



# Student Attendance Policy

## Document Control

Version	Author	Summary of Changes	Approved By	Date Published	Date of Review
V1	LET	New	CEO	Feb 2020	Feb 2022
V2	LET	Annual Review; 1. Formatting; Updated school procedures and adding Castle Hills and Vega; Covid Related Absence; Medical Appointments (card not required)	Trust Board	Feb 2022	
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## INTRODUCTION

At Leger Education Trust, we believe that excellent attendance and punctuality are vital in helping students achieve their best. Students should be at school, on time and ready to learn, every day the school is open, unless the reason for absence is unavoidable. Students need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind; those with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school.

The government has laid down guidelines which they expect students at secondary schools to achieve in terms of attendance. We do acknowledge that there are certain instances where this may not be possible due to illness etc. Whilst some absences may be unavoidable, we ask that parents support us in ensuring each child's attendance meets both the Academy and the Trust's expectations. Any problems with regular attendance, such as concerns over academic support or possible bullying, are best resolved by the Academy with parents at an early stage.

We will closely monitor all student attendance and alert parents if we feel there is an issue. Where attendance is an issue, each Academy undertakes a wide range of measures to support students and families. Where we fail to see an improvement in attendance, it may be necessary to make a referral to an appropriate external agency to ensure the student receives the support required to bring about an improvement.

Our Trust target for attendance is 96%+. Absence results in lost learning time and, although students may endeavour to catch up missed work, it cannot replace the teacher-led learning that has taken place. Absentees also miss out on the rich programme of extra-curricular activities and events that make the school experience so enjoyable.

## WHY REGULAR ATTENDANCE IS SO IMPORTANT:

**Learning:** Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence seriously affects their learning. Student absence disrupts teaching routines, so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Improving attendance is everyone's business. The barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates, and are often specific to individual students and families. The foundation of securing good attendance is that school is a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environment where all students want to be and are keen and ready to learn.

Some students find it harder than others to attend school and therefore at all stages of improving attendance, The Trust and partners will work with students and parents to remove any barriers to attendance, by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place. Effective practices for improving attendance will involve close interaction with the school curriculum, behaviour, bullying, special educational needs support, pastoral and mental health and wellbeing, and the effective use of resources, including pupil premium. There will be a concerted effort across all teaching and non-teaching staff in Academies, the Trust or Governing Body, the local authority, and other local partners.

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school (or by education otherwise than at a school) and that they attend school regularly.

**Safeguarding:** A child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend the Academy regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each student is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this Trust, promoting the welfare and life opportunities for students encompasses: Attendance, Behaviour Management, Health and Safety, Access to the Curriculum, Anti-bullying. Failing to attend on a regular basis may be considered as a safeguarding matter. For the most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided.

## **TRUST EXPECTATIONS RELATING TO ATTENDANCE**

### **We expect the following from all of our students:**

- They will attend the Academy every day it is open, achieving at least 96% attendance, unless they have a genuine illness.
- They will arrive at school on time and will be appropriately prepared for the day.
- They (if at secondary school) will inform their Teacher, Form Tutor or appropriate member of staff of any problems which affect attendance or punctuality.

### **We expect the following from parents with regards to attendance and punctuality:**

- To ensure all students attend the Academy regularly, on time and be aware of their legal responsibilities. (Please see Appendix 1 for information on education legislation).
- To contact the Academy every day their child is unable to attend, using the dedicated attendance telephone number.
- To ensure that their child is appropriately prepared for the day.
- To contact the school in confidence whenever they have a problem concerning attendance or punctuality.
- To be fully aware of exam dates and to support attendance during these periods.
- Not to arrange a holiday in term time.
- To respond to the appropriate person regarding letters of concern immediately.
- To make every effort to arrange dental and medical appointments out of the school day.
- That telephone contact numbers are available and if changed, the Academy is informed immediately.

### **Parents can expect the following from each Academy in the Trust:**

- Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance.
- Support from the Academy to improve attendance and deal with any underlying issues.
- Early contact from the Academy when a student fails to attend the school without providing good reason or when a student is truanting.
- Response to problems notified to us.
- Celebrate and reward good and improving attendance through competitions, certificates and events.
- Support when there is a problem of long-term illness.
- Involvement with Doncaster Children's Services and the Police when appropriate.

