

LA Attendance Policy

In line with statutory guidance:

- *Working Together to Improve School Attendance – August 2024 reviewed and updated July 2026*
- *National Framework for Penalty Notices – August 2024*
- *The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations - August 2024*

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Success Starts by Being at School

Improving school 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 pupils and families. Good attendance begins with school being somewhere pupils want to be and therefore the foundation of securing good attendance is that school is a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environment where all pupils are keen and ready to learn.

The purpose of this document is to set out clearly the Local Authority (LA) Policy on partnership working with schools and what can be achieved through the use of a whole-school approach to promoting regular attendance and reducing persistent and severe absence. School Attendance is everyone's responsibility.

Throughout this document 'schools' refers to all schools, academies and trusts, and any school staff who have delegated responsibility for managing school attendance and exploring all strategies for improving attendance and reducing persistent and severe absence. These members of school staff could be the Senior Attendance Lead, the Attendance Champion, the Nominated Attendance Person (NAP), the Headteacher or other designated member of staff.

Attendance at school is based on a range of statutory requirements. Parents/Carers have the primary responsibility for ensuring those children of compulsory school age receive a suitable education, either by compulsory attendance at school or otherwise. (Section 7 of the Education Act 1996)

These requirements place duties on the LA, who are required, by law, to ensure parents fulfil their responsibility of ensuring that their child receives an education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. This LA duty is delegated to the Attendance Support Team (AST) who work with schools to ensure that all legal interventions relating to school attendance can be accessed. Training is available for schools.

School Attendance is everyone's responsibility, and this LA policy supports partnership working with schools, who will each have their own bespoke attendance policy. It requires commitment from all staff employed within the school, together with governors, parents, pupils and the community in which the school is located.

Associated Legislation & Guidance

- The Education Act 1996
- 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' – The DfE statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities – August 2024'
- National Framework for Penalty Notices – August 2024
- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations - August 2024

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.

Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This

means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

Expectations of the Local Authority

The local authority, statutory safeguarding partners and other local partners therefore have a crucial role in supporting pupils to overcome those barriers and ensuring all children can access the full-time education to which they are entitled. Local authorities are facilitators of wider support needed by individual families and schools to overcome barriers in the short term. They are also strategic leaders that work across a geographical area to remove barriers in the longer term.

The local authority rigorously tracks local attendance data to devise a strategic approach to attendance that prioritises the pupils, pupil cohorts and schools on which to provide support and focus its efforts on to unblock area wide barriers to attendance. From 19th August 2024, all schools have a statutory duty to share their pupil level attendance data with the DFE via the 'View Your Education Data'.

Telford & Wrekin's Attendance Support Team (AST) provides the following core functions free of charge to all schools (regardless of type):

- **Communication and advice:** regularly bring schools together to communicate messages, provide advice and share best practice between schools and trusts within the area. Telford & Wrekin introduced two further opportunities for schools to share good practice in the termly Attendance Briefings and the half termly Attendance Surgeries.
- **Targeting Support Meetings:** In Telford & Wrekin this duty is undertaken by two Attendance Advisors who hold regular conversations with schools, using their attendance data to identify pupils and cohorts at risk of poor attendance and agree targeted actions and access to services for those pupils. Advice will be available to all schools in, for example, developing a school's attendance policy, attendance related training for all school staff, advice about the information available to parents on school website.
- **Multi-disciplinary support for families:** AST officers may liaise with early help support workers who work intensively with families to provide practical whole-family support where needed to tackle the causes of absenteeism and unblock the barriers to attendance. Training, advice and guidance will be offered by AST for partner agencies.
- **Legal intervention:** AST have delegated responsibility to take forward attendance legal interventions, using the full range of legal measures, including Penalty Notices where voluntary support has not been successful or engaged with to utilise all tools available to improve school attendance.

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 schools and local partners to work collaboratively in partnership with, not against families. The local authority additionally monitors and takes steps to improve the attendance of children with a social worker through their Virtual School.

All partners should work together to:

Expect

Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils 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 pupils and parents to listen to and understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.

Facilitate support

Remove barriers in school and help pupils 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 an attendance contract or education supervision order.

Enforce

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention: a penalty notice in line with the National Framework or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

The Importance of Regular School Attendance

The importance of regular school attendance cannot be overestimated. Regular attendance is a pre-requisite to a good education and securing it must therefore be a high priority for schools, governors, LAs, parents and the pupils themselves. By failing to attend school regularly pupils diminish the value of the education provided for them; they may also damage the learning of others because fluctuations in the size of pupil group may restrict the scope for effective teaching.

Attendance is increasingly regarded as a measure of the quality of the education offered by a school. The Government threshold for persistent absence (PA) is set at an attendance rate of 90% and the threshold for severe absence (SA) is 50%, but these figures also include pupils at risk of reaching those levels. It is important for schools to ensure that any pupil who falls into the 'persistent or severe absentee' category should be tracked, closely monitored and appropriate support offered.

The DfE guidance 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' states it is everyone's responsibility to encourage and promote good attendance in as many ways, and for as many pupils as possible. Schools will need to balance this with measures to address the needs of those children who do find it difficult to attend. A

whole-school approach to attendance will focus primarily on promoting attendance but will also address the issue of truancy and condoned absence where it occurs. The whole-school approach to attendance relates to a wide range of other school issues including punctuality, rewards and incentives, positive re-integration of long-term absentees, curricular differentiation, and reducing numbers of pupils who are withdrawn from roll to electively home educate (EHE)

The School Policy should include contingency plans for supporting pupils in unprecedented situations. In circumstances such as those experienced during the coronavirus pandemic in 2020, the LA will work in partnership with the Department for Education (DfE) and Public Health England regarding any decisions at a local (and national) level affecting a geographical area and will support schools and individual settings following the appropriate advice and guidance.

The Role of the Attendance Support Team

The Attendance Support Team (AST) form part of the Telford & Wrekin Council's support services to schools and liaise where appropriate with school staff to help secure pupils' good attendance. Legal action to enforce attendance can only be taken by the LA and this statutory responsibility is delegated to the AST.

