The Island Learning Trust

Attendance Policy

School name

School logo

Last reviewed on:	July 2026
Next review due by:	July 2027

The Island Learning Trust is dedicated to providing a high-quality, inclusive education for all pupils and is committed to ensuring equal opportunities for every learner. This attendance policy has been developed to promote a consistent and supportive approach for all pupils and their families within our care.

All our schools take a 'support first' attitude when working with families to improve attendance, recognising that regular attendance is vital for children's learning, wellbeing, and social development. We are committed to identifying and addressing any barriers that may prevent children from attending school regularly, ensuring that our approach is inclusive and responsive to individual needs.

We work in partnership with families through open communication and shared decision-making, always focusing on solutions rather than blame. Children's voices are central to our approach; we listen to them, work alongside them, and value their input - encouraging them to set personal goals, share their experiences, and celebrate progress.

We strive to create an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome, and consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance, ensuring every child has the opportunity to reach their full potential.

1. Aims

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 Attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Support First – We prioritise understanding and support over judgement when addressing attendance concerns.
- Equity and Inclusion – Every child and family is treated with fairness, respect, and sensitivity to individual circumstances.
- Partnership with Families – We work collaboratively with families to build trust and shared responsibility for attendance.
- Child Voice – We actively listen to and involve children in shaping their attendance journey.
- Barrier Awareness – We recognise and respond to the diverse challenges that may affect attendance.
- Celebrating Progress – We acknowledge and celebrate improvements and efforts, not just perfect attendance.
- Consistency and Clarity – Our approach is clear, consistent, and communicated effectively across all schools.
- High expectations – We have high expectations for all our children to support them to achieve their full potential.

Key Definitions:

- Persistent Absence (PA): attendance below 90%
- Severe Absence (SA): attendance below 50%

The Trust recognises that attendance is a key safeguarding indicator. Absence, particularly persistent or unexplained absence, may indicate wider vulnerabilities or risks. All attendance concerns will therefore be considered within the Trust's safeguarding framework.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on **working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024)** 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 3 of the **Education Act 2002**
- Part 7 of the **Education and Inspections Act 2006**
- **The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments)**
- **The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013**

It also refers to:

- **Keeping Children Safe in Education**
- **Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools**

This policy also complies with our trust's funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The trust board

The trust 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 authorities
    - 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 trust's/school's policies and ethos
- Making sure the schools'/school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- Making sure the trust/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
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole trust/school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils needs
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance, including with teachers from across the trust, as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
    - The importance of good attendance
    - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
    - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
    - The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data
- Holding the head(s) of school to account for the implementation of this policy

3.2 The head of school

The head of school is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to trust board
- 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 appropriate member of 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
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels

3.3 The director of safeguarding

The trust attendance lead is responsible for:

- Driving attendance improvement across the trust
- Working more intensively with schools who require support to improve attendance
- Liaising with the DfE's regional teams for advice about wider support programmes

- Monitoring attendance trends across all schools within the Trust, including vulnerable groups (SEND, disadvantaged pupils)
- Providing regular reports to the Trust Board
- Ensuring consistency of attendance practice across schools
- Identifying and sharing effective practice

The trust strategic attendance lead is Ms J Tate – Director of Safeguarding and can be contacted via email jtate@tiltrust.org

3.4 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving 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
- Have an overview for intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is [insert name] and can be contacted via [telephone number and/or email address].

3.5 The school family liaison officer

The school family liaison officer at each school 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 head of school
- Working with KCC KPAS Officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the head of school when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The family liaison officer is [insert name] and can be contacted via [telephone number and/or email address].

3.6 Class teachers

All class teachers are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis and completing registers accurately and in a timely manner. Class teachers are also responsible for driving high expectation for attendance within their classroom environment, highlighting any concerns to the appropriate members of staff for support.

3.7 Parents

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 or young person
- 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 on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9am 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 one emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- To work in collaboration with the school when a concern regarding attendance is identified. To Keep to any attendance contracts and/or support plans that they make with the school and/or local authority
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting [name/role, such as head of year, pastoral lead or family liaison officer], who can be contacted via [telephone number and/or email address]

Regular school attendance is essential. Absence should only occur when a child is too unwell to attend or in exceptional circumstances.

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day, on time
- To endeavour 'to best they can be' by asking a trusted adult for help or support if they are concerned or worried about anything

All staff understand that attendance is a safeguarding responsibility and will report concerns in line with safeguarding procedures.

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an electronic 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 be marked, using the appropriate national attendance and

absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

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

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity, where 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.

The school day starts at [time] and ends at [time].

Pupils must arrive in school by [time] on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at [time] and will be kept open until [time – not longer than 30 minutes after the session begins, or the length of the form time or first lesson in which registration takes place]. The register for the second session will be taken at [time] and will be kept open until [time].

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 **9am** or as soon as practically possible, by calling the school office, who can be contacted via [telephone number and/or email address].

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 the absence is longer than 5 days or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school may ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

4.3 Planned absence

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

However, we encourage parents/carers 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.