These procedures are instigated when:

- a) Attendance drops below the expected level (e.g. 96%)
- b) There are obvious patterns of repeated absence or lateness
- c) When lateness or truancy starts having a negative impact on a child's education

### **The Law relating to attendance**

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that 'the parent' of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full-time education suitable: -

(a) To age, ability and aptitude and

(b) To any special educational needs the student may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise'.

Furthermore, the Education Act 1996 and subsequent amendments to legislation give schools and local authorities the powers to take legal action against parents to enforce attendance at the school they are registered to attend. Please see Appendix 1 for further information on attendance legislation.

### **Children Absent from Education (CAE) and Children Missing from Education**

As a Trust we recognise that all children/young people, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to an efficient, full-time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have.

### **Definitions:**

- A child **absent from education** is a child who is on roll at a school, but is very regularly not attending.
- A child **missing education** is a child of compulsory school age who isn't on a school roll or being educated elsewhere.

We understand that if a child is absent from education or is missing from education, these are vital warning signs of safeguarding risks to a child. It could indicate that a child is;

- being abused
- being neglected
- subject to sexual or criminal exploitation

It might also indicate that a child has mental health problems, or is at risk of;

- substance abuse
- travelling to conflict zones
- female genital mutilation (FGM)
- honour-based abuse or forced marriage
- exploitation

Children who are persistently absent from school are more likely to need early help, and this includes children who are persistently absent for part of the school day. These children are more likely to become children missing education (i.e. not on any school roll).

There has been a significant increase in children absent from education since school closures during the COVID-19 pandemic – these are often referred to in the media as 'ghost children'. They may have mental health issues that affect their ability to return to school, or their family circumstances may have changed, or they may have been groomed and exploited during the pandemic.

We recognise that when a child goes missing from an Academy it is a potential indicator of a safeguarding concern; therefore, we follow the Doncaster Safeguarding Board procedures. The full version can be found at: <http://www.doncaster.gov.uk/services/schools/children-missing-education>.

Each Academy will investigate instances of unauthorised absences and will report students with irregular attendance, or who have been continuously absent for 10 days or more, to Doncaster Council. Each Academy reserves the right to contact relevant agencies to seek advice (Children's Social Care, Police, YOS, Housing, Doncaster Council etc.) if any child is absent from school for more than five days without confirmation from parents. This policy will be applied fairly and consistently but individual needs of pupils and their families who have specific barriers to attendance will be considered.

### **Students who have gone missing from a Trust Academy**

- From the 1st day of absence and up to the 10th school day of absence the Academy must make initial enquiries to locate the pupil.
- If the Academy have not been able to confirm the location of the pupil by the 11th school day of absence they must complete the 'Moved Out of Doncaster/Whereabouts unknown' form completing the checklist and send to [welfare.service@doncaster.gov.uk](mailto:welfare.service@doncaster.gov.uk)
- If the Academy and the Local Authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to ascertain the whereabouts of the student and the student has been absent for a minimum of 20 school days, the Academy can remove the student's name from its admission register from the first day of absence
- If a child continues to be absent with no evidence of an imminent return after more than 20 days but the whereabouts are known, the Trust will convene a Trust Attendance Panel and consider removing the student from the Academy roll.

There are many circumstances where a child may become missing from education. In such cases, as those listed below, school will take a pro-active approach:

- Students at risk of harm/neglect (Academy will follow standard Child Protection procedures for referrals to social care/police);

- Children of Gypsy, Roma or Traveller families (school will inform local authority when a GRT student leaves the Academy without identifying a new destination school);
- Families of Armed Forces (school will contact MOD Children's Education Advisory Service for advice on making arrangements for continuity of education);
- Missing children/runaways (direct referral to Children's Services and Police); and,
- Children who cease to attend a school (referral to Doncaster Council).

It is important to note that any Safeguarding concerns regarding the immediate safety or well-being of a student need to be referred immediately to Social Care and the police if appropriate. When the Academy suspects they have a missing student the above procedures must take place.

### **UNDERSTANDING TYPES OF ABSENCE:**

Every half-day absence from the Academy has to be classified by the Academy (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of an absence is always required. Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from the Academy for a good reason like genuine illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause. Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Trust and or the Local authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings.

This includes:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily.
- Truancy before or during the school day.
- Absences which have never been properly explained.
- Holidays in term time.

Whilst any student may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular non-attendance should be resolved by the Academy, the parents and the student working together. If a student is reluctant to attend, excusing them from attending makes the situation worse as it gives the impression that attendance does not matter.