The AST provide a service to schools and support legal intervention to improve school attendance. AST will normally liaise with the appropriate delegated attendance lead or the Nominated Attendance Person (NAP). However, attendance is the responsibility of the whole school. Schools should, therefore, consider the most effective ways of giving all staff access to advice and training delivered by AST to ensure an understanding of the LA's responsibilities.

Education Welfare Officer (EWO) support is available through a traded 'Service Level Agreement' that schools can benefit from and this service is provided by AST. Some schools employ their own EWO. It is statutory duty that schools have a clear attendance policy which should detail how and when a referral to the AST is made and appropriate school staff and their EWO/NAP understand the procedures. In particular, consideration should be given to:-

- the school's own procedures for dealing with absence, which should be agreed in discussion with their EWO/Pastoral Lead before a referral is made to the AST
- legal action can only be taken for unauthorised absences
- good communication and partnership working with schools/EWOs and AST

Legal Responsibilities

The legal framework governing attendance is set by the Education Act 1996 and the associated regulations.

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 to his/her age, aptitude and ability and to any special educational needs he/she may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

Section 444 further states that: - “The parent of a child of compulsory school age registered at school and failing to attend regularly is guilty of an offence punishable in law. An offence is **NOT** committed if it can be demonstrated that:-

- the pupil's absence was authorised by the school,
- the pupil was ill or prevented from attending by unavoidable cause,
- the absence occurred on a day set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil/parents belong,
- the school is not within the prescribed walking distance of the child's home and no suitable transport arrangements have been made by the LA. 'Walking distance' is defined as two miles for pupils under eight and three miles for all other pupils. Telford & Wrekin Council have, however, chosen to define these distances as two miles for infant, junior and primary pupils and three miles for other pupils. Distances will be measured by shortest available walking route.
- A limited defence is available to the parents of travelling children (see appendix 3).

The Act also places a legal obligation on:-

- The LA to provide support to enforce regular school attendance with legal intervention relating to non attendance offences.
- Schools to notify the LA when a child who is absent from school without authorisation for 10 or more days. The LA should be notified of any episodes of absence of 10 days or more under the 'Child Missing Education/Children Not Receiving Education (CME/CNRE/CWAFE)' protocol. Referrals are made via the SAM portal.
- Schools to inform the LA of every pupil who accumulate 15 days absence due to illness continuously or cumulatively. N.B: This return is merely to track data relating to absence from illness- schools will need to continue to support the pupil.
- The Headteacher and the Governing Body are to ensure that two school registers are kept, one for admissions and one for attendance (under the Pupil Regulations Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006) 2024 as amended.

Following the publication of the National Framework for Penalty Notices 2024, the DfE aim to have a fairer and more consistent system for schools and LAs to manage unauthorised absence. Penalty notices are intended to be a deterrent to parents who take their children out of school during term time and that absence is unauthorised by the school. There is also the option of a Notice to Improve which may be appropriate in some cases, if a school feel that they are able to work in partnership with parents to improve school attendance and avoid a Penalty Notice being issued.

The Penalty Notice protocol and process is an alternative strategy to other legal processes to manage unauthorised absence under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 and the two routes are detailed in the table below.

Exclusion Penalty Notices (in addition to Penalty Notices)

For a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school and is excluded from that school either for a fixed period or permanently, his/her parent/carers is guilty of an offence under **Section 103 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006** if that child is present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first five days of each and every fixed period or permanent exclusion.

The AST Referral should be submitted via the SAM portal to request an Exclusion Penalty Notice. Strict criteria must be met as detailed in the AST 'Red Book' manual 'Guidance for Referrals and Legal Intervention'

Traditional prosecution route for non attendance

Under section 444 of the Education Act 1996 schools will have robust evidence of attempting to support the pupil and their family before seeking punitive measures. When taking this route, schools work in partnership with AST. This is the tried and tested method that schools currently use and is available alongside the Penalty Notice process.

The S.444 route is a dripping tap approach with a clear escalation process. Where a school has attempted to engage with and support parents, such as through the use of school letters and meetings followed by AST warnings, but despite all best efforts of the school parents don't engage, an Interview Under Caution (IUC) is offered to parents to establish the reason for absence.

The Attendance Support Team will liaise with schools and advise on the best route to take to manage cases of unauthorised absence.

To summarise: 2 Routes

Section 444 of the Education Act

- Schools send SAL letters before a referral to AST
- AST issue AST1A warning notice
- School continue with Early help & support
- No improvement, school re - refer & AST issue AST2A final warning notice
- School meet with parents
- School continue to support

Penalty Notices

- A PN can be issued when a pupil has 10 sessions of unauthorised absence over 10 school weeks.
- A 'Notice to Improve' can be considered if support will suffice
- The 10 sessions do not need to be consecutive.
- 10 Sessions can be any unauthorised e.g. U, G, O or N code in any combination

What happens when all avenues have been explored, and the child still does not attend school regularly?

Provided absences are unauthorised, a warning notice (AST 1 or 1A) will be issued and attendance monitored for a minimum of 15 school days between each intervention. If there is no improvement in attendance, a final warning notice (AST 2 or 2A) will be served on the parents.

If no significant improvement in attendance is noted within a minimum of 15 school days of the serving of this warning, AST will require the school to request an Interview

Under Caution (IUC) also known as a PACE interview (under Police & Criminal Evidence Act 1984).

AST will liaise with school staff in the preparation of any interview and invite the parent to attend. This interview will be the platform to present evidence to the parent of the unauthorised absences and discuss the support that has been offered. The parent will have the opportunity to discuss their reasons for the absences. Following the interview, all evidence will be considered, and a decision will be made whether to prepare the case to send to the legal team with a view to legal action being taken. AST will write to the parents to outline what will happen next.

Following the IUC, once the file is prepared the case will be sent to the LA Legal team and a final decision will be made whether Court proceedings will be initiated under Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act.

The LA's Policy & process for Prosecution is as follows:

The parent(s) of any pupil of compulsory school age who fails to achieve regular attendance will be considered for legal proceedings unless there are extenuating circumstances. All referrals will be considered and discussion between AST and school staff is encouraged.