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

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late (L)
- After the register has closed will be marked as unauthorised (U)

If a pattern or lateness occurs the school will send a letter to parents highlighting concerns regarding punctuality and/or may invite parents in for a meeting to discuss any support necessary.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

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

- Attempt to call the first point of contact on the contact list by 9:30am asking for response
- If no response to call, a message will be sent to the first name on the contact list by 9:45am asking for a call to school to notify and confirm the reason for absence
- If there is still no response, the school will ring numbers on the contact list until a reply is received
- The office will alert the FLO of which children are absent by 10:00am, If FLO is not available to report absences to DSL
- HT/DSL/FLO to risk assess the current level of concern and consider whether circumstances warrant a home visit
- Home visit is to be made following decision at 10:15am, where possible by FLO/DSL/school staff or any other agency
- If no response at home visit, FLO/DSL to consider family history, other agencies involved, risk assess situation and make appropriate calls/referrals
- 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(s) for which the pupil was absent
- 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 the school liaison officer or any other agency as appropriate
- 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

Schools will notify the local authority of all compulsory aged pupils who are continuously absent for at least 10 school days where 1 or a combination of the unauthorised absent codes are recorded – G, N, O, U. The local authority will be notified by way of an online return and this will be completed on a termly basis.

4.6 Reporting to parents

The school will regularly inform parents (see definition of 'parent', as used in this policy, in section 3.8 above) about their child's attendance and absence levels. Parents can obtain up-to-date information via the Compass app, in addition by requesting a paper copy of their child's registration certificate, these will also accompany their child's annual school report.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The head of school will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings.

The head of school 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, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances

A leave of absence is granted at the head of school's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

Below are a few examples of where 'exceptional circumstances' may be considered (not exhaustive list). Decisions must not be discussed or shared. Failure to adhere to confidentiality may result in decisions being voided. Examples are:

- Significant bereavement, crisis or serious illness
- Funeral of parent, grandparent or sibling
- Transport was not provided by the LA when it should have been
- Children of service personnel about to go on deployment
- One off sporting events/performing arts competitions
- Operations which require recovery time
- Respite for children under social care involvement or those who are looked after or previously looked after
- Religious observance

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 **2 weeks** before the absence, via an email or request leave of absence form that is available the school's website. The head of school may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

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

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's 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
- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

Other reasons the school may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, 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

5.2 Sanctions

The Trust will ensure that all reasonable support has been offered and documented before escalation to legal intervention.

Our schools will make use of the full range of 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.

Penalty notices

The head of school (or someone authorised by them), 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, it will check with the local authority before doing so, and send it 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 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

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).

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.

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.

Notices 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.

Notices 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.

They 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 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 20 days for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

The Trust promotes good attendance through:

- A strong culture of belonging and inclusion
- Clear and consistent expectations communicated to families
- Early identification of barriers to attendance
- Individualised support for pupils and families

- Celebration of improvement as well as high attendance
- Effective use of attendance data to target intervention

Schools may also:

- Celebrate attendance in assemblies
- Use class-based recognition systems
- Recognise improvement rather than only 100% attendance

Communication with Parents

The Trust recognises that effective communication with parents is central to improving attendance. Communication will:

- Be clear, supportive and non-judgemental
- Focus on the child's experience and wellbeing
- Provide practical support
- Be tailored to individual families
- Offer a named point of contact

Schools will use a graduated approach to communication, from early reminders through to formal processes where needed.

The Trust adopts a graduated response to attendance:

Stage 1 – Universal
High quality provision and clear expectations

Stage 2 – Early Intervention
Early conversations, identification of barriers

Stage 3 – Targeted Support
Support plans, meetings, agency involvement

Stage 4 – Formal Intervention
Notices, penalty notices and legal action

At all stages, support is prioritised.

7. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

Schools will work closely with parents and carers to understand the reasons behind a child's absence, using a compassionate and non-judgemental approach. Staff will actively seek to listen to the child's voice, using tools such as pupil voice sheets, drawings, or simple conversations to understand how the child feels about school and what support they may need.

A named adult - such as the class teacher, SENCO, or a pastoral support worker will be assigned to oversee the child's return. This adult will create a personalised reintegration plan, which may include:

- Access to a safe space or calm area during the day
- Regular check-ins with a trusted adult
- Emotional literacy support (e.g., ELSA sessions or wellbeing groups)
- Peer support, such as a buddy system
- Academic catch-up through targeted interventions or small group work

The child's views will be regularly gathered and used to adapt the plan. Parents/carers will be involved throughout, and the plan will be reviewed at agreed intervals.

Where appropriate, the school will make referrals to external agencies to provide additional support. These may include:

- Community support
- Emotional Wellbeing Team
- School Nursing Team
- CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services)
- Local authority attendance or inclusion teams

If a pupil has an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan and their attendance drops, or if barriers to attendance are linked to their special educational needs, the school may notify the Local Authority SEND team and request a review of the plan to ensure it continues to meet the child's needs effectively.

The Trust recognises that some pupils may experience emotionally based school avoidance (EBSA). In these cases, absence is linked to emotional distress rather than defiance. Schools will provide a supportive, graduated response including trusted adults, safe spaces, adjusted timetables and external support where appropriate. All plans will be regularly reviewed with the aim of full reintegration.