#### **Persistent absence:**

A student becomes a 'persistent absentee' (PA) when they miss **10%** or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level damages a child's educational prospects. PA students are tracked and monitored carefully through our Trust and we also combine this with academic mentoring where absence affects attainment.

### **UNPLANNED ABSENCE**

Please see Appendix 3 on procedures to follow to record an unplanned student absence. If a child feels ill in the morning, parents should provide them with appropriate pain relief/medication and send them to school. Any medication should be handed in to the main reception who will administer it when required. Every student should be in school if they have a minor illness such as a headache, cold, sore throat or period-pain.

If a student is ill i.e. to the extent that they cannot get out of bed, then parents should ring the Academy to notify the Attendance Team of their absence. Parents must ensure that students return to the Academy as soon as possible, even if they are not 100%. If a student is absent from the Academy for 5 days or longer parents must provide medical evidence, eg a medical appointment card/letter indicating the reason for absence wherever possible. We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the Academy has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

## **PLANNED ABSENCE**

### **Medical Appointments**

A full day's absence will not be authorised for a medical appointment. Parents should arrange all appointments outside the school day. If the appointment is unavoidable, a student must come to school before and after the appointment. Any full day's absence will be marked as unauthorised.

### **Requests for absence during term-time**

Due to Government legislation each Academy in the Trust is no longer able to authorise any holiday during school time. This absence will therefore be recorded as unauthorised absence on the student's attendance record unless this is deemed to be an exceptional circumstance which would need to be agreed by the Principal. A Penalty Notice may be issued by the Local Authority following a student's absence. Penalty notices are issued at £60 per parent (if paid within 21 days) and £120 (if paid within 28 days) for each child. A leave of absence form is available from each Academy. If parents do not notify the Academy but there is evidence that the student has been on holiday, a fixed penalty fine may still be issued. Sixth Form students will follow the same protocols regarding holiday requests.

## **RESPONDING TO NON-ATTENDANCE**

Where a student is absent and the Academy have had no contact from a parent/carer the school will respond in the following manner

- First day contact via phone call or text will be implemented for all students who have not attended and the Academy hasn't received a reason for absence by the parent. Further attempts at communication may also be made.
- Second day contact by telephone call from the Attendance Team. This may include telephone numbers held on the system that are not priority number 1.
- Third day phone call by members of the Attendance or Pastoral Team. If contact is still not made a member of the Academy may visit any child who is absent from school without notification of a reason for absence.
- Parents will be notified of persistent non-attendance by letter. To follow legal guidelines all letters regarding attendance will include student legal names. In the case of continued absence, parents will be asked to attend an Attendance Support Plan meeting. Parental contracts may be drawn up with clear actions to improve student attendance at this meeting.
- Persistent absence will be brought to the attention of the Attendance and Pupil Welfare Service. Further meetings between the Academy, parents/carers, students and other agencies may take place in an attempt to identify and solve the problems which are preventing the student from attending school.
- In cases where attendance does not improve, appropriate action will be taken by the Attendance and Pupil Welfare Service in liaison with Academy staff.

## **CELEBRATING AND REWARDING GOOD ATTENDANCE**

Good and improved attendance is rewarded by each Academy with various incentives for individual students, class groups, form groups and whole school. These include prize draws, rewards and celebration assemblies.

## WORKING TOGETHER TO IMPROVE ATTENDANCE

Successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance, at home, in school or more broadly requires Academies, local partners and families to work collaboratively. All partners should work together to:

### EXPECT

Aspire to high standards of attendance from all students and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.



### MONITOR

Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.



### LISTEN AND UNDERSTAND

When a pattern is spotted, discuss with students and parents to listen and understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.



### FACILITATE SUPPORT

Remove barriers in school and help students and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.



### FORMALISE SUPPORT

Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through a Parenting Contract or Education Supervision Order.



### ENFORCE

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, attendance would be enforced through statutory intervention or prosecution to protect the student's right to an education.



## **PUNCTUALITY TO SCHOOL**

Students should be in school by the time directed by each Academy. If they are not, they will be classed as late. The Academy will contact home regarding a same day detention in Secondary Academies. Parents of students who are deemed to be persistently late will be expected to meet with a member of the Attendance Team, or member of Academy team to discuss any issues.

### **Late Arrivals**

A student will be marked late if not in the registration area when the register is taken. Registers will be kept open for 30 minutes after the start of the school day, after this time a mark of U or other appropriate code will be used. This will lead to an unauthorised absence.

## **PERSONAL DETAILS**

**It is vital that parental details are correct.** There are times when an Academy may need to contact parents to discuss absence or more importantly to contact a parent in the event of an emergency. Data checks occur at the start of the year and it is the expectation that parents notify the Academy of any changes in personal contact details.

## **MOVING TO A DIFFERENT SCHOOL OR ACADEMY**

It is important that if families decide to send the child/children in their care to a different School/Academy they must inform the current Academy as soon as possible. The student must continue their education with the Academy until their start date at the new school. Schools/academies may be reluctant to take a student onto roll where attendance is low and so it is imperative that they continue to attend. A student will not be removed from the Academy roll until we have received confirmation that they have started at the new school/Academy and the following information has been received and verified.

- The date the student is leaving this Academy and starting a new School/Academy.
- The address of the new School/Academy, and confirmation from that School/Academy that the student has been admitted.
- The new home address.

The students' School/Academy record will then be sent on to the new school/academy as soon as possible. In the case of movement abroad, records will be provided for the student to take with them. In the event that the Academy has not been informed of the above information, the family will be referred to the Local Authority as a 'Child Missing Education'. The Academy will complete a 'Common Transfer File' (CTF) for all students leaving the academy for another school/academy.

## **NEW STUDENTS**

Any parent wishing to apply for a place at one of our Academies may do so following the Academy admissions policy.

## **APPENDIX 1 – Leger Education Trust Attendance Legislation**

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) 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.

## APPENDIX 2 – Contents of the attendance register

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
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

Code	Definition	Scenario
<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

<b>H</b>	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
<b>I</b>	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
<b>M</b>	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
<b>T</b>	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
<b>Unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	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)
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
<b>U</b>	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend

<b>Y</b>	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, <b>strike</b> , or pupil is in custody
<b>Z</b>	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
<b>#</b>	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

The detail for each code in the table above is provided below. These National codes enable schools to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way and are used to collect statistics through the School Census system. The data helps schools, local authorities and the government to gain a greater understanding of the level of, and the reason for, absence and the delivery of education.

### **Present**

Relevant regulation: 6(1)(a)(i)

#### **Code / \: Present in school / = am \ = pm**

Pupils must not be recorded as present if they are not in school during registration. If a pupil were to leave the school premises after registration, they will still be counted as present for statistical purposes.

#### **Code L: Late arrival before the register is closed**

Schools should actively discourage late arrival and be alert to patterns of late arrival. All schools are expected to set out in their attendance policy the length of time the register will be open, after which a pupil will be marked as absent. This should be the same for every session and depending on the structure of the school day not longer than either 30 minutes after the session begins, or the length of the form time or first lesson in which registration takes place. A pupil arriving after the register has closed should be recorded as absent using code U, or another absence code that it is more appropriate.

### **Absent**

#### **Authorised Absence from School**

Relevant regulation: 6(1)(ii), 6(1)(b), 6(2), 7(1) and 7(2)

Authorised absence means that one of a specific set of circumstances applies, as set out below:

#### **Code C: Leave of absence granted by the school**

Only exceptional circumstances warrant granting a leave of absence. Wherever referred to in this guidance a leave of absence should not be, and from certain types of school must not be, granted unless it has been applied for in advance by the parent who the pupil normally lives with and the headteacher believes the circumstances to be exceptional. Schools must consider each application for a leave of absence individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind each request. Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days a pupil can be absent from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion.

Specific leaves of absence may also be granted where:

### **A pupil is participating in a performance**

A school maintained by a local authority or a special school not maintained by a local authority can grant leave of absence for a pupil to undertake employment during school hours for the purpose of taking part in a performance, within the meaning of section 37 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1963 if the local authority have given the pupil a licence for that performance.

Legislation sets out that a local authority licence must be obtained before a child can take part in a performance. There are some exemptions, including the granting of Body of Persons Approval (BOPA). BOPAs can be issued by the local authority where a performance is to take place, or by the Secretary of State (generally only if there are to be many children involved and a number of different locations, but legislation does not limit this to those situations).

Schools should be sympathetic to requests for leave of absence that are supported by a licence or a BOPA; as long as the school remains satisfied that this will not have a negative effect on a pupil's education. Where the licence specifies the dates that a pupil is to be away from school to perform, the school should record the absence for those days as if a leave of absence had been applied for and granted. However, where the terms of the licence or BOPA do not specify dates, it is at the discretion of the headteacher to grant leave of absence.

### **A pupil is subject to a temporary part-time timetable**

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package. A part-time timetable should not be used to manage a pupil's behaviour.

A part-time timetable must only be in place for the shortest time necessary and not be treated as a long-term solution. Any pastoral support programme or other agreement should have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend full-time, either at school or alternative provision. There should also be formal arrangements in place for regularly reviewing it with the pupil and their parents. In agreeing to a part-time timetable, a school has agreed to a pupil being absent from school for part of the week or day and therefore must treat absence as authorised.

### **A pupil is pregnant**

Leave for maternity is treated like any other leave of absence. We would expect schools to act reasonably and grant a sufficient period of leave from school, taking into consideration the specific circumstances of each case. Ultimately it is at the headteacher's discretion how much leave to grant.

### **Code H: leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday granted by the school**

Parents should plan their holidays around school breaks and avoid seeking permission from schools to take their children out of school during term time unless it is absolutely unavoidable.

An application for leave of absence should (and from certain schools must) not be granted unless it is made in advance by a parent the pupil normally lives with and the school is satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstance of the case which justify the

leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days a pupil can be absent from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion.

### **Code E: Excluded but no alternative provision made**

If no alternative provision is made for a pupil to continue their education whilst they are suspended from school or excluded from school, but their name is still entered in the admission register.

When a pupil of compulsory school age is suspended or permanently excluded from a maintained school, pupil referral unit, academy, city technology college, or city college for the technology of the arts, alternative provision must be arranged from the sixth consecutive day of any suspension or exclusion. Where alternative provision is made schools should record this using the appropriate code for attending an approved educational activity.

### **Code I: Illness (not medical or dental appointment)**

Schools should advise parents to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness. Schools must record absences as authorised where pupils cannot attend due to illness (both physical and mental health related).

In the majority of cases a parent's notification that their child is ill can be accepted without question or concern. Schools should not routinely request that parents provide medical evidence to support illness. Schools are advised not to request medical evidence unnecessarily as it places additional pressure on health professionals, their staff and their appointments system particularly if the illness is one that does not require treatment by a health professional. Only where the school has a genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness should medical evidence be requested to support the absence.

Pupils with long term illness or other health needs may need additional support to continue education, such as alternative provision arranged by the local authority. Local authorities are responsible for arranging suitable education for children of compulsory school age who, because of health reasons, would otherwise not receive suitable education. This applies whether or not the child is registered at a school and whatever type of school they attend. The education must be full-time or as close to full-time as the child's health allows. DfE's statutory guidance on ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs sets out that local authorities should provide education as soon as it is clear that the child will be away from school for 15 days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative. Local authorities should have a named officer responsible for the education of children with additional health needs.

### **Code M: Medical or dental appointment**

Schools should encourage parents to make appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, they should get the school's agreement in advance and the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.

If a pupil is present at registration but has a medical appointment during the session in question, no absence needs be recorded for that session.

### **Code R: Religious observance**

Schools must record absence as authorised when it falls on a day that is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the parents' religious body (not the parents).

As a general rule, we would interpret 'a day exclusively set apart for religious observance' as a day when the pupil's parents would be expected by the religious body to which they belong to stay away from their employment in order to mark the occasion. If in doubt, schools should seek advice from the parent's religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance.

If a religious body sets apart a single day for a religious observance and the parent applies for more than one day, the school may only record one day as authorised on this basis; the rest of the request would be a leave of absence, and this is granted at the school's discretion as set out under Code C.

Schools and local authorities may seek to minimise the adverse effects of religious observance on a pupil's attendance and attainment by considering approaches such as:

- Setting term dates around days for religious observance;
- Working with local faith groups to develop guidance on absence for religious observance;
- Schools taking INSET days that coincide with religious observance days; and
- Providing individual support for pupils who miss sessions on days exclusively set apart for religious observance.

### **Code S: Study leave**

Study leave should not be granted by default once tuition of the exam syllabus is complete, it should be used sparingly and only granted to Year 11 pupils during public examinations. If schools do decide to grant study leave, provision must still be made available for those pupils who want to continue to come into school to revise.

As study leave is unsupervised it must be recorded as absence.

### **Code T: Traveller absence**

A number of different groups are covered by the generic term traveller – Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers.

This code should not be used for general absences by those groups. It must only be used when the pupil's parent(s) is travelling for occupational purposes and the school has granted a leave of absence following a request from the parent. This code should not be used to record any other types of absence by these groups.

Pupils from these groups whose parent(s) do not travel for occupational purposes are expected to attend school as normal. They are subject to the same rules as other pupils in terms of the requirements to attend school regularly once registered at a school.

Where a pupil has no fixed abode because their parent(s) is engaged in a business or trade that requires them to travel, there is an expectation that the pupil attends at least 200 sessions per year. The pupil must attend school as regularly as the business permits and therefore, if the business or trade permits the pupil to attend for more than 200 sessions per year, they should do so.

To help ensure continuity of education for pupils, when their parent(s) is travelling for occupational purposes, it is expected that the pupil should attend school elsewhere when their parent(s) is travelling and be dual registered at that school and their main school.

### **Unauthorised Absence from School**



Relevant regulation: 6(1)(ii) and 6(3)

Unauthorised absence is where a pupil's absence is not one of the types of absence listed as authorised in regulation 6(2) or where the reason for a pupil's absence has not been provided and cannot be established.

### **Code G: Holiday not granted by the school or in excess of the period determined by the school**

Where the school has not granted a leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday but the parents still take the child out of school, or the child is kept away longer than the period of leave granted.

A school cannot grant a leave of absence retrospectively. If the parent did not apply in advance, leave of absence should not (and from certain types of school cannot) be granted.

### **Code N: Reason for absence not yet provided**

Schools must follow up all unexplained and unexpected absence in a timely manner.

Every effort should be made to establish the reason for a pupil's absence. When the reason for absence has been established the school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant code.

Where absence is recorded as unexplained in the attendance register, the correct code should be inputted as soon as the reason is ascertained, but no more than 5 working days after the session. Code N should not therefore be left on the pupil's attendance record indefinitely; if a reason for absence cannot be established after 5 working days, schools should amend the pupil's record to Code O.

### **Code O: Absent without authorisation**

Where no reason for absence is established or the school is not satisfied that the reason given is an authorised absence.

### **Code U: Arrived in school after registration closed**

Where a pupil has arrived late after the register has closed and the school is not satisfied that the reason for lateness is an authorised absence.

Schools should actively discourage late arrival, be alert to patterns of late arrival and seek an explanation from the parent. All schools are expected to set out in their attendance policy the length of time the register will be open, after which a pupil will be marked as absent. This should be the same for every session and depending on the structure of the school day not longer than either 30 minutes after the session begins, or the length of the form time or first lesson in which registration takes place.

### **Attending an approved educational activity**

Relevant regulation: 6(1)(a)(iii), 6(1)(c), and 6(4)

An approved educational activity is where a pupil is attending another school at which they are registered or taking part in off-site activity such as field trips, educational visits, work experience or unregistered alternative provision.

Pupils can only be recorded as attending an off-site activity if it is approved by the school, of an educational nature and supervised by someone authorised by the school. Ultimately, schools are responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils taking part in an off-site educational activity so it would be

reasonable to expect that the school would only authorise someone who was answerable to the school to supervise an activity.

The activity must take place during the session for which it is recorded and for pupils of compulsory school age the school must record the nature of the activity.

### **Attending another school at which the pupil is registered**

Relevant regulation: 6(1)(a)(iii) and 6(4)(b)

Code D: Dual registered at another school

The law allows for a pupil to be registered at more than one school. This code is used to indicate that the pupil was not expected to attend the school in question because they were scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered. The main examples of dual registration are pupils who are attending a pupil referral unit, a hospital school or a special school on a temporary basis.

Each school should only record the pupil's attendance and absence for those sessions that the pupil is scheduled to attend their school. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby all unexpected and unexplained absence are promptly followed up.

### **Attending an educational activity that takes place outside the school**

Relevant regulation: 6(1)(iii), 6(1)(c) and 6(4)(a)

Code B: Off-site educational Activity

Attending an off-site educational activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school.

For pupils of compulsory school age, schools must also record the nature of the activity, examples are:

- attending taster days at other schools;
- attending courses at college;
- attending unregistered alternative provision arranged or agreed by the school.

The educational activity must take place during the session for which it is recorded.

Ultimately schools are responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils educated off-site. Therefore, by using code B, schools are certifying that the education is supervised, and measures have been taken to safeguard the pupil. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the educational activity notifies the school of any absences by the pupil. The school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

This code must not be used for any unsupervised educational activity i.e., when a pupil is at home doing some schoolwork.

### **Code J: At an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment**

Attending an interview with prospective employers or another educational establishment. Schools should be satisfied that the interview is linked to employment prospects, further education, or transfer to another school.

This must take place during the session for which it is recorded.

## **Code P: Participating in a supervised sporting activity**

Taking part in a sporting activity that has been approved by the school. If schools have concerns about the appropriateness of an activity, they can seek advice from the sports' national governing body. However, the final decision on approving the activity rests with the school and they should take the effect on the pupil's general education into account.

The sporting activity must take place during the session for which it is recorded. Approved educational activity must be supervised by a person authorised by the school. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the sporting activity notifies the school of any absence by the pupil. The school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

## **Code V: Educational visit or trip**

Attendance at an organised visit or trip, including residential trips organised by the school, or attendance at a supervised trip of a strictly educational nature arranged by an organisation approved by the school.

The educational visit or trip must take place during the session for which it is recorded.

Approved educational activity must be supervised by a person authorised by the school. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the organiser of the visit or trip notifies the school of any absence by the pupil. The school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

## **Code W: Work experience**

Work experience is for pupils in the final 2 years of compulsory school age. The work experience must take place during the session for which it is recorded. Approved educational activity must be supervised by a person authorised by the school. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the work experience notifies the school of any absence by the pupil. The school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

## **Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances**

Relevant regulation: 6(1)(iv), 6(1)(d), 6(5), 6(7) and 6(2)(b)(i)

## **Code Y: Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances**

Where a pupil is unable to attend school because:

- the school site or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause at a time when pupils are due to attend; or
- the transport provided by the school or a local authority is not available and the pupil's home is not within safe walking distance; or
- a local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the pupil from attending school.

Schools must also record the nature of the circumstances in which a pupil is unable to attend school.

## **Walking distance**

In relation to a child under the age of 8, means 2 miles, and for a child of 8 or above, means 3 miles. In each case measured by the nearest available safe route.

#### Pupil in custody

Code Y is also used where the pupil is in custody; detained under a court order for a period of less than 4 months or is returning to the school at the end of their custodial period.

#### Administrative codes

Code X: Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to be in school

Where a pupil not of compulsory school age is attending school part-time.

For example, where parents have chosen for their 4 year-old child to attend part-time until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which the child reaches compulsory school age.

#### **Code Z: Prospective pupil not on admission register**

To enable schools to set up registers in advance of pupils joining the school to ease administration burdens. Schools must enter a pupil's name on the admission register from the first day that the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school. In the normal admissions round, when parents have accepted the school place offered, the local authority can inform schools on behalf of the parents and notify the school when the parent has agreed that the pupil will attend school. This can also be the case where the local authority co-ordinates in-year applications for school places. If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed starting day, the school must establish the reason and record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

#### **Code #: Planned whole or partial school closure**

Whole school closures that are known and planned in advance such as:

- days between terms;
- half terms;
- occasional days (for example, bank holidays);
- weekends (where it is required by the management information system);
- up to 5 non-educational days; and
- use of school as a polling station.

Partial school closures that are known and planned in advance such as:

- 'staggered starts' or 'induction days' where different term dates have been agreed for different year groups - this code is used to record the year group(s) that is not due to attend; and
- Use of part of the school as a polling station.

### **Campsmount Academy**



If a student is absent, parents should contact the Academy by 08.30am on the first day of absence on the telephone number below.

A telephone call is expected each day a student is absent.

For absences that extend to a week (5 school days or more), some form of medical evidence is required; this can be in the form of a Doctor's note, letter, copy of prescription or sight of prescribed medication.

Absence Telephone Number: 01302 700002 – Option 1

Text messages will be sent home for non-attenders if parents have not contacted the Academy. This will be followed by a telephone call and further attempts at communication will also be made, including a home visit if the Academy are unable to confirm the whereabouts of a student.

### **Spa Academy Askern**



If a student is absent, parents should contact the Academy by 9.00am on the first day of absence on the telephone number below – this number includes a 24-hour answer phone facility for your convenience. Alternatively, please email the address below to report the absence.

A telephone call or email is expected each day a student is absent.

For absences that extend to a week (5 school days or more), some form of medical evidence is required; this can be in the form of a Doctor's note/letter, copy of prescription or sight of prescribed medication.

Absence Telephone Number: 01302 700332 – Option 1

Absence Email Address: [admin@spaacademyaskern.com](mailto:admin@spaacademyaskern.com)

Phone calls will be made for non-attenders if parents have not contacted the Academy. This will be followed by a text message and further attempts at communication will also be made, including a home visit if the Academy are unable to confirm the whereabouts of a student.



### **Askern Littlemoor Infant Academy**

If a student is absent, parents should contact School by 9.00am on the first day of absence on the telephone number below – this number includes a 24-hour answer phone facility for your convenience.

A telephone call is expected each day a student is absent.

For absences that extend to a week (5 school days or more), some form of medical evidence is required; this can be in the form of a Doctor's note/letter, copy of prescription or sight of prescribed medication.

Absence Telephone Number: 01302 701353 – Option 1

School will contact the parents/carers of non-attenders if a notification has not been received. Further attempts at communication will also be made including a home visit if School is unable to confirm the whereabouts of a child.



### **Askern Moss Road Infant Academy**

If a child is absent, parents should contact School by 9.00am on the first day of absence on the telephone number below – this number includes a 24-hour answer phone facility for your convenience.

A telephone call is expected each day a student is absent.

For absences that extend to a week (5 school days or more), some form of medical evidence is required; this can be in the form of a Doctor's note/letter, copy of prescription or sight of prescribed medication.

Absence Telephone Number: 01302 700287 – Option 1

School will contact the parents/carers of non-attenders if a notification has not been received. Further attempts at communication will also be made including a home visit if School is unable to confirm the whereabouts of a child.



## Castle Hills Primary Academy

If a student is absent, parents should contact the Academy by 9.00am on the first day of absence on the telephone number below – this number includes a 24-hour answer phone facility for your convenience.

A telephone call is expected each day a student is absent.

For absences that extend to a week (5 school days or more), some form of medical evidence is required; this can be in the form of a Doctor's note/letter, copy of prescription or sight of prescribed medication.

Absence Telephone Number: 01302 780246 Option 1.

Text messages will be sent home for non-attenders if parents have not contacted the Academy. This will be followed by a telephone call and further attempts at communication will also be made including a home visit if the Academy are unable to confirm the whereabouts of a student.

## Ridgewood School



If a student is absent, parents should contact the school before 8.30am on the first day of absence on the telephone number below and advise when they are expected to return – this number includes a 24-hour answer phone facility for your convenience.

A telephone call is expected each day a student is absent.

Ensure that, where possible, appointments are made outside of the school day. For absences that extend to a week (5 school days or more), some form of medical evidence is required; i.e. an appointment card, indicating the reason for absence.

Absence Telephone Number: 01302 800490

Absence Email Address: [attendance@ridgewoodschool.co.uk](mailto:attendance@ridgewoodschool.co.uk)

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

- Call the student'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 student's emergency contacts, the school may carry out a welfare visit to the home address.
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer.



## **Barnburgh Primary Academy**

Absence calls must be made to the school each day that the pupil is absent (unless the illness is expected to be longer term and this has been discussed with the school).

Always try and send your child to school even if they seem a little 'under the weather', for example, with a runny nose, mild cold symptoms etc and provide them with appropriate pain relief/medication if necessary. Any prescribed medication should be handed in at our main reception and a parental consent form completed. A member of staff will then administer the medication in line with our **Medicines in School policy**. Parents have permission to visit school throughout the school day to administer non-prescribed medicines to their children.

School will always contact you if your child is not well enough to stay in school which is why it is vitally important that we have your correct contact details.

However, please do not send your child to school if they show any signs of infectious illnesses such as chicken pox, covid-19, gastroenteritis etc. If your child has been vomiting or is suffering from diarrhoea, then they must stay away from school for 48 hours from the last bout of illness. This is to ensure that any infection does not spread through the school. Please arrange all appointments outside the school day wherever possible. If the appointment is unavoidable, we expect your child to attend before and after the appointment. **A full day's absence will not be authorised for a medical appointment.**

If you are unsure as to whether your child can attend school, please contact your doctor or speak to the school office. Additionally, if you have any concerns about your child's well-being, please discuss this with the school in the first instance