All parents must have been given sufficient notification of their children's attendance concerns via the serving of official warning notices.

After communication with the LA legal team, if it is decided to initiate legal proceedings in the Magistrates Court, the AST officers will work with the school staff to produce the necessary witness statement and appropriate supporting evidence. This evidence gathering exercise leads to an interview Under Caution where parents will have an opportunity to meet with AST officers and discuss the reasons for their child's absence.

Who is responsible for instigating Court procedures?

The LA is responsible and has a statutory duty to undertake all aspects of the legal procedure. In Telford & Wrekin this duty is delegated to the Attendance Support Team, followed by approval by a representative from legal services who agree AST can proceed with any legal case. A summons will be issued by AST and served in accordance with the requirements of the respective Magistrates Clerks and a representative from the AST will attend court and present the prosecution case on behalf of the Local Authority. In certain circumstances legal services will ensure a Council Solicitor is made available to present cases on behalf of the Local Authority, e.g. trials following a 'not guilty' plea and contested cases.

A certificate signed by the Headteacher confirming the contents of the child's school attendance register during the period of prosecution referred to in the summons will be required as documentary evidence by the court.

AST officers will work in partnership with schools to prepare all associated documentation to evidence all support/strategies offered to parents in cases of unauthorised absence.

N.B. Only unauthorised absences can be used in evidence

In all cases before legal proceedings are initiated for presenting the case in the Magistrates Court, consideration will be given to applying for an Education Supervision Order (ESO).

What is an Education Supervision Order - ESO?

An ESO is an Order made by the Family Proceedings Court under Section 36 of the Children Act 1989. The initial Order is for one year, but application can be made to extend the Order yearly up to a period of three years. The Court must be satisfied that a child of compulsory school age is not being properly educated and that the making of the Order would be better for the child than making no Order at all. In addition the Court shall have regard in particular to:

- the ascertainable wishes and feelings of the child concerned (considered in the light of the child's age and understanding)
- the child's physical, emotional and educational needs
- the likely effect on the child of any changes in circumstances
- the child's age, sex, background and any characteristics that the Court considers relevant
- any harm the child has suffered, or is at risk of suffering
- the capability of each parent in meeting the child's needs together with any other person whom the Court considers appropriate
- the range of powers available to the Court under this Act in the proceedings in question

More information on ESOs is contained in the manual:

'Attendance Support Team Guidance for Referrals & Legal interventions'

Under the terms of the Order, the supervising officer must "advise, assist and befriend" the child and family, whilst the child and family must abide by the "directions" that the Court lays down and any other reasonable directions of the supervising officer. Failure by the parent to follow these directions would mean returning to Court when a fine of up to £2,500 could be imposed. In addition, the parent may be imprisoned for up to 3 months. Failure by the child to follow these directions would lead to the statutory involvement of Social Care.

There may be some situations in which an ESO is unlikely to be effective. Where, for example, parents would be hostile to such intervention, it may not be possible to undertake the structured programme of work that is necessary. At all times, the supervising officer will need to operate within a structure that defines clear aims and objectives. This will require a planned and realistic programme of intervention, including directions where necessary, which will specify how the aims and objectives are to be achieved. The active involvement of parents, children and schools will aid success.

N.B. Education Supervision Orders, as the name implies, require a great deal of time spent with the pupil supervising them and encouraging them to change patterns of behaviour. They have a limited effectiveness, as many of the strategies that could be applied will have already been tried to no avail. Therefore, the 'No Order' principle will apply.

Guidance for School in Developing a Whole-School Attendance Policy

The DfE guidance 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' states that every school will have a bespoke whole-school attendance policy. The policy should promote regular attendance, aim to reduce persistent and severe absence and remove barriers that impact on attendance.

The Framework for a Whole-School Attendance Policy is detailed in the DfE Guidance. Further advice and guidance is available to all Telford & Wrekin schools from the schools own allocated Attendance Advisor. Schools can email attendancesupportteam@telford.gov.uk for further information.

The Attendance Register

The register is a legal document which must be in electronic format. Registers, attendance & absence codes must be recorded accurately. The register and its content will be requested in a Court of law as evidence in a prosecution for non-attendance. It may also contribute data to pupils' end-of-term reports, to records of achievement, and to school leavers' references.

An accurate and consistent registration system is crucial if poor attendance and punctuality within a school are to be addressed. It is vital that pupils are aware that registration is a significant part of the school day.

All staff involved with the registration process should be aware that the law is very specific regarding the keeping of registers. Marking and keeping the register is of the utmost importance. The form tutor/teacher should not relegate it to the bottom of the list of priorities and it should be completed in a timely manner for the attendance administrator to be able to manage absence processes.

The attendance register must be completed twice per day, at the beginning of the morning session and at anytime during the afternoon session.

Completing the register

(See also DfE guidance 'Working together to Improve School Attendance -)

- a) **No pupil should be marked present unless actually physically present when the register is taken** or unless s/he has been given permission to be absent by the school.
- b) The register must be taken at the beginning of the morning session and at any time during the afternoon session.
- c) A registration code must be entered for all pupils.
- d) The register should be closed at an agreed time each day. AST have advised all schools to adhere to DfE guidance, that registers are closed 30 minutes after the start of the morning registration session.
- e) Where a pupil arrives late but the register is still open, the pupil should be marked as late 'L' – code which is counted as 'present' for that session.

- f) Where a pupil misses registration (arrives after registration has closed) absence must be marked as 'U' code which is an unauthorised absence.
- g) Where a pupil misses registration but provides an adequate explanation, s/he should be recorded as late if arriving before the register closes but coded as an authorised absence for the session e.g. M for dental or medical appointment if arriving after the register closes.
- h) Attendance data from registers should be monitored appropriately and any identified absence should be investigated in line with the school's attendance policy and 'first day calling' procedures.
- i) Where the reason for absence is unknown, the N registration code should be used. The N code should remain on the register for a maximum of five school days. If no reason has been provided during this time the absence should be recorded as unauthorised. If reason for absence has been provided and accepted, it should be recorded in the register.