Any part-time timetable will be a short-term intervention, agreed with parents, regularly reviewed and include a plan to return to full-time education.

8. Attendance monitoring

We use data to monitor, identify and support individual pupils or groups of pupils when their attendance needs to improve. Persistently absent pupils are tracked and monitored carefully. We also combine this with academic tracking as increased absence affects attainment. We share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities, and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.

8.1 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 the DfE on request. The school has granted the DfE 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 trust, 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.

8.2 Analysing attendance and using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance
- Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence
- Conduct thorough analysis of weekly, 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
- Identify attendance patterns across the trust to identify common issues and barriers and share effective practice between schools
- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that have 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 8.3 below)
- 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

8.3 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 and take a support first approach
    - 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

We always work with parents to understand barriers to a child attending school regularly and will work in an informative and collaborative way, contacting parents via phone calls, text message, letters and meetings. Depending on the circumstances, we will take the appropriate approach to meet the needs of the child and the parent. The ultimate aim is for children to be attending regularly and accessing high quality education.

Attendance concerns will always be considered within the Trust's safeguarding framework. Patterns of absence may indicate vulnerability and will be responded to in line with safeguarding procedures.

The Trust will follow statutory guidance for children missing education and act promptly where a pupil's whereabouts are unknown.

10. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Nurturing relationships and behaviour policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Children With Health Needs Who Cannot Attend School Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs Policy

Appendix 1:

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 2: Nursery Attendance

Purpose

This appendix outlines the approach to attendance within nursery provision across the Trust. It recognises that nursery attendance is non-statutory, whilst promoting regular attendance as a key factor in supporting children's learning, development, wellbeing, and successful transition into full-time education.

This appendix should be read alongside the Trust Attendance Policy, which applies to pupils of statutory school age.

Non-Statutory Attendance

Attendance at nursery is not compulsory. However, regular attendance is strongly encouraged as it plays a crucial role in supporting children's learning, development and overall wellbeing. Consistent attendance enables children to establish secure routines, build strong relationships with staff and peers, and develop confidence within the nursery environment.

Regular attendance supports key areas of early development, including communication and language, social interaction, and emotional regulation. It ensures children benefit from the full range of planned learning experiences and the continuity that underpins effective early years provision. Consistent attendance also helps children to develop independence, resilience and the stamina required for transition into full-time education.

Irregular attendance can disrupt children's learning, hinder the development of relationships, and impact their sense of belonging. For these reasons, families are strongly encouraged to ensure that children attend all agreed sessions wherever possible.

As nursery attendance is non-compulsory, statutory attendance procedures, including penalty notices and legal interventions, do not apply.

Expectation of Attendance

Children are expected to attend all agreed sessions consistently. Regular attendance enables children to fully access their entitlement and supports the development of positive learning behaviours, routines and relationships.

Attendance patterns are established at the point of allocation and should be maintained unless otherwise agreed with the school.

Reporting Absence

Parents must inform the school on the first day of any absence, providing a clear reason. Where absence continues, parents are expected to keep the school informed.

The school will follow up any unexplained absence in a timely manner to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the child.

Monitoring and Safeguarding

The school monitors attendance for all nursery children and maintains accurate records of attendance and absence.

All absence is considered within the context of safeguarding procedures. Where absence is unexplained, prolonged, or gives cause for concern, the school will take appropriate action, which may include direct contact with parents and, where necessary, escalation in line with safeguarding processes.

Funded Hours and Allocation

Funded nursery places are allocated based on an agreed pattern of attendance. These hours must be used as allocated.

Failure to attend regularly, or to take up allocated sessions, may result in a review of the number of hours offered and possible adjustment of provision.

Attendance Patterns and Review of Provision

Attendance is reviewed regularly to identify patterns of irregular attendance or non-attendance.

Where attendance is inconsistent or sessions are not being accessed as agreed, the school will work in partnership with parents to understand any barriers and support improved attendance.

Where attendance is a concern, the school will work in partnership with parents and carers to:

- understand any barriers to attendance
- offer support and guidance
- agree next steps to improve attendance where appropriate

Where there is:

- a regular pattern of absence
- repeated non-attendance
- or sessions not being accessed as agreed

the school may review provision. This may include adjustment or reallocation of sessions where appropriate, particularly where places are funded and in demand.

Withdrawal of Sessions

Nursery attendance is not subject to statutory enforcement measures such as penalty notices or legal action.

However, the school has a responsibility to ensure that publicly funded places are used appropriately, that provision is allocated fairly, and that all children are safeguarded. As such, the school will take proportionate action, including the review or withdrawal of sessions, where attendance expectations are not met.

Process

In line with the Trust's support-first approach, the school will follow a graduated and proportionate process where attendance concerns arise:

- Monitor attendance
- Inform parents early of any concerns
- Offer a conversation, support and guidance
- Agree strategies to improve attendance
- Warn that sessions may be reviewed
- Review or withdraw provision if there is no sustained improvement

At all stages, the focus will be on working in partnership with families and supporting the best outcomes for the child.