



# Attendance Policy



Board approved:  
Review Frequency: annual  
Date of next review: June 2025

## Record of Changes

Date	Section	Change
June 2024	New Whole-trust policy	Updated 2024 guidance

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## School Contacts & Response to Absence for Parents/Carers

### Bridge Learning Campus

#### First Day of Absence Response

- Parents/carers are expected to notify the school of the reason for their child's absence on **each** day of absence. Parents/carers can do this by phoning **01179 030356** and speaking to our Attendance Administrator, Miss McDonald:
  - Primary Absence – Option 1
  - Primary Absence – Class Dojo & search 'Miss Attendance'
  - Secondary Absence – Option 2
  - All absences – [attendance@blc.school](mailto:attendance@blc.school)

Miss Allen – Attendance Manager

Miss Morse – Attendance & Welfare Officer

Miss McDonald – Attendance Administrator

For voice messages, please include the child's full name, date of birth and year group. This is so we know the message is from a responsible adult.

- If we have not heard from a parent/carer and a pupil is absent, from **9.05am** a member of the school attendance or pastoral team will follow up the absence by contacting the parent/carer. If there is no response, the school will phone pupil's emergency contacts, in priority order. Priority will be given where there is additional support in place, or where pupils are considered more vulnerable for example a child in care or on a child protection/child in need plan, children who have previously been reported missing, or children with concerning attendance.
- A list is kept in the primary school office of pupils who walk to school on their own. If a pupil doesn't arrive, and the school has not been notified of the reason for absence, parents/carers are contacted as a priority. Parents/carers who wish to add their child to this list should speak to staff in the school office.
- If the school is unable to establish why the pupil is absent and/or is concerned for the welfare of the pupil, staff may undertake our own 'safe and well' checks, request a Welfare Check from the police or contact Children's Social Care.

#### Pre-agreed absence

- Parents/carers are not required to contact the school on the day of an absence if the parent/carer has already formally notified the school prior to the day of absence and the absence has been agreed in advance. For example, a planned hospital appointment or an exceptional term time leave of absence which has already been agreed by the headteacher in writing.

#### Illness

- We encourage parents/carers to carefully consider whether their child can attend school or if they really are too ill for school. Informed decisions should be led by the National Health Service's (NHS) '[Is my child too ill for school?](#)' guidance.

### **Emergency Contacts**

- Parents/carers are asked to supply details of at least three other adults who can be contacted in an emergency. It is the responsibility of parents/carers to keep these contact details up to date by communicating with the school office. The school will also remind parents/carers about this through parents/carers' evenings/newsletter reminders.

### **Following up Unexplained Absences**

- The school will follow up any absences where the parent/carer has not made contact to explain the reason. Following up on unexplained absences can take up a considerable amount of school resources, so we ask parents/carers to respect staff time and report absences promptly.
- When the school establishes the reason for the absence, it will be marked as authorised or unauthorised depending on the reason. If the school is unable to establish the reason for absence, having followed the school's attendance procedures, the absence will be marked as unauthorised.

### **Persistent Absence**

- If a pupil is persistently absent from school and the school cannot establish a reason and/or confirm the pupil's whereabouts, the school will take individual action, depending on the circumstances. This could include contacting wider family members, making enquiries with neighbours, contacting other professionals, requesting a Welfare Check from the police, and making referrals to Children's Social Care.

### **Rewarding Good and Improved Attendance**

- The school recognises that rewarding good and improved attendance should be carefully considered to ensure it does not make pupils who have poor attendance feel marginalised, worried or guilty about their low attendance rate, its impact on the pupil's own learning or the learning or rewards for the class as a whole.
- The school will regularly review any reward systems to ensure they are not negatively impacting on individual pupils or groups of pupils.

### **Reporting to Parents/Carers**

- The school will include each pupil's attendance information in their termly report and provide parents/carers with a copy of their attendance summary for the year in Term 6. If parents/carers wish to see a copy of their child's attendance summary at any other time during the year, they can ask for a printed copy from the school office.
- Where a pupil's attendance drops below 97%, the school may contact parents/carers to highlight this, unless there is a good reason not to.