Electronic Registration:

Schools use a variety of management information systems (MIS) to record attendance. Using an MIS system will not by itself improve attendance. It does, however, provide accessible, accurate and easy to use data and information relating to individual pupils, groups of pupils or whole school attendance. These systems also produce data reports, which may include:

- A daily/sessional report of all absentees.
- Data to quickly identify patterns and trends in authorised and unauthorised absences.
- Individual pupil registration certificates which can be produced at any time throughout the school year and includes information on total percentage attendance, unauthorised v authorised absence and punctuality.
- An PA/SA tracking facility which can be used to monitor pupil's attendance and track what impact any support or interventions have had.
- A record of attendance for each class over any given period of time which will provide a percentage attendance figure for each session and data which could identify patterns of absence for individuals as well as the whole class.
- Individual reports for vulnerable groups, such as pupils with SEND
- A list of all pupils who are persistent absentees (90% or below) or severe absentees (50% or below).

Contents of the Attendance Register

All schools, except those where all the pupils are boarders, must keep an attendance register in accordance with the [School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#). Regulation 10 sets out the contents of the

attendance register. The attendance register must be kept electronically to aid accuracy and reduce the burden of information sharing.

Schools cannot delete a pupil's name from the attendance register unless they have a reason (as set out in regulation 9) to delete the pupil's name from the admission register; the pupil's name must be deleted from both registers at the same time.

Schools must take the attendance register at the beginning of each morning session and once during each afternoon session. Usually, a substantial break such as a lunchbreak separates one session from the next. Lessons that take place after the lunchtime break will therefore be a different session from the ones before the break and another register needs to be taken. When there is more than one afternoon session and therefore the attendance register is taken more than once in the same afternoon, the DfE will use the codes for the last afternoon session as the basis for its statistical attendance data.

Attendance and absence codes

On each occasion the register is taken, the appropriate national attendance and absence code must be entered for every pupil (of both compulsory and non-compulsory school age) whose name is listed in the admission register at the time (with the exception of a pupil who is a boarder).

The codes enable schools to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way and are used to collect statistics. The data helps schools, local authorities and the government gain a greater understanding of the delivery of education and the level of, and reason for, absence.

As set out in the DfE's guidance on '[Providing remote education](#)', pupils who are absent from school and receiving remote education still need to be recorded as absent using the most appropriate absence code. Schools should keep a record of, and monitor pupil's engagement with remote education, but this is not formally tracked in the attendance register.

Attending the school

Code / \: Present at the school / = morning session \ = afternoon session

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 attending for statistical purposes.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as attending.

Code L: Late arrival before the register is closed

The pupil was absent when the register started being taken but arrives 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 recorded as absent. This should be the same for every session and not longer than 30 minutes. If a pupil is recorded with code N but arrives later in the session after the register has closed, the attendance register must be amended to record them as absent using code U or another absence code that is more appropriate.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as attending.

Attending a place other than the school

Code K: Attending education provision arranged by the local authority

The pupil is attending a place, other than the school or any other school at which they are a registered pupil, for educational provision arranged by a local authority under section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996 (exceptional provision of education), section 42(2), or 61(1) of the Children and Families Act 2014 (special educational provision off site). A pupil attending provision arranged by the school rather than the local authority must be recorded using Codes P or B instead.

Schools must also record the nature of the provision (regulation 10(5)), examples are:

- attending courses at college,
- attending unregistered alternative provision.

Schools should ensure that arrangements are in place whereby the education provider notifies the school of any absence by the pupil. The school must record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as attending an approved educational activity.

Code V: Attending an educational visit or trip

The pupil is attending a place, other than the school or any other school at which they are a registered pupil, for an educational visit or trip arranged by or on behalf of the school and supervised by a member of school staff. The visit or trip must take place during the session for which it is recorded.

If the pupil does not attend the visit or trip the school must record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as attending an approved educational activity.

Code P: Participating in a sporting activity

The pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is a sporting activity. The sporting activity must take place during the session for which it is recorded.

A pupil can only be recorded as attending a place for an approved educational activity if:

- the place is somewhere other than the school, another school where the pupil is registered, or a place where educational provision has been arranged for the pupil by a local authority under section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996 or sections 42(2) or 61(1) of the Children and Families Act 2014;
- the activity is of an educational nature;
- the school has approved the pupil's attendance at the place for the activity; and

- the activity is supervised by a person considered by the school to have the appropriate skills, training, experience and knowledge to ensure that the activity takes place safely and fulfils the educational purpose for which the pupil's attendance has been approved. Supervision means the pupil is physically supervised by someone who meets this definition.

If schools have concerns about the appropriateness of an activity, they can seek advice from the sports' national governing body. The final decision on approving the activity, however, rests with the school and they should take the effect on the pupil's general education into account.

Schools have responsibilities for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils attending an approved educational activity. The school will need to be satisfied that appropriate measures have been taken to safeguard the pupil. 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 must record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as attending an approved educational activity.

Code W: Attending work experience

The pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is work experience provided under arrangements made by a local authority or the school as part of the pupil's education. The work experience must take place during the session for which it is recorded.

A pupil can only be recorded as attending a place for an approved educational activity if:

- the place is somewhere other than the school, another school where the pupil is registered, or a place where educational provision has been arranged for the pupil by a local authority under section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996 or sections 42(2) or 61(1) of the Children and Families Act 2014;
- the activity is of an educational nature;
- the school has approved the pupil's attendance at the place for the activity; and
- the activity is supervised by a person considered by the school to have the appropriate skills, training, experience and knowledge to ensure that the activity takes place safely and fulfils the educational purpose for which the pupil's attendance has been approved. Supervision means the pupil is physically supervised by someone who meets this definition.

Schools have responsibilities for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils attending an approved educational activity. The school will need to be satisfied that appropriate measures have been taken to safeguard the pupil. 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 must record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as attending an approved educational activity.

Code B: Attending any other approved educational activity

The pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience. The educational activity must take place during the session for which it is recorded.

