

# Dawley C of E Primary Academy



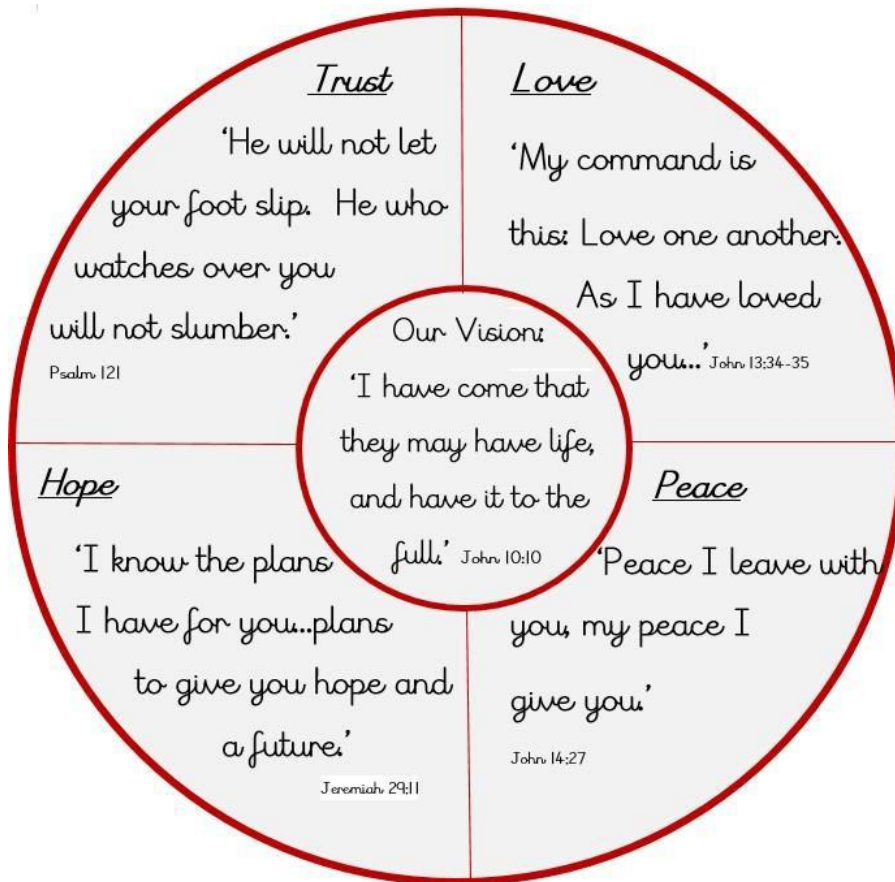
## Attendance Policy

<b>Adopted by Governing Body</b>	March 2023
<b>Reviewed</b>	March 2023
<b>Date of next review</b>	March 2024

## Vision

*'I have come that they may have life and have it to the full. John 10:10*

Our vision is to develop flourishing, caring children, equipping them with the skills to reach their potential. We believe in a curriculum that enriches lives, ignites interests, and engages children in real-life experience, as global citizens with an inclusive respect for others, readying them for their future, to live life to the full.



**Aims:**

Dawley C of E Primary Academy is committed to providing a full and efficient educational experience to all pupils. We believe that, if pupils are to benefit from education, punctuality and good attendance is crucial. As a school, we will organise and do all we can to ensure maximum attendance for all pupils. Any problems that impede punctuality and regular attendance will be identified and addressed as speedily as possible.

It is the policy of our school to celebrate achievement. Attendance is a critical factor to a productive and successful school career. Our school will actively promote and encourage 100% attendance for all our pupils.

Our school will give a high priority to conveying to parents and pupils the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognise that parents have a vital role to play and there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there is concern about attendance.

If there are problems which affect a pupil's attendance we will investigate, identify and strive in partnership with parents and pupils to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible. We will adopt a clearly focused approach aimed at returning the pupil to full attendance at all times.

**Legislation and guidance:**

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

- Part 6 of The Education Act 1996
- Part 3 of The Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

**Roles and responsibilities****The local academy committee:**

The local academy committee is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the Principal to account for the implementation of this policy

**The Principal:**

The Principal 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

### **The designated senior leaders responsible for attendance:**

The designated senior leaders is responsible for:

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

The designated senior leaders responsible for attendance are the Principal and Vice Principal and can be contacted via 01952 386280 or [a3317@telford.gov.uk](mailto:a3317@telford.gov.uk)

### **The Attendance Team:**

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 Principal
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the Principal when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- Home visits
- Daily calls
- Attendance Meetings

To supplement work done with the EWO, the Attendance Team run Spotlight Campaigns which focus on children with attendance concerns. This will comprise of an initial letter stating the child is part of the Spotlight, with a note that attendance must improve. After 2 weeks the attendance will be monitored again. If there have been improvements and 'Well Done' letter will be issued. If there is no improvement, the parent(s)/carer(s) will be invited in for a meeting with the team in order to discuss any issues to see if they can help with ensuring the child's attendance improves.