### **School Support for Attendance**

The school wants to support all pupils to attend well. For any concerns about attendance, parents/carers can contact:

#### **Attendance Team**

Miss Allen – Attendance Manager Across Campus – [kallen@blc.school](mailto:kallen@blc.school)

Miss Morse – Attendance & Welfare Officer Across Campus – [smorse@blc.school](mailto:smorse@blc.school)

We recognise that supporting pupils back into school following a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence is crucial, to provide support to build confidence and bridge gaps. If you require more support on attendance, then please contact:

- Year N – 6 Kirsty Moore and Sharon Tarling [kmoore@blc.school](mailto:kmoore@blc.school)/[starling@blc.school](mailto:starling@blc.school)
- Y7 – Nicholas Trudgen [ntrudgen@blc.school](mailto:ntrudgen@blc.school)
- Y8 – Louise Saunders [lsaunders@blc.school](mailto:lsaunders@blc.school)
- Y9 – Mark Young [myoung@blc.school](mailto:myoung@blc.school)
- Y10 – Claire Harrison [charrison@blc.school](mailto:charrison@blc.school)
- Y11 – Sandra Lee [slee@blc.school](mailto:slee@blc.school)

### **Mental Health/Wellbeing**

Parents who have concerns about their child's mental wellbeing can contact the school's SENDCo or Designated Safeguarding Lead for further information on the support available.

- Laura Rudd (SENDCO) [SEN@blc.school](mailto:SEN@blc.school)
- Lisa Cains (SEMH Lead) [lcains@blc.school](mailto:lcains@blc.school)
- Liz Hackling (Designated Safeguarding Lead) [ehackling@blc.school](mailto:ehackling@blc.school)

### **Special Educational Needs or Disability**

Parents are encouraged to contact the schools' SENDCo if they have any concerns about their child. Any pupils with SEND should have attendance considered and reviewed as part of their individual support plans or the Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

If parents think their child may have special educational needs but these have not yet been formally identified, they are encouraged to contact the school SENDCO.

### **Urgent health concerns**

- Parents /carers should contact their GP (doctor) or the NHS Helpline on 111 if they are concerned about their child's mental or physical health and wellbeing
- In case of emergency, parents/carers should call 999.
- After seeking emergency advice and support, parents should also let the school know as soon as is practicable.

### **Frequent absence due to health needs**

If a pupil is frequently absent from school due to particular health need/s the school may ask to meet with parents/carers (and other professionals where appropriate) to draw up an Individual Healthcare Plan to support the pupil's attendance. Please ask for the Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions policy.

Miss Allen – Attendance manager – [kallen@blc.school](mailto:kallen@blc.school)

Rachel Brown – School Nurse – [rbrown@blc.school](mailto:rbrown@blc.school)

## 1. Policy Statement

1.1 It is the aim of all schools within Trust in Learning Academies that pupils should enjoy learning, experience success and realise their full potential. The Attendance Policy reflects this and recognises that regular attendance has a positive effect on the motivation and attainment of pupils.

1.2 Trust in Learning Academies make an unwavering commitment to excellent pupil attendance, centred around proactive child-centred actions, evidence-informed practices, data analysis and insights, and a shared understanding of everyone's roles and collective responsibilities.

1.3 Trust in Learning Academies place a particular emphasis on creating a 'sense of belonging' within our schools, so that our pupils feel a secure connection to the school which they attend. We also believe in the benefits of building positive parental partnerships to establish trust and understanding in order to overcome any potential barriers to attendance together. Improving attendance is everyone's business.

The principals of a 'support first approach' are adopted, and we seek to:

<b>Support first approach</b>	
<b>Expect</b>	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.
<b>Monitor</b>	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.
<b>Listen and understand</b>	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.
<b>Facilitate support</b>	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.
<b>Formalise support</b>	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.
<b>Enforce</b>	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.

## 2. Reference to related policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with existing trust-wide and school policies including (but not limited to) the following:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy
- Behaviour for Learning Policy including Anti-Bullying Policy
- Exclusions and Suspensions Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy

## 3. Legislation and Guidance

3.1 This policy meets the requirements of the following legislation which sets out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance including:

- The Education Act 1996 (as amended)
- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- The Education (Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders) (England) Regulations 2007
- The Education (Information about Individual Pupils) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendments) Regulations 2024
- The Children Act 1989
- The Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- The Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Sentencing Act 2020

DfE guidance:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 (as amended)
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance, applies from 19 August 2024
- The Equality Act 2010 and schools, 2014
- Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions, 2015
- Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs, 2013
- School attendance parental responsibility measures, 2015
- School census guidance, 2022
- Home to school travel and transport guidance, 2014
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools, 2023

Local Authority Guidance from Bristol City Council and South Gloucestershire Council

- Children Missing Education Guidance
- Education Penalty Notice Code of Conduct

## 4. Equalities Impact

This policy will be applied fairly and consistently, taking into account the individual needs of our pupils and their families who have specific barriers to attendance. Therefore, in the development of our policy we have considered our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. An equality impact assessment has been undertaken for this policy in accordance with the Trust's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion and the Public Sector Equality Duty.