A pupil can only be recorded as attending a place for an approved educational activity if:

- the place is somewhere other than the school, another school where the pupil is registered, or a place where educational provision has been arranged for the pupil by a local authority under section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996 or sections 42(2) or 61(1) of the Children and Families Act 2014;
- the activity is of an educational nature;
- the school has approved the pupil's attendance at the place for the activity; and
- the activity is supervised by a person considered by the school to have the appropriate skills, training, experience and knowledge to ensure that the activity takes place safely and fulfils the educational purpose for which the pupil's attendance has been approved. Supervision means the pupil is physically supervised by someone who meets this definition.

Schools must also record the nature of the approved educational activity (regulation 10(5)), examples are:

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

Schools have responsibilities for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils attending an approved educational activity. The school will need to be satisfied that appropriate 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 must record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as attending an approved educational activity.

Absent - leave of absence

All schools must use the following codes to record the reason for a pupil being absent with leave:

Code C1: Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.

All schools can grant leaves of absence for pupils to undertake employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours. Schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority can only do so in the following circumstances (under regulation 11(2)):

- Where the local authority have granted a licence for the pupil to take part in a performance regulated by section 37(2) of the Children and Young Persons Act 1963.
- Where a pupil does not need a licence for such a performance because an exception applies under section 37(3) of the Children and Young Persons Act 1963, including where a Body of Persons Approval (BOPA) covering the pupil has

been issued by the local authority in whose area the performance will take place or the Secretary of State.

- Where a Justice of the Peace has given the pupil a licence to go abroad for a performance or other regulated purpose under section 25(2) of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933.

Schools should be sympathetic to requests for leave of absence that are supported by a licence issued by a local authority or a BOPA; as long as the school remains satisfied that this will not have a negative effect on a pupil's education. Where a local authority 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. Where the terms of the local authority licence do not specify dates, however, or where a BOPA or other exemption or licence from a Justice of the Peace applies, it is at the discretion of the school to grant leave of absence.

Schools that are not required to follow regulation 11, must still use this code to record a pupil who is absent with leave for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or work abroad under a licence or exemption as described above.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Code M: Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a 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.

Schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority can only grant leave of absence for this under regulation 11(11), where an application is made in advance by a parent the pupil normally lives with (or the pupil if they will be over compulsory school age by the time of the absence), and the school is satisfied that, based on the individual facts of the case, there are exceptional circumstances which justify the leave.

Schools that are not required to follow regulation 11, must still use this code to record a leave of absence has been granted for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment.

If a pupil is present at registration but then leaves the school to attend a medical or dental appointment during the session in question, no absence needs be recorded for that session.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Code J1: Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution

Schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority can grant leave of absence, under regulation 11(4), where an application has been made in advance by the parent who the pupil normally lives with (or the pupil if they will be over compulsory school age by the time of the absence) and the leave is to enable the pupil to attend an interview for employment or admission to another educational institution.

Schools that are not required to follow regulation 11, must still use this code to record a leave of absence has been granted for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational establishment.

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

This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Code S: Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination

Schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority can grant leave of absence, under regulation 11(5), for a pupil to study for a public examination where the leave has been agreed in advance with a parent who the pupil normally lives with (or the pupil if they will be over compulsory school age by the time of the absence).

Study leave should not be granted by default once tuition of the exam syllabus is complete and should be used sparingly. 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.

Schools that are not required to follow regulation 11, must still use this code to record when a pupil is absent with leave that has been granted for the purpose of studying for a public examination.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

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

Schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority can grant a leave of absence, under regulation 11(7) or (8) for a pupil not of compulsory school age to attend school part-time.

Schools that are not required to follow regulation 11, must still use this code to record when a pupil is absent with leave because their timetable does not require them to attend.

Where the pupil is absent when timetabled to attend the school, the absence must be recorded using the appropriate absence code not code X.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance.

Under compulsory school age

In cases where a parent wishes their child to begin school on a part-time basis in line with the school admissions code, schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority may give leave of absence for sessions the pupil is not expected to attend. This must be agreed between the school and the parent they normally live with and must end at the point at which the pupil reaches compulsory school age. The times and dates when the pupil is expected to attend the school must be agreed by the school and the parent with whom the pupil normally lives with.

Over compulsory school age

Where a sixth form pupil's timetable does not require them to be on site for every session of the week, a school maintained by a local authority, or a special school not maintained by a local authority may give leave of absence. The times and

dates when the pupil is expected to attend the school must be agreed with the parent with whom the pupil normally lives with or the pupil.

Code C2: Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a 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 (See DfE Guidance 'Working together to Improve School Attendance' - paragraphs 65 –70).

Schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority can grant a leave of absence, under regulation 11(6) to temporarily reduce the timetable of a pupil of compulsory school age to part-time, if the school and a parent who the pupil normally lives with have agreed that, exceptionally, the pupil should temporarily be educated only part-time and have agreed the times and dates when the pupil will, during the period of temporary part-time education, be expected to attend the school.

Schools that are not required to follow regulation 11, must still use this code to record when a pupil is absent with leave because they are subject to a part-time timetable in line with an agreement between the school and a parent the pupil normally lives with that the pupil should temporarily be educated part-time.

Where a pupil is receiving a full-time education, but only part-time at the school in question (e.g. dual registration, part-time unregistered alternative provision or flexi-schooling) this code must not be used and the appropriate code for why the pupil is not in school for that session should be used.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Code D: Dual registered at another school

The law allows a pupil to be registered at more than one school. This code is used to indicate that the pupil is absent with leave 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.

The school at which the pupil is scheduled to attend must record the pupil's attendance and absence with the relevant code. Code D may only be used by either school for a session where the pupil is scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby all unexpected and unexplained absences are promptly followed up.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance to avoid double counting.

Code C: Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance

All schools are able to grant a leave of absence at their discretion. A leave of absence should not, and from a school maintained by a local authority or a special school not maintained by a local authority, must not be granted unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Schools must judge each application individually considering 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 school's discretion.

Schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority can only grant such a leave of absence under regulation 11(11), where an application is made in advance by a parent the pupil normally lives with (or the pupil if they will be over compulsory school age by the time of the absence).

Generally, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance.

Schools that are not required to follow regulation 11, must still use this code to record where a pupil is absent with leave for a reason that is not covered by another leave of absence code.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Pregnant pupils

Leave for maternity is treated like any other leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. Schools are expected to act reasonably and grant a sufficient period of leave from school, taking into consideration the specific facts and circumstances of each case. Ultimately, it is at the school's discretion how much leave to grant.

Absent - other authorised reasons

Code T: Parent travelling for occupational purposes

The pupil is a mobile child, and their parent(s) is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with them. A mobile child is a child of compulsory school age who has no fixed abode and whose parent(s) is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require them to travel from place to place.

Schools should not unnecessarily ask for proof that the parent is travelling for occupational purposes, this should only happen when there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the reason for absence given. If there is doubt over the reason given, the school may ask for proof that the family are required to travel for occupational purposes during the period of absence.

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

This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Whilst for statistical purposes this is counted as authorised absence, if a pupil's attendance was to fall below an acceptable level consideration may be given to attendance enforcement.

Defence in the law

Parents can in some circumstances, present a defence against prosecution, under section 444(6) of the Education Act 1996. This defence applies where the

child has no fixed abode, and the parent can prove that they are engaged in a trade or business that requires them to travel from place to place and that the child has been attending school as regularly as the trade or business permits. If the child is aged 6 or older, the parent must also prove that the child has attended school for at least 200 sessions in the preceding 12 months. This is in addition to the requirement to prove that the child has attended as regularly as the trade or business permits, which means that if the trade or business permits the child to attend for more than 200 sessions, they should do so.

Code R: Religious observance

The pupil is absent on a day that is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body the parent(s) belong to (not the parents themselves).

As a general rule, 'a day exclusively set apart for religious observance' is 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 record 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 using this code; the rest of the time would need 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;
- 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.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Code I: Illness (not medical or dental appointment)

The pupil is unable to attend due to illness (both physical and mental health related). Schools should advise parents to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness.

Schools are not expected to routinely request that parents provide medical evidence to support illness absences. Schools should only request reasonable medical evidence in cases where they need clarification to accurately record absence in the attendance register – i.e. making a decision that code I is the absence code that accurately describes the reason the pupil is not in school for the session in question. In the majority of cases a parent's notification that their child is too ill to attend school will be that evidence and can be accepted without question or concern. Only where the school has genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness should medical evidence be requested to support the absence.

Where medical evidence is deemed necessary, schools should not be rigid about the form of evidence requested and should speak to the family about what evidence is available. Schools should be mindful that requesting additional medical evidence unnecessarily places pressure on health professionals, their staff and their appointment system, particularly if the illness is one that does not require treatment by a health professional. Where a parent cannot provide evidence in the form requested but can provide other evidence, schools should take this into account. Where a parent cannot provide any written evidence the school should have a conversation with the parent and pupil, if appropriate, which may in itself serve as the necessary evidence to record the absence.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Code E: Suspended or permanently excluded

The pupil is suspended from school or permanently excluded from school on disciplinary grounds, but their name is still entered in the admission register, and no alternative provision has been made for the pupil to continue their education.

When a pupil of compulsory school age is suspended or permanently excluded on disciplinary grounds 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 school day of any suspension or permanent exclusion. Where the pupil is attending alternative provision, for the session in question, schools should record this using the appropriate attendance code in regulation 10(3) or if the pupil is attending another school at which they are a registered pupil, schools should record this using code D (dual registered at another school).

This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Absent - unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause

Code Q: Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements

Relevant regulation 10(4), (12) and (13).

Code Q is only used where a pupil is absent because the local authority has a legal duty to arrange home-to-school travel for the pupil and they have not done so, or because the pupil has no choice but to attend a school that does not qualify for such travel arrangements and is more than walking distance from where they live. These circumstances are set out in law but in summary are where:

- the local authority has a duty to arrange the pupil's [home to school travel](#) and has not; or
- the pupil is registered at a private school that is beyond walking distance from the pupil's home and the local authority has not arranged boarding for them or enabled them to go to a state school nearer to their home; or
- the pupil lives in Wales and a Welsh local authority has a duty to provide [home to school travel](#) and has not.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance.

Code Y1: Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available

The pupil is unable to attend because the school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport to and from the school that is normally provided for the pupil by the school or local authority is not available.

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 route.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance.

Code Y2: Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel

The pupil is unable to attend the school because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national, or international emergency.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance.

Code Y3: Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed

Part of the school premises is unavoidably out of use and the pupil is one of those that the school considers cannot practicably be accommodated in those part of the premises that remain in use.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance.

Code Y4: Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed

Relevant regulation 10(10)

Where a school was planned to be open for a session, but the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather), the attendance register is not taken as usual because there is no school session. Instead, every pupil listed in the admission register at the time must be recorded with code Y4 to record the fact that the school is closed.

This code may not be used for any planned closure such as weekends or holidays.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance.

Code Y5: Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention

Relevant regulation 10(14)

The pupil is unable to attend the school because they are:

- in police detention,
- remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or
- detained under a sentence of detention.

If a pupil is remanded to local authority accommodation, they should attend school as normal where possible and where it is not possible any absence should be recorded using the appropriate code.

A pupil's absence should be recorded under code Y7 (Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause) if they are unable to attend because they are serving a community based (i.e. non-detained) part of a sentence of detention, referral order, or youth rehabilitation order that requires them to be absent during the school day.

Schools are expected to communicate with the pupil's Youth Offending Team worker while the pupil is in custody and remains on the school roll to discuss the

pupil's educational needs, progress and return to the school upon their release where appropriate. Education is a key part of effective resettlement; therefore, it is important that schools maintain contact with the Youth Offending Team throughout the sentence to support the child's resettlement where appropriate.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance.

Code Y6: Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law

The pupil is well enough to attend (otherwise Code I would have been recorded) but there are Government rules or guidance to limit the spread of infection or disease which say they should not attend.