If there is no improvement, the Attendance team will work alongside the EWO to improve the attendance. The EWO will follow recognised procedures, including legal action where necessary.

The Attendance Team are Mr Fallon and Ms Muir and can be contacted via 01952 386280 or [a3317@telford.gov.uk](mailto:a3317@telford.gov.uk)

**Class teachers:**

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance correctly on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information onto SIMS each day. They also need to know what children are persistently absent, make welfare calls and / or flag any issues with attendance to a member of the Attendance Team.

**Administrative Team:**

The Administrative Team will:

Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school management Information system (MIS) system - SIMS.

**Parents/carers:**

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9:15am 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
- Pick up their child/children at 3:10pm or 3:20pm (dependent on the finish time). If parents are regularly late picking up their child/children then the children will be looked after by After School Club. There is a charge for this club.
- Pick up for Y6 children- In Y6 in preparation for secondary school we try to encourage independence when walking home. We allow children to leave school and walk home alone when parents have given us written permission. However, this privilege can be withdrawn.
- Children must attend school on the first day on which the school has agreed.

**Pupils:**

Pupils are expected to:

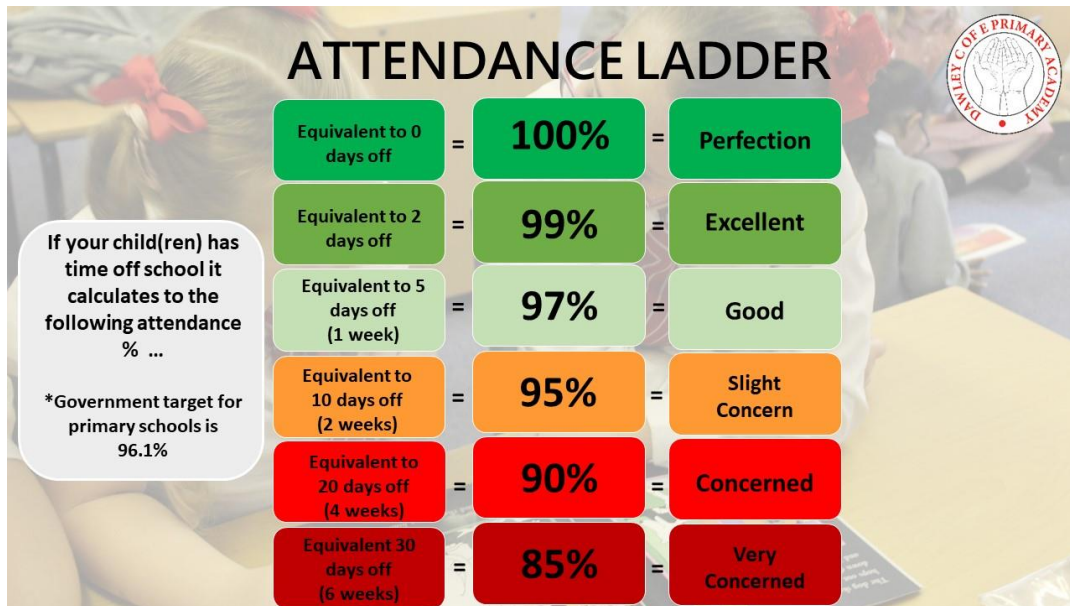
- Attend school every day on time

## Attendance

We keep attendance a high profile by displaying daily class attendance percentages and highlighting this in classes and worships.

Children are expected to attend for the full 189 days of the academic year, unless there is a good reason for absence. There are two types of absence:

- Authorised (where the school approves pupil absence)
- Unauthorised (where the school does not approve absence)



## Recording attendance

### Attendance register

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

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

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
- Any amendment to the attendance register will include:
  - The original entry
  - The amended entry
  - The reason for the amendment
  - The date on which the amendment was made
  - The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix I 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 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by the start time below:

<b>Year Group</b>	<b>Start Time</b>	<b>Finish Time</b>
<b>Nursery (15 hrs)</b>	<b>8:40am</b>	<b>11:40am (15 hrs)</b>
<b>Nursery (30 hrs)</b>	<b>8:40am</b>	<b>3:20pm (30 hrs)</b>
<b>Reception</b>	<b>8:50am</b>	<b>3:20pm</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>8:50am</b>	<b>3:20pm</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>8:50am</b>	<b>3:20pm</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>8:40am</b>	<b>3:10pm</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>8:40am</b>	<b>3:10pm</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>8:40am</b>	<b>3:10pm</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>8:40am</b>	<b>3:10pm</b>

The register for the first session will be taken at the start time and will be kept open until 30 minutes after this time. The register for the afternoon session will be done at 12:45pm or 1:05pm and will be kept open until 30 minutes after registration.

### **Unplanned absence:**

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day and every day following, of an unplanned absence by 9:15am by calling the school office staff.

Please call 01952 386280. The telephone lines are open from 8:30am in the morning. We do not accept emails for absence unless you are able to get through via telephone.

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

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or 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 and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance. Further evidence of the illness may be requested. This can be in the form of a prescription, a note from the doctor, a note from the pharmacist to show evidence of the illness. Those pupils who are on a SAL2 will be marked as unauthorised, unless medical evidence has been provided.

**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 and provides an appointment card, or screenshots the text message and emails it to school. Parents should visit the school office or telephone school on 01952 386280 when requesting a leave of absence.

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 two weeks in advance (unless it is an emergency) of the requested absence.

**Reporting Absence:**

Families should contact the school on the first day of a pupil's absence stating a reason for the absence. The Academy will then decide if that absence is authorised and inform the family if it is not.

If families do not make contact with the Academy to explain the child's absence, one of the Attendance Team will attempt to contact the family by telephone.

**Following up unexplained absence:**

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

- Call the pupil's parent/carer 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, the school or EWO will make a home visit for a safe and well check and if we still cannot ascertain where your child is we may contact police or Family Connect.
- When we have information about where your child is we will decide whether the absence is approved or not
- School will identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary.

**Authorised and unauthorised absence****Approval for term-time absence**

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

Each case will be considered individually and on its own merits. Parents need, therefore, to consider very carefully before making any request for leave in term time the demands of the National and wider School Curriculum especially at the Key Stage assessment stage. In considering a request, the school may also take account of:



- the **exceptional** circumstances stated that have given rise to the request;
- the age of the child;
- the stage of the child's education and progress and the effects of the requested absence on both elements;
- the overall attendance pattern of the child;
- the nature of the trip.
- students/pupils due to take SATS will **not** normally be granted leave of absence
- whether the same absence could be taken during the 13 weeks school is closed to pupils?

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

Any request should be submitted a minimum of two weeks prior to the absence (Unless an emergency) using the 'Request for Leave form'. The form is accessible via the Academy Office. The Principal may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for authorised absence include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils 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
- Where requests for a grant of leave in term time are received from only one parent the response letter – agreeing or refusing – will be either addressed to both/all parents where they live at the same address or to each where they do not. This is to ensure, particularly in the case of a refusal, that both or all parents are fully aware of the consequences of ignoring a refusal as the refusal letter clearly states that each parent may receive a penalty notice.
- Children in entertainment must have a performance licence. This is considered on an individual basis.

### **Legal sanctions**

The local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a Principal, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year

- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

Further information can be access via the Telford and Wrekin Council Attendance Support website:

([https://www.telford.gov.uk/info/20025/school\\_information/341/attendance\\_support](https://www.telford.gov.uk/info/20025/school_information/341/attendance_support)).

### **Education Welfare Officer:**

If a child's attendance falls below 90%, the Academy will work with the family and involve the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) to improve the attendance. The EWO will follow recognised procedures, including legal action where necessary.

Non-attendance of pupils considered to be 'at risk' or on a Child Protection Policy will be followed up as a matter of urgency.

Each fortnight school staff review the punctuality and lateness and we meet regularly with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO). The EWO or school will write to parents if punctuality or lateness does not improve. On an individual case basis, we will consider meeting with parents when a child's attendance falls below 90%. There are a variety of letters that will be sent to parents called school attendance letters (SAL). These are called SAL 1, SAL 1 W, SAL 2, SAL L (Late) or it can be a bespoke letter. At any point additional evidence may be requested. This can be in the form of a prescription, a note from the doctor, a note from the pharmacist to show evidence of the illness.

School will consider referrals to any outside agencies such as SEND support, mental health support, Educational Psychologists, BSAT teams, strengthening families and individual meetings to try and improve attendance. Where ill health is a factor, the school will seek to confirm the medical problems identified by the child/parent (particularly if there have been several referrals and the explanation has been ill health). If it is felt that the parent/carers have not sought appropriate medical help but are merely making excuses, parent/carers will be advised to obtain medical evidence for all future absences from their doctor.

If attendance still does not improve appropriate warning or penalty notices will be issued by the Attendance Support Team and this could eventually lead to legal action being taken against the parent.

### **When is a child removed from the school role?**

- If the parent/carer is moving out of area to a new school, please contact school.
- If the parent/carer is pursuing a place in another school within Telford and Wrekin parents should complete the online in-year transfer request section of their 'My Telford' account.
- If the parent/carer wishes the child's name to be removed from the school role as they intend to teach the child other ways rather than at a school, please contact school.

