

Attendance Policy (Pupils)

KTS Academy



Approved by:	Governing Body	Date: 29/01/2020
Policy Author:	Sarah Gunn	
Last reviewed on:	11/12/2025	
Next review due by:	December 2026	
Review Frequency:	Annually	

Contents

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

Appendix 1: Attendance codes

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 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 make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school Attendance Policy Pupils 2024-2025

At KTS Academy, we recognise that many of our pupils have complex special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) which can present unique barriers to attendance. We are committed to working flexibly and compassionately with families to overcome these barriers whilst maintaining high expectations for attendance.

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 School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment

It also refers to:

- School census guidance
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools Attendance Policy Pupils 2024-2025

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/carers
- 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 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 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 school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils' needs
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance 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 headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The 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
- Working with the parents/carers 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/carers 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 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/carers 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 Sarah Gunn and can be contacted via 01287 677265

3.4 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1), and submitting this information to the school office

Class teachers will also:

- Identify patterns of absence or lateness in their class
- Communicate concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader
- Welcome pupils back after absences and support their reintegration
- Maintain positive relationships with families to encourage good attendance

3.5 School admin staff

School admin staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the class teacher or assistant headteacher where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

School admin staff will also:

- Contact parents/carers on the first day of unexplained absence
- Maintain accurate records of all absence communications
- Process leave of absence requests and forward them to the headteacher
- Monitor daily attendance registers for completeness and accuracy

3.6 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 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting Sarah Gunn who can be contacted via 01287 677265

Parents are also expected to:

- Work collaboratively with the school to address any barriers to attendance
- Attend meetings about their child's attendance when requested
- Engage with support offered by the school and external agencies
- Inform the school of any changes to their contact details
- Provide medical evidence when requested for absences due to illness

3.7 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day, on time

Pupils are also expected to:

- Arrive ready to learn
- Communicate any concerns about attending school to a trusted adult
- Follow the school's behaviour policy and engage positively with their learning

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 mark, 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 9am and ends at 3pm.

Pupils must arrive in school by 9am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 9:10am and will be kept open until 9:30am. The register for the second session will be taken at the start of the afternoon 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 9am, or as soon as practically possible, by calling the school admin staff who can be contacted via 01287 677265 or send a Class Dojo to the class teacher.

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 will 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 and parents will be notified of this in advance.

For pupils with SEND who have recurring medical conditions or regular hospital appointments, the school will work with families to establish clear communication protocols to minimise administrative burden whilst maintaining accurate records.

4.3 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.

Parents should request leave of absence for medical appointments via the school office or Class Dojo.

However, 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.

The pupil's parent must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence.

We recognise that for many of our pupils with SEND, medical appointments during school hours are unavoidable due to specialist service availability. Where pupils have regular appointments (e.g., weekly therapy sessions), parents should inform the school as soon as possible.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
 - After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code
- Attendance Policy Pupils 2024-2025

We understand that some pupils may experience lateness due to:

- Delays with local authority transport
- Medical needs requiring morning routines that cannot be rushed
- Anxiety or other SEND-related barriers

Where lateness is persistent, we will work with families to identify the underlying causes and develop solutions. This may include:

- Liaising with the local authority transport team
- Adjusting arrival expectations for individual pupils where appropriate
- Providing additional support for morning transitions

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:

- 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, the school may follow up with a welfare visit by a school leader or the police.
- 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 an education welfare officer
- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the pupil's social worker or youth offending team officer
- 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 Attendance Policy Pupils 2024-2025

Given the vulnerability of our pupil population, safeguarding is always our primary concern when following up unexplained absences. We will always consider whether the absence may be linked to:

- Safeguarding concerns
- Unmet SEND needs
- Family crisis or breakdown
- Mental health difficulties

4.6 Reporting to parents

The school will inform parents (see definition of 'parent', as used in this policy, in section 3.7 above) about their child's attendance and absence levels if they are unexplained.

We will provide parents with:

- Regular updates when attendance is a concern
- Celebration of improved attendance

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

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

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

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

We consider 'exceptional circumstances' on an individual basis.

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.

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, before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible from the school office. The headteacher 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 (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
- 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
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

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
- Attending work experience
- 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

Our school 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.

Before considering sanctions, we will always:

- Investigate the reasons for absence
- Consider whether SEND-related barriers are contributing to absence
- Offer appropriate support to remove barriers
- Work collaboratively with families
- Involve external agencies where appropriate

Penalty notices

The headteacher (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

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.

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.

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 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

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

At KTS Academy we understand the challenges which face families of pupils with SEND in improving attendance. Many pupils have medical appointments, hospital admissions and illnesses related to their special needs which impact on their attendance. In addition to this pupils often live out of the catchment area of the school and rely on local authority transport to get to school, this can require pupils to miss a full day of school to attend an appointment. KTS staff will support improving attendance on an individual basis and will work with families to do so.