## 5. Data Use

The personal information used by Trust in Learning Academies to help manage attendance and absence is governed by the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018. Much of this information will be sensitive, to both pupils and their parents/carers, and staff take care to apply appropriate safeguards to ensure personal information is processed fairly and lawfully, is the minimum amount necessary to achieve our aims, is accurate, and where necessary, kept up to date, is not held for longer than is necessary and remains safe and secure.

## 6. Aims

6.1 Our schools aim to meet their obligations with regard to school attendance by promoting good attendance, ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled, acting early to address patterns of absence, and creating a culture in which the importance of good school attendance is understood and valued by all parties.

6.2 This policy sets out our school's position on attendance and details the procedures that all parents<sup>1</sup> must follow to report their child's absence from school and to remind them of their legal duty, to ensure their child attends school regularly.

6.3 It is vital that children develop regular attendance habits at an early age. Therefore, schools will encourage parents of pre-school children, and Reception children who are not yet of compulsory school age, to send their children to every session that is available to them. If the child is unable to attend the school for any reason, the parent should inform the school of the reason on the first day of absence. If the school is concerned about a pupil's attendance for any reason, the school will contact the parent to discuss the matter, in the first instance.

6.4 The school will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory<sup>2</sup> school age attend regularly and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

6.5 Pupils should go to school every day unless they are really not well enough to attend. Children who attend school regularly are more likely to feel settled in school, maintain friendships, keep up with their learning and gain the greatest benefit from their education. Trust in Learning Academies want all our pupils to enjoy school, grow up to become emotionally resilient, confident and competent adults who are able to realise their full potential. Regular attendance and punctuality is essential in the workplace and children who are used to attending school on time, and on every occasion unless they are too unwell to attend, will be better prepared for the attendance expectations in the workplace.

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<sup>1</sup> Education law defines parents as: all natural parents, whether they are married or not; any person who has parental responsibility for a child or young person; and any person who has care of a child or young person i.e., lives with and looks after the child. In this policy the term 'parent' includes parents and carers.

<sup>2</sup> A child becomes of 'compulsory school age' on the 1st January, 1st April or 1st September following their 5th birthday and ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of Year 11.



6.6 In April 2017 the Supreme Court clarified the definition of regular attendance to be attendance “in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school”, therefore if an absence is not authorised by the school, the pupil’s attendance is deemed to be irregular.

6.7 The school will do all it can to encourage our pupils to attend. The school will also make available the best provision it can for any pupil who needs additional support in school or who is prevented from attending school, due to physical or mental health needs or disability. The academy recognises for disabled pupils, ‘reasonable adjustments’ may be needed to the school environment or to policies to support good attendance. Please see DfE guidance documents ‘Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions - December 2015’, ‘Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs- January 2013’ and Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) – or ask the school for printed copies.

6.8 One of the most important factors in promoting good attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards school and a sense of belonging. To this end, the school strives to provide a happy and rewarding experience for all children, and to foster positive and mutually respectful relationships with parents.

6.9 By promoting good attendance and punctuality the school aims to:

- Make good attendance and punctuality a priority for all those involved in the school community.
- Raise our pupils’ awareness of the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- Provide support, advice and guidelines to parents, pupils and staff.
- Work in partnership with parents, including regularly informing them about their child’s absence and attendance levels.

## **7. Effects of non-attendance**

7.1 Any absence affects the pattern of a child’s schooling and regular absence may seriously affect their learning. The Department for Education (DfE) defines a pupil as a ‘persistent absentee’ when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year, for whatever reason. For pupils who miss more than 50% of possible sessions they are defined as ‘severely absent’.

7.2 The school will ensure that data is routinely monitored to identify emerging attendance issues and will seek to prevent any pupil becoming persistently or severely absent. This will include identifying the individual needs of pupils, working closely with families and wider support services to remove barriers to attendance, and formalising approaches in line with DfE guidance.

## **8. Barriers to Attendance**

8.1 To understand barriers to attendance, the school will ensure all pupils and parents are treated with dignity and staff will model respectful relationships to build a positive understanding between home and school that can be the foundation of good attendance. In communicating with parents, staff will highlight the link between attendance and attainment and wider wellbeing and enhance their understanding of what good attendance looks like. Where a pupil or family needs support with attendance the school will identify who is best placed to work with them to address issues.

8.2 The school will support pupils and parents by working together to address any in-school barriers to attendance. Where barriers are outside of the school's control, all partners should work together to support pupils and parents to access any support they may need voluntarily.

8.3 Some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include pupils who have long term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities. Schools are mindful of the barriers these pupils may face and will put additional support in place where necessary to help them access their full-time education.

8.4 Where absence intensifies, the school will work in tandem with the local authority and other relevant partners to increase support. Reduced timetable will only be used in exceptional circumstances, for a limited period, to support pupils to reintegrate back into full time provision wherever possible.

8.5 The school is committed to sharing information and working collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe

## **9. Safeguarding and Attendance**

9.1 Our schools will monitor trends and patterns of absence for all pupils as a part of their standard procedures. If a pupil is not attending as required, where the school deems it appropriate, staff may make home visits to see and speak to the pupil and parents/carers as part of the academy's safeguarding and attendance processes. If staff are unable to see and speak to the pupil and parents/carers, they may contact the pupil's emergency contacts and/or other professionals or contacts of the family, who they reasonably expect may be able to provide the school with relevant information.

9.2 Schools are aware that sudden or gradual changes in a pupil's attendance may indicate additional or more extreme safeguarding issues. In line with government guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (2024 version, or as updated by the DfE) staff will investigate and report any suspected safeguarding cases on to the relevant authorities. As part of the school's safeguarding duty and standard procedures, staff will inform the relevant Local Authority and/or the Police of the details of any pupil who is absent from school when the school cannot establish their whereabouts and is concerned for the pupil's welfare.

## **10. Contents of the Admissions Register**

10.1 The admission register (sometimes referred to as the school roll) must contain specific personal details of every pupil in the school along with the date of admission or re-admission to the school, information regarding parents and carers, and details of the school last attended. The school will enter pupils on the admission register at the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed with, or been notified by the parent, that the pupil will attend.

10.2 A pupil's name can only lawfully be deleted from the admission register if a reason set out in regulation 9 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. As the register is a legal document, parents are encouraged to inform the school of any changes whenever they occur and ensure the admission register is amended as soon as possible.

## 11. Contents of the Attendance Register

11.1 The law states that schools must take the attendance register at the start of the morning session of each school day and once during the afternoon session. On each occasion the register is taken the appropriate national attendance and absence code must be entered for every pupil. The school must record whether each pupil is present or absent.

11.2 Effective and timely use and sharing of register data is critical to safeguard children, improve attendance and is supported by the use of schools' electronic Management Information System to record attendance information. The school's registers will be preserved for 6 years from the date after the last entry was made.

## 12. Attending the School (and Lateness)

12.1 Pupils are marked present if they are in the academy when the register is taken. If a pupil leaves the academy premises after registration, they are still counted as present for statistical purposes.

12.2 It is the duty of parents/carers to ensure that children attend school on time. This encourages habits of good timekeeping and lessens any possible classroom disruption. However, it is also recognised that pupils are sometimes late due to reasons such as caring for parents/carers or siblings, or transport difficulties.

12.3 If a pupil starts arriving late to the school on a regular basis, staff will work with the pupil and family to find out why the pupil is late and whether any support is needed for the pupil or family, in order to support the pupil to attend on time.

### 12.4 Morning registration

- Our gates open at **8.00am** and children are encouraged to come in from this time in order for them to settle in the classroom ready to learn.
- Our pupils must arrive by **8.35 am** on each school day.
- Pupils arriving after **8:40 am** will be marked as late (L) – which still counts as present. See DfE Attendance Codes – Appendix One.
- If a pupil arrives after the close of registration after **9:15 am**, they will be marked with the unauthorised absence code 'Late after registers close' (U) for the morning session. (See 'Unauthorised Absence' section for more information on unauthorised absences.) If a pupil arrives late after the registers close due to a valid reason, such as an unavoidable medical appointment, their absence will be marked with the appropriate authorised absence code.

### 12.5 Afternoon registration

- The afternoon register is taken at **1:00 pm** and will be kept open until **1:15 pm**.
- If a pupil has been out of school during the morning and/or lunchtime session and arrives at school after the times set out above, they will be marked (L) – which counts as present.

- If a pupil arrives after **1:15 pm** they will be marked with the unauthorised absence code 'Late after registers close' (U) for the afternoon session. If a pupil arrives late after the afternoon registers close due to a valid reason, such as an unavoidable medical appointment, their absence will be marked with the appropriate authorised absence code.

### 13. Effects of Late Arrival

13.1 When a child arrives late to school, they miss important events like assembly, teacher instructions and introductions. Children often also feel embarrassed at having to enter the classroom late.

13.2 The table below indicates how frequent lateness can add up to a considerable amount of learning being lost. This can seriously disadvantage children and disrupt the learning of others.

Minutes late per Day	Equates to Days of Teaching Lost in one Year	Which means this number of lessons missed
5 mins	3 Days	15 Lessons
10 mins	6 Days	30 Lessons
15 mins	9 Days	45 Lessons

### 14. Attending a place other than the school

14.1 Pupils are marked as attending a place other than the school if they are present for the assigned session. These codes include:

- Code K Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
- Code V: Attending an educational visit or trip
- Code P: Participating in a sporting activity
- Code W: Attending work experience
- Code B: Attending any other approved education activity
- Code D: Dual registered at another setting

14.2 The school retains responsibilities for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils attending an approved educational activity. The school must be satisfied that appropriate measures have been taken to safeguard the pupil. The school should ensure that arrangements are in place whereby providers notify the school of any absence. The school must record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

14.3 If a pupil is attending an alternative education provider such as another school, or Pupil Referral Unit, for part or all of their education, the school will make arrangements for the pupil to be dual registered at the other setting and mark the registers accordingly.

14.4 If a pupil is attending an alternative education provider arranged by the school, which is not a school or Pupil Referral Unit, for part or all of their education, the school will mark the sessions which the pupil attends the alternative setting as code B (any other approved educational activity). The school expects the alternative provider (AP) to notify school staff of any absences by individual pupils, to ensure the school is aware of any attendance concerns as soon as possible and can take follow up action as necessary. Attendance updating frequency is daily unless agreed with the alternative setting. Any attendance concerns will be followed up by the school in conjunction with the Alternative Provider (AP).

## 15. Authorised absence

15.1 A leave of absence means that the school has given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away from the school. These codes are classified for statistical purposes as 'authorised absence' which means the pupils absence is with permission granted by the school. These codes include:

- Code C1: Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad
- Code M: Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment
- Code J1: Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
- Code S: Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination
- Code X: Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
- Code C2: Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
- Code C: Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance

### 15.2 Medical/Dental Appointments

- Parents should try to make appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where appointments during school time are unavoidable, the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment. It is not acceptable for a child to miss a whole day's schooling for an appointment, unless absolutely necessary, in which case the school will need an explanation as to why this is.
- If a pupil must attend a medical appointment during the school day, they must be collected from the school office by the parent or another authorised adult, and signed out in the 'signing out' book. No pupil will be allowed to leave the school site without parental confirmation.
- Advance notice is required for medical or dental appointments, unless it's an emergency appointment, and must be supported by providing the school with sight of, or a copy of, the appointment card or letter – only then will the absence be authorised.

**15.3 Part-time timetables** - Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable

- Pupils are entitled to a full-time education, suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and any special educational needs or disabilities that they may have.
- If, for any reason, the school is unable to provide a pupil with a full-time education due to the pupil's needs, staff will work with the pupil, parent and other agencies where appropriate, to come to a mutually convenient arrangement. Any reduced timetables will be for the shortest amount of time possible, whilst arrangements are made to support the pupil's return to full-time provision as soon as possible. See Appendix 3 for full details.

### 15.4 Leave of Absence Requests – 'Exceptional Circumstances'

**The law does not grant parents the automatic right to take their child out of school during term time.**

- Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of 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.