Meaning, the pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be:

- contrary to any guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of infection or disease published by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care (or the equivalent in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland), or
- prohibited by any legislation relating to the incidence or transmission of infection or disease.

Code Y7: Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause

An unavoidable cause, that is not covered by one of the other 'unable to attend' codes detailed above, is preventing the pupil from attending the school.

This code should be used only where something in the nature of an emergency has prevented the pupil from attending the session in question. The unavoidable cause must be something that affects the pupil, not the parent. The fact that a parent has done all they can to secure the attendance of the pupil at school does not, in itself, mean the pupil has been prevented by unavoidable cause.

Schools must also record the nature of the unavoidable cause (regulation 10(6)), examples are:

- Bail conditions (that prevent the pupil from attending the school or being present in the area where the school is situated)
- Court attendance (where the pupil is legally required to attend Court)

This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance.

Absent - unauthorised absence

Code G: Holiday not granted by the school

The school has not granted a leave of absence and the pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday.

A school cannot grant a leave of absence retrospectively. If the parent did not apply in advance, leave of absence should not be granted.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as unauthorised absence.

Code N: Reason for absence not yet established

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 not yet been established before the register closes, the absence must be recorded with code N.

Where absence is recorded as code N (reason not yet established) in the attendance register, the correct absence code should be entered as soon as the reason is ascertained, but no more than 5 school days after the session (regulation 10(7) to (9)). Code N must not therefore be left on the pupil's attendance record indefinitely; if a reason for absence cannot be established within 5 school days, schools must amend the pupil's record to Code O.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as unauthorised absence.

Code O: Absent in other or unknown circumstances

Where no reason for absence is established or the school is not satisfied that the reason given is one that would be recorded using one of the codes statistically classified as authorised.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as unauthorised absence.

Code U: Arrived in school after registration closed

Relevant regulation 10(7) and (8)

Where a pupil has arrived late after the register has closed but before the end of session.

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 recorded as absent. This should be the same for every session and not longer than 30 minutes.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as unauthorised absence.

Administrative codes

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.

Most school admissions involve the school or admission authority offering a place to the parent of the prospective pupil (or, in the case of admission to sixth form, the prospective pupil). An offer of a place is not an agreement. Before a pupil can be registered at a school the parent (or prospective pupil) must have accepted the offer, either by agreeing the starting day in advance or by the fact of the pupil attending the school on that day. In the normal admissions round, when parents have accepted the school place and starting day offered, the local authority can communicate that agreement to schools on behalf of the parent. This can also be the case where the local authority co-ordinate in-year applications for school places.

Schools must enter pupils' names on the admission register on the first day that the school and a person with control of the pupil's attendance have agreed that the pupil will attend the school. If no date has been agreed or notified, the pupil's name must be entered on the first day they attend the school. Names must be added before or at the beginning of the first session on that day.

If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed starting day, the school must follow this up and try to establish the reason for absence.

This code is not collected for statistical purposes.

Code #: Planned whole 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 the whole school as a polling station.

This code is not collected for statistical purpose.

Deletions from Roll

See also 'The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024

[the school attendance regulations 2024](#)

Schools have a statutory duty to inform the LA within 5 days of any deletion from roll using the D1 form. This form should be completed and submitted to admissions@telford.gov.uk Pupils can only be removed from the school roll under the circumstances detailed in Section 9 of 'The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024

If a parent informs the host school that they are moving out of the area and supply the new school details of where they intend to register the child, the host school will contact the new school to confirm that the child has been registered at the new school. If confirmed, the Headteacher can remove the pupil from their school roll. This removal cannot be back dated. If the pupil cannot be located in the new LA of the area the parents has given, the host school should complete a CME/CNRE referral via SAM portal (which will feed into the LA MIS system, Synergy).

Where a parent informs the school that they will be pursuing a place in another school in the local area the parent should complete the online in-year transfer request section of their 'My Telford' account and the Admissions Team at Telford & Wrekin Council will process the application and inform both schools of the transfer. The Admissions Team will inform the parent that a place is available to them at the new school. Once admission is confirmed at the new school the receiving school will inform the LA of the Admission via the SAM portal (within 5 days).

- a) Where a parent informs the school that they are requesting their child's name is removed from the school roll, as they intend to electively home educate i.e. teach the child ***otherwise than at school***, the school will liaise with the Electively Home Education Advisory Team and a Multi-Agency Meeting (MAM) will be arranged to establish the reason the parent has made this decision. Once the child's name is removed from the school roll the LA Advisory Teacher for Elective Home Education will liaise with the parent and monitor the educational provision from that point.
- b) Removal of a pupil from the school roll should only be undertaken when authorised by the Headteacher after all reasonable enquiries have taken place to locate children who have moved out of the area. **The school must notify the LA in all**

cases of a pupil being removed from the school roll where a family has moved and cannot be traced in line with DfE guidance 'Children Missing Education' – September 2024'. This information should be submitted via a referral using the SAM portal on Synergy. Schools may be contacted and asked to keep the pupil on roll whilst further investigations are made. Schools can liaise directly with the CME officer.

It is illegal for a school to remove a pupil from a school roll simply because the pupil has a poor behaviour or poor attendance record.

Professional Development Days

Where schools are proposing to take PD days, it is good practice for a Headteacher to agree these days with the support of the full governing body and to liaise with neighbouring schools. Parents should be given sufficient notice of training days and dates should be published on the school website, enabling parents to make appropriate childcare arrangements.

Leave in Term Time

The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulation 2024 and the National Framework for Penalty Notices 2024 allows Headteachers the discretion to grant leave of absence during term time but only if there are 'exceptional circumstances'. Headteachers should determine the duration of school days a child can be absent from school if the leave is granted.

Any leave of absence during term time can be disruptive both to the child's learning and to the school regardless of the reason for the leave. Schools will only consider authorising leave in term time where:

- the application is made on schools 'Request for leave in term time' form, to the Headteacher in advance of the leave by a parent/carer the child normally lives with
- there are exceptional circumstances, as agreed by the Headteacher for the leave and in such circumstances the Headteacher determines the duration of any agreed leave in term time.