Our approach to promoting attendance includes:

Whole-school strategies

- Celebrating good attendance with individual pupils through certificates and rewards
- Creating a welcoming, inclusive environment where all pupils feel valued
- Ensuring the curriculum is engaging and meets individual needs
- Maintaining strong communication channels with families
- Providing regular attendance updates to parents
- Promoting the link between attendance and achievement

Early intervention

We operate a tiered approach to supporting attendance:

Universal support (all pupils):

- Welcoming atmosphere each morning
- Positive relationships between staff and families
- Clear communication about the importance of attendance

Targeted support (attendance 90-95%):

- Phone call from class teacher to discuss any concerns
- Identification of any barriers to attendance
- Offer of support to address barriers
- Monitoring of attendance for 4 weeks
- Letter to parents highlighting attendance concern

Intensive support (attendance below 90% - persistent absence):

- Meeting with designated senior leader and parents
- Development of an attendance action plan
- Regular review meetings
- Involvement of external agencies where appropriate (e.g., education welfare, health services, social care)
- Consideration of whether an early help assessment is needed
- Close monitoring with weekly updates to parents

Critical support (attendance below 50% - severe absence):

- Urgent multi-agency meeting
- Safeguarding concerns considered and addressed
- Intensive support package developed
- Daily contact with family
- Possible home visits
- Legal intervention considered if support is not engaged with

SEND-specific strategies

- Flexible approaches to medical appointments, working with families to minimise disruption
- Liaison with local authority transport team to address transport issues
- Phased returns for pupils who have been absent due to illness
- Reasonable adjustments for pupils whose SEND creates barriers to attendance
- Close working with health professionals supporting pupils
- Individual attendance plans for pupils with complex needs
- Regular communication with parents about their child's specific needs

Working with external partners

We work closely with:

- Education welfare officers
- Social care services
- Health professionals (GPs, paediatricians, CAMHS, therapists)
- Local authority SEND team
- Local authority transport team
- Early help services
- Family support workers

7. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

7.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

See 6.0 Attendance Policy Pupils 2024-2025

For pupils experiencing complex barriers to attendance, we will:

- Conduct a thorough assessment of the barriers with the family
- Develop an individualised support plan
- Consider whether an early help assessment is appropriate
- Make referrals to appropriate external agencies
- Maintain regular contact with the family during absences
- Provide work for the pupil to complete at home where appropriate and possible
- Plan carefully for the pupil's return to school

7.2 Pupils absent due to mental or physical ill health or SEND

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.

For pupils absent due to ill health, we will:

- Maintain regular contact with the family to monitor the pupil's wellbeing
- Liaise with medical professionals where appropriate
- Consider whether alternative provision or adjustments are needed
- Provide work for the pupil where appropriate and where their health allows
- Plan a phased or gradual return if needed
- Ensure the pupil receives a warm welcome back to school
- Monitor the pupil's wellbeing closely on their return

For pupils with mental health difficulties affecting attendance, we will:

- Work sensitively with the family to understand the barriers
- Consider whether a referral to CAMHS or other mental health services is appropriate
- Develop a supportive plan that may include:
 - A phased return with reduced hours initially
 - A safe space the pupil can access if feeling overwhelmed
 - A key adult the pupil can talk to
 - Adjustments to the pupil's timetable or environment
- Review and adjust the plan regularly based on the pupil's needs

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

KTS staff will support improving attendance on an individual basis and will work with families to do so.

When a pupil returns after a lengthy absence, we will:

Before the return:

- Contact the family to discuss the return and any concerns
- Develop a return-to-school plan, which may include:
 - A phased return (e.g., starting with mornings only, gradually building to full days)
 - Adjustments to the timetable
 - Additional support from key staff
 - A designated safe space
- Share the plan with all relevant staff
- Prepare the pupil's peers where appropriate

On the first day back:

- Ensure a warm welcome from familiar staff
- Check in with the pupil regularly throughout the day
- Be flexible and responsive to the pupil's needs
- Communicate with parents at the end of the day

In the first few weeks:

- Monitor the pupil's wellbeing and engagement closely
- Maintain regular communication with parents
- Review and adjust the return plan as needed
- Celebrate successes and progress
- Gradually reduce additional support as the pupil settles

8. Attendance monitoring

The DSL and DDSL monitor attendance using the DFE attendance data on a monthly basis to analyse data. Attendance is monitored daily when the leadership team receive the absence information for that day from the school office. Absences are recorded on SIMS and CPOMS.

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 level.

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 against national attendance data for special schools to identify areas of focus for improvement, and share this with the governing board.

Our monitoring schedule includes:

- **Daily:** Review of absence information by leadership team; follow-up of unexplained absences

- **Weekly:** Review of attendance patterns and identification of emerging concerns
- **Fortnightly:** Review meetings for pupils on intensive support plans
- **Half-termly:** Analysis of attendance data by class, year group, and cohort; identification of pupils requiring targeted or intensive support
- **Termly:** Reports to governing board; review of whole-school attendance strategies
- **Annually:** Full analysis of attendance trends; evaluation of interventions; planning for the following year

8.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils that need additional support with their attendance, and 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

Our analysis will consider:

- Overall attendance percentages
- Persistent absence rates (below 90%)
- Severe absence rates (below 50%)
- Patterns of absence (e.g., particular days of the week, before/after holidays)
- Reasons for absence
- Punctuality data
- Differences between groups of pupils (e.g., by year group, SEND need, disadvantage)
- Comparison with previous terms/years
- Comparison with local and national data

8.3 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 severe absence, and their families (see section 8.4 below)
- Provide attendance reports to the governing board and school leaders
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

We will use data to:

- Identify pupils who need additional support at the earliest opportunity

- Evaluate the effectiveness of our attendance strategies
- Identify any systemic issues (e.g., transport problems affecting multiple pupils)
- Set realistic but ambitious targets for improvement
- Allocate resources effectively
- Report to governors and inform strategic planning

8.4 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)

For pupils with SEND, we recognise that some absence may be unavoidable due to medical needs. However, we will still work proactively to:

- Minimise absence where possible
- Ensure absence is properly authorised and recorded
- Maintain engagement with learning during unavoidable absences
- Support swift returns to school
- Identify where additional support or adjustments may help reduce absence

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated