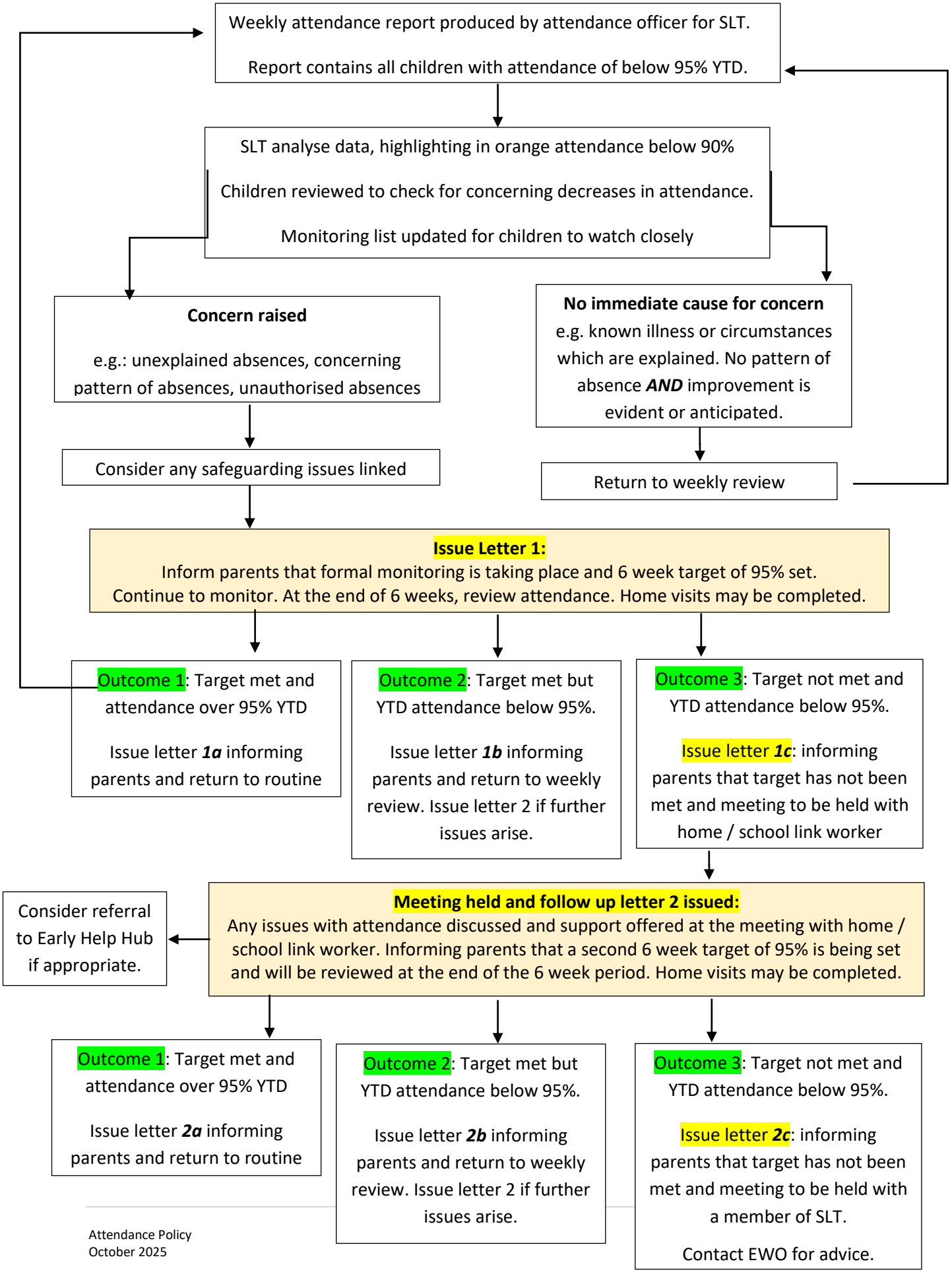
Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
****	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school

M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school

Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for

		authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

Appendix 4 – Flowchart of actions to be taken to improve attendance



Meeting held with SLT and follow up letter 3 issued:

SBC Attendance officer invited to join this meeting. Any issues with attendance discussed and support offered at the meeting with member of SLT.

Set 4 week review target of 95% and arrange date for follow up review with parent.

A warning period from the local authority may be issued. Attendance contract signed. Home visits may be completed.

Gain consent for Early Help referral and complete MARF.

Outcome 1: 4 week target met

Meet with parent and discuss any further concerns. Return to weekly monitoring ensuring progress is sustained.

Meet with parent again if concerns re-emerge.

Outcome 2: 4 week target not met but with exceptional circumstances.

Meet with parent and discuss any further concerns. Set a further 4 week target of 95%.

Outcome 3: 4 week target not met with no exceptional circumstances.

Meet with parent with Headteacher. Discuss any further concerns and highlight impact on learning.

Inform parents that the matter will now be referred to the Local Authority Education Welfare Service.

MARF to be completed.

Further actions to be taken by school and local authority could include but not limited to:

- Intervention work by Early Help and / or Children's Social care
- Communication to parents direct from the local authority
- Notice to improve being issued by the local authority
- Parent required to attend an Attendance Panel with the Local Authority
- Fixed penalty notice issued with possible prosecution if not paid within set timescale, or exceeds two notices issued within 3 years

Appendix 5 – Slough Borough Council Penalty Notice Information

Penalty Notice Changes

With the introduction of the new National Framework for Penalty Notices, the following will come into force for absences that start after 19th August 2024. This is nationwide and also across borders if you move school or house.

Term Time Leave is only allowed in exceptional circumstances communicated in advance with evidence provided as soon as possible to the Headteacher.

First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised term time leave or irregular attendance the amount will be
£160 per parent per child paid within 28 days
Reduced to £80 per parent per child if paid within 21 days

Second Offence

Within 3 years of the first offence
The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised term time leave or irregular attendance the amount will be:
£160 per parent per child paid within 28 days
No reduction for early payment.

Third Offence onwards

Within 3 years of the first offence

The third time an offence is commited for unauthorised term time leave or irregular attendance a Penalty Notice will not be issued, and the case will be presented straight to the Magistrates' Court. Fines can be around £2500 per parent, per child.

Cases found to be guilty in Magistrates' Court can show as a criminal record and also on the parent's future DBS certificates due to 'failure to safeguard a child's education.

Don't Forget

Penalty Notices are issued **Per Parent, Per Child.**
For example 3 siblings absent would result in each parent receiving 3 fines.
This could amount to £960

Please ensure you communicate with your child's school.

Term Time Leave is only allowed in exceptional circumstances communicated in advance with evidence provided as soon as possible to the Headteacher.

10 sessions in 10 weeks - Penalty Notices will be considered for any 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in 10 weeks.

5 Consecutive days of term time leave can trigger a Penalty Notice

www.slough.gov.uk
Slough Borough Council