Applications should be made as far in advance of the leave as possible and parents/carers should seek permission for the leave from the school before they book any holidays. Schools will only agree absence in exceptional circumstances, and will need to confirm their decision in writing to the parent in a timely manner.

The legislation does not allow for retrospective permission to be granted.

How do schools consider term time holiday requests?

While absence may be granted for leave during term time, it is entirely the Headteacher/school's decision and is not a parental right.

Schools will include information for parents in their attendance policy. Information will also be available on the school website.

Parents need to be aware of the LA Code of Conduct for Penalty Notices.

Please visit the school's own and the Telford & Wrekin website.

Analysis of Attendance Data

All schools have a statutory responsibility to share pupil level data with the LA. This is available to the LA through the 'View Your Education Data' module on the DfE website. Attendance data allows the opportunity to track, monitor and analyse attendance. Schools are encouraged to analyse and compare attendance of specific groups, particularly vulnerable groups, e.g. SEND, children with a social worker, EAL pupils etc. Schools will need to a clear strategy on how they identify, track and manage pupils who are persistently or severely absent and evidence the impact of any strategy utilised to improve attendance.

All schools can access detailed attendance data from their MIS systems and when facilities are used to full capacity, the information can be of great use in schools for strategic planning and can enable schools to manage attendance issues more effectively. Data will also be analysed during any inspection and schools will be accountable for monitoring and addressing low levels of attendance and pupils who become persistent absentees.

Whole-school attendance figures produced regularly, weekly, termly etc, based on year groups, can specifically indicate factors such as:

- declining attendance in specific cohorts,
- viruses or illnesses that have an impact on specific groups or the whole school e.g. chickenpox, norovirus, (advice should be sought from Public Health England if an outbreak of a virus is identified)
- the effect of seasonal attendance e.g. whether attendance declines in the colder months and preceding/following school holidays

Weekly figures may illustrate:

- the effect of staff absenteeism and supply staff,
- the fall in attendance preceding teacher training days, half terms, study leave or work experience,
- the effect of ending terms on a Monday or Tuesday,
- the effect of activity days, day trips, or residential trips,
- the effect of the timing of the school day,
- the impact of any modified/part time timetables
- the effect of unauthorised leave in term time.

Continuous analysis of individual pupil's attendance and of the whole school gives scope to strategic planning. By identifying those levels which the school considers are indicators of persistent absenteeism or irregular attendance, it will be possible to identify the extent of the problem. The school can then target time provided by pastoral staff more effectively by producing:-

- overall attendance data for vulnerable groups
- lists of all pupils with unexplained absence which can be fed back to the responsible member of staff

- coded absence, broken down into a class and/or year group format, would allow identification of excessive unauthorised absences
- individual attendance records which highlight reasons for absence and the pattern and rate of unauthorised absence

The pastoral staff will then be able to identify and support those pupils/groups who give cause for concern.

Reintegration of Long-Term Absentees

A number of pupils miss long periods of school through sickness, exclusion, school refusal, etc. and may feel especially vulnerable when they do eventually return. It is vital to make the transition back to full-time school as smooth as possible.

Ideally, the return of the long-term absentee needs to be carefully planned but this may not always be possible.

To ease the return of the long-term absentee, schools may need to consider an Individual Pupil Action Plan:

- nominate a key person to co-ordinate, monitor and review the child's return - a favourite teacher may be the ideal person,
- ensure that all staff are aware of, and alert to, the situation,
- consider the possible need for a phased or gradual return,
- consider the timetable and determine what is immediately possible and manageable for the child. Liaise with the LA about the use of any part time timetable and follow the modified timetable protocol with a structured timeline. NB: schools must obtain parental agreement and signature/s
- involve parent/pupil with planning & what support is appropriate

Children Missing Education(CME) & Child Not Receiving Education (CNRE)

for information please email childrenmissingeducation@telford.gov.uk

Further guidance is available in '*Protocol for Identifying and Maintaining Contact with Children Missing Education*'

Children in Care

There has been growing concern nationally about the attendance and educational achievements of children and young people in the care of the Local Authorities. Children and young people may be looked after by the local authority for a variety of reasons. Most children are in care under voluntary arrangements. A minority are subject to care orders.

The Virtual School (VST) are the LA team who have statutory responsibilities to support children in care (CIC). The VST work in partnership with all other agencies and schools to ensure children in care are fully supported in their educational placement.

Many of the children in care will have been affected by distressing and damaging experiences. They may be living away from home because of family breakdown, abuse or neglect, or social need. Nearly all will have to cope with some sense of loss of family, siblings, and friends, of identity or familiar surroundings. Some will carry guilt feelings and other hidden injuries and many will have very low self-esteem. All or any of these factors will affect the way these children act. It is important, therefore, that these disadvantages are not compounded and that early entry into local schools is facilitated.

Schools are of course responsible for a large number of pupils and some children in care may display a range of behavioural and discipline challenges. However, working in partnership with the VST to ensure a supportive, consistent and caring education can help many children recover from the adversities that have beset them.

To summarise:

The Attendance Support Team aims to help parents and the LA meet the obligations and duties placed upon them by successive Education Acts and Child Care legislation.

AST aims to enable all children to gain maximum benefit from their education, regardless of race, gender, ability, status, culture and religion by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

In the changing world of education, these procedures explain the role and function of the AST in relation to schools, families, children and other agencies. It also provides a framework whereby schools and the AST can negotiate the degree of support appropriate to individual requirements.

The AST will consider all the circumstances of any referral and may seek further information from school staff (e.g. Social Care, Early Help intervention) before issuing any warning notice or penalty notices to parents. An AST referral should be submitted by the school via the SAM portal.

The AST Guidance for Referrals and Legal Intervention for Schools

Training on this guidance and the accompanying manual is available to all schools.

For any other enquiry regarding school attendance please contact the Attendance Support Team on (01952) (3)85220 or email attendancesupportteam@telford.gov.uk