- If a child/family cannot be traced and all reasonable enquiries have been explored and it has been at least four weeks since the child attended school (Child missing education)
- Following a granted leave of absence the child has not returned to school and has failed to return to school
- Where the pupil has been permanently excluded

### **Lateness:**

School begins when the doors open at 8:40am (EYFS and KS2) and 8:50am (KS1). All pupils are expected to be in school for registration at this time. Any child arriving later than 9:00am should enter the school via the main entrance reporting to the Academy Office. Arrival from 9:00am to 9:30am is classed as late and arrival after 9:30am is recorded as unauthorised (U code). If accompanied, a parent or carer should give a reason for the lateness, which will be added to the register.

Pupils who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of others. Where persistent lateness gives cause for concern further action may be taken and recognised procedures involving the EWO will be followed.

<b>Minutes Late per Day</b>	<b>Equivalent of Missing</b>
5 Minutes	3.4 School Days per year
10 Minutes	6.9 School Days per year
15 Minutes	10.3 School days per year
20 Minutes	13.8 School Days per year
30 Minutes	20.7 School Days per year

### **What can parents do to help?**

- Let the school know as soon as possible why their child is absent
- Try to make appointments (e.g. medical) outside school time
- Do not take holidays during school time
- Do not allow their child to have time off unless it is necessary

### **If parents are worried about their child's attendance at school, what can they do?**

- Talk to their child – it may be something simple
- Talk to school staff

### **If it continues...**

- Parents may contact the Education Welfare Officer who will work with them and the Academy to resolve the situation (number available from the Academy Office).
- The Academy may ask the EWO to follow recognised procedures, including legal action where necessary.

Telford and Wrekin Council Attendance Support information and processes and procedures can be accessed via their website:

([https://www.telford.gov.uk/info/20025/school\\_information/341/attendance\\_support](https://www.telford.gov.uk/info/20025/school_information/341/attendance_support)).

## Appendix I:

### Reward Systems:

Attendance is a high profile in the Academy. The daily attendance is displayed clearly for all children to be able to see. This display also includes the highest daily attendance for a House (**Love, Peace, Hope, Trust**).



Each week, classes in EYFS / Key Stage One and Key Stage Two with the highest attendance will be presented with either Ellen (EYFS/KS1) or Philip (KS2) who will stay within the class for a week. The weekly attendance will also be reported on the weekly newsletter.

At the end of each term, the school awards children who have 95%+ attendance (splitting this into 95%+, 98%+, 99%+ and 100%). This reward is in the form of a certificate, muffin, voucher or something else.

At the end of the academic year, these different groups will be awarded an overall prize. For example, a pupil with 100% attendance may receive a Smyths Toy voucher or a scooter (these are awarded with the interests of the child in mind). We also award the **'Most Improved'** attendance to the child(ren) who has made the most improvement in their attendance over the year.

### Things the Academy does to promote attendance:

A range of incentives and activities the Academy engages in to focus on improving attendance includes (this is not an exhaustive list):

- Well done letters
- Ellen and Philip as rewards to the class with the highest attendance
- 100% Attendance prizes (termly and end of the academic year)
- 99%+ Attendance prizes (termly and end of the academic year)
- 98%+ Attendance prizes (termly and end of the academic year)
- 95%+ Attendance prizes (termly and end of the academic year)
- Most improves attendance prize (end of the academic year)
- House Points linked to attendance
- Welfare checks to homes
- Collection and drop-offs
- Face to face support meetings
- Education Welfare Officer involvement and support
- Parent cooking sessions
- Parent lunches for individual year groups
- Mother's Day Afternoon
- Father's Day Breakfast

- Weekly email to class teachers
- Attendance Display board
- Attendance information on the Newsletter
- Messages via ParentPay

## Appendix 2:

### Definitions and attendance codes

#### Definitions:

- Everyday count as two sessions. Every half day absence has to be classified by the school as either **AUTHORISED** or **UNAUTHORISED**. This is why the cause of each absence is always required, preferably in writing or by telephone.
- Regular attendance means that your child must attend school every day, unless there are justified reasons, and arrive at school on time.
- **Authorised Absence**
- An authorised absence is classified as authorised when a child is away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from the parent/carer.
- **Unauthorised Absence**
- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the principal.
- Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which on authorisation has been given.

<b>Authorised absence</b>	<b>Unauthorised absence</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Genuine illness of the pupil;</li><li>• Hospital/dental/doctor's appointment for the pupil;</li><li>• Major religious observances;</li><li>• Visits to prospective new schools;</li><li>• External exams or educational assessments.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Shopping/daytrip/visit to a theme park;</li><li>• A birthday treat;</li><li>• Oversleeping due to a late night;</li><li>• Looking after other children/other family members;</li><li>• Appointments for other family members;</li><li>• Holidays which have not been agreed</li></ul>

### Appendix 3:

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

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
/	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
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
<b>Authorised absence</b>		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school



Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school