- The school will consider each application individually, taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.
- The request must be made by the parent with whom the child normally lives, and permission must be sought in advance.
- The school will not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. The school must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances, based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case; following consultation with other staff as required, including the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days the pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the school's discretion.
- Circumstances which could be authorised include significant family emergencies or funerals. However, parents will also be aware that, wherever possible, it can be better for children to continue to attend school normally during difficult family times.
- Parents should complete a Leave of Absence Request form which is available from the school. The request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated, and wherever possible, at least **four weeks** before the absence. **Although such absence may be unauthorised, it is better that we know your child is safe, rather than missing.** Please be aware that you may be required to provide us with additional evidence in order to support your request.
- If the school has any concerns about possible safeguarding risks such as risk of FGM or Forced Marriage we will follow the necessary protocols. (Please see the school's Safeguarding Policy for more information.)
- All term time absence for children in care should be discussed at the child's Personal Education Planning (PEP) meeting in advance where possible and agreed with the Social Care and The HOPE Virtual School. This permission should be gained before school is approached for approval. The school will contact the HOPE Virtual School in relation to any requests for term time absence for a child in care.

### 15.5 Absent – other authorised reasons

Absent due to other authorised reasons means that the school has given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away from the school or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence. These codes are classified for statistical purposes as 'authorised absence'. These codes include:

- Code I: Illness (not medical or dental appointment)
- Code T: Parent travelling for occupational purposes
- Code R: Religious observance
- Code E: Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made

### 15.6 Illness

- In most cases, absences for illness which are reported by following the school's absence reporting procedures will be authorised.
- The school follows Department for Education guidance '[Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\) \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)' 2024<sup>3</sup> which states that if

the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the parent to provide medical evidence, such as a prescription, appointment card, or other appropriate form of evidence.

- Where a parent cannot provide any written evidence, staff will endeavour to have a conversation with the parent and pupil, if appropriate, which may itself serve as the necessary evidence to record the absence.
- The school will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily. In some instances, the school may ask the parent to obtain a letter from a GP, or the school may seek parental permission to contact the pupil's GP directly to help support the needs of the individual pupil.
- If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.
- Where a pupil has a high level and/or frequency of absence, the school may require medical evidence of some description in order to authorise any future medical absences. If this is the case, the school will make the parent/s aware of this expectation in advance.
- The reporting of absence due to illness remains the responsibility of the parent. Absences due to illness which have **not** been reported to the school by the parent on the first day of absence may not be authorised.

#### **15.7 Pupils taken ill during the school day**

- If a pupil needs to be sent home due to illness, this should be by agreement with an appropriately authorised member of school staff.
- In such circumstances, the pupil must be collected from the school office/Reception by a parent or another authorised adult (unless otherwise agreed between the school and the parent) and signed out in the 'signing out' book. No pupil will be allowed to leave the school site without parent confirmation.

#### **15.8 Mobile pupils - Parent travelling for occupational purposes**

- The school will authorise the absence of a mobile pupil of no fixed abode who is unable to attend school because they are travelling with their parent who is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require them to travel from place to place. This is subject to certain limits, depending on the child's age and number of sessions absent. The school will discuss cases individually with Traveller parents as necessary. Parents should let the school know of their plans as far in advance as possible. Authorised Traveller absence will be recorded appropriately in the register.
- To help ensure continuity of education for Traveller children, wherever possible, the child should attend school elsewhere when their family is travelling for occupational purposes. In which case the child will be dual registered at that school and this school, which is their 'main' school.
- Children from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities whose families do not travel for occupational purposes are expected to register at school and attend as normal. They are subject to the same rules as other children in terms of the requirement to attend school regularly.

### 15.9 Religious Observance

- The school acknowledges the multi-faith nature of the school community and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside of school holidays or weekends.
- In accordance with the law, the school will authorise one day's absence for a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs.
- Should any additional days be necessary, they should be requested in advance using the leave of absence in term time process.
- Additional days taken without exceptional circumstances, will be recorded in the register as unauthorised absence. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body, to confirm whether the day is set apart.

### 15.10 Suspensions (previously called fixed-term exclusions)

- If the school decides to send a pupil home due to their behaviour, this will be recorded as an Exclusion. The school will follow the current DfE's statutory guidance on exclusions.
- Any exclusion **must** be agreed by the headteacher.
- The school will notify the parent of the exclusion in writing. If the pupil is a Child in Care, the school will notify the pupil's carer, social worker and the HOPE Virtual School. In other instances, where a pupil is open to Children's Social Care for any reason, the school will also inform their allocated social worker.
- The pupil must be collected from the school office by the parent or another authorised adult, and signed out in the 'signing out' book. No pupil will be allowed to leave the school site without parental confirmation.

### 15.11 Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause

In accordance with DfE school attendance guidance, the school will record pupils as 'Unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause' in the following circumstances (such circumstances are not recorded as absences and are not counted as possible attendances):

- Code Q: Unable to attend because of a lack of access arrangements
- Code Y1: Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
- Code Y2: Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
- Code Y3: Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
- Code Y4: Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
- Code Y5: Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
- Code Y6: Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
- Code Y7: Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause



## 16. Unauthorised absence

16.1 Unauthorised absence is where a school is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence or no reason for absence was provided. Absence will be unauthorised if a pupil is absent from school without the permission of the school.

16.2 Whilst parents can provide explanations for absences, it is the school's decision whether to authorise the absence or not.

Unauthorised absence includes:

- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Pupils who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- Shopping
- Haircuts
- Birthdays
- Waiting at home for a washing machine to be mended, or a parcel to be delivered
- Day trips
- Long weekends and holidays in term time (unless very exceptional circumstances are agreed in writing, in advance by the school)
- In the case of term time leave - if a pupil is kept away from school longer than was agreed, the additional absence is unauthorised

16.3 Unauthorised absences may result in Legal Sanctions, usually Penalty Notices or Prosecutions. The unauthorised absence codes include:

- Code G – Holiday not granted by the school
- Code N – Reason for absence not yet established
- Code O – Absent in other or unknown circumstances
- Code U – Arrived in school after registration closed

### 16.4 Administrative codes

Where necessary and applicable, our school will use the defined administrative codes. These codes are not collected for statistical purposes and are:

- Code Z: Prospective pupil not on admissions register
- Code #: Planned whole school closure

## 17. Recording Information on Attendance and Reasons for Absence

All absences are recorded in the attendance register in the school's management information system. Information about the reason for the absence, how it was reported and by whom, and any additional information pertinent to the absence may also be recorded.

## 18. Support for Poor School Attendance (other than unauthorised term time leave)

18.1 Sometimes pupils can be reluctant to attend school. School staff encourage parents and pupils to be open and honest with them about the reason for the pupil's absence. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or for a parent to give in to pressure to let the child stay at home. This can give the impression to the child that attendance does not matter and can make things worse. School staff need to understand the reasons why a pupil is reluctant to attend in order to be able to support pupils and parents in the best way.

18.2 When the school has concerns about the attendance of a pupil, staff will do their best to make the parent/s aware of the concerns about their child's attendance and give them the opportunity to address this. Communication can be provided in accessible formats and can be offered in different languages if requested. However, if parents do not make use of the support offered and improve their child's attendance to an acceptable level, this may result in legal sanctions.

18.3 Where there are no genuine reasons for the absences, parents may be asked to meet with a member of staff to discuss the matter. In some cases, this may result in a formal action plan being produced in the form of an Attendance Contract.

18.4 If the school refers a case of poor school attendance to the Local Authority for legal sanctions, the school will show that they have warned the parent/s that they are at risk of receiving a Penalty Notice or other legal sanction. This will at least be evidenced via the sending of a Notice to Improve – attendance warning letter.

18.5 The school will not usually request legal sanctions from the Local Authority in cases where poor attendance is symptomatic of complex family circumstances. In such circumstances the school will take a holistic approach to the issue and involve other agencies as necessary. The exception to this will be where parents fail to accept or engage with support offered by the school and/or other agencies or fail to implement the suggested changes. When referring for legal sanctions, the school will show that they have warned the parent/s that they are at risk of receiving a Penalty Notice or other legal sanction. If the school has safeguarding concerns about a pupil who is absent, staff will share information with other agencies as they deem necessary.

## **19. Penalty Notices and Prosecutions**

19.1 Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends school on a regular basis. It is a criminal offence under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 to fail to secure regular attendance of a registered pupil at the school. This applies to both resident and non-resident parents who may both be subject to legal sanctions if their child fails to attend school regularly. It also applies to others who may not be the parent but may have day to day care of the child.

19.2 Unauthorised absence from school can result in a number of different outcomes for parents and children. Each case is considered individually.

19.3 Under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, if a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school his/her parent(s) are guilty of an offence.

19.4 Parents with more than one school aged child need to be aware that each child's irregular attendance is dealt with as a separate matter.

19.5 The school will refer cases of unauthorised absence that meet the threshold for a Penalty Notice to the Local Authority for legal action unless there are reasonable grounds for not doing so. The outcome of a referral to the Local Authority may be a Penalty Notice or Prosecution.

19.6 Penalty Notices are intended as a sanction for low level offences and a tool to support improved school attendance, for example in circumstances associated with an unauthorised holiday taken during term time. They are an alternative to prosecution and may not be issued if prosecution is considered to be a more appropriate response to a pupil's irregular attendance. See Appendix 5.

19.7 A pupil's unauthorised absence from school could result in one of the following:

- **Penalty Notice**

The penalty is £80 per parent, per child payable within 21 days, rising to £160 per parent, per child if paid between 22 and 28 days. (Failure to pay will result in prosecution.)

If a second Penalty Notice is issued within a rolling 3-year period the penalty is £160 per parent, per child if paid within 28 days. There will be no option to pay a lower amount.

- **Prosecution**

Prosecution could lead to fines up to £2500 and /or up to 3 months imprisonment. (See DfE's statutory guidance on [School attendance parental responsibility measures](#) for more information and Bristol City Council/South Gloucestershire Penalty Notice Code of Conduct

19.8 Penalty Notices and prosecution proceedings are issued to each parent with responsibility for the child and are issued for each child with irregular attendance. For example, in the case of Penalty Notices, if two siblings had irregular school attendance, and there were two parents with responsibility for the children, four Penalty Notices would be issued. Penalty Notices cannot be paid in instalments.

19.9 In addition to Penalty Notices, there is a range of other legal interventions open to schools. Schools, trusts and local authorities are expected to work together and make use of the full range of legal interventions rather than relying solely on fixed penalty notices or prosecution. It is for individual schools and local authorities to decide whether to use them in an individual case after considering the individual circumstances of a family. These are:

- Parenting contracts
- Education supervision orders
- Attendance prosecution
- Parenting orders
- Fixed penalty notices

## **20. Children Missing Education (CME)**


20.1 If the school has reason to believe the pupil may no longer be living at the address held on record and staff are unable to confirm the whereabouts of the pupil through the school's usual processes, staff will follow their Local Authority Children Missing Education guidance and make CME and Pupil Tracking referrals as appropriate. The school will seek advice from the Children Missing Education Officer if further support is required for individual cases.

20.2 If a parent notifies the school in writing that the pupil and family are moving out of the area and the pupil no longer requires a place, the school will remove the pupil from roll in line with the law and local authority guidance and will referrals/grounds for deletion notification forms as appropriate.

## **21. Removing a Pupil from the School Roll**

21.1 The school will add and delete pupils from roll in line with the law. A pupil's name can only lawfully be deleted from the admission register if a reason set out in regulation 9 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

21.2 Trust schools do not encourage Elective Home Education, as for the vast majority of pupils, school education is best for their academic and social development. If a parent expresses a wish to home



educate, steps will be taken prior to this being agreed in order to mitigate and/or resolve any identified issues and to ensure that this decision is made in the best interests of the child. The school follows all legislative/local authority guidance, to ensure the pupil is registered with the Local Authority as receiving Elective Home Education and have assumed responsibility for the pupil, prior to deletion from roll.

21.3 For pupils who have moved out of area (including emigration), the school will submit Statutory Notification as soon as it is made aware of the situation, and follows all legislative/local authority guidance to determine the precise date when the pupil should be deleted from roll.

21.4 For Pupil Transfers to a New School, the school will confirm the pupil's start date at the new school and that the pupil has started there, and then submit the Statutory Notification to the Local Authority prior to deletion from roll.

## **22. Policy Monitoring Arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Trust Attendance Team, or more frequently if there are changes to legislation and guidance. At every review, the policy will be shared with school and Trust governance.

## Appendix 1 – Department for Education (DfE) Attendance & Absence Codes

<b>Attending</b>	
/ \	Present at the school / = morning session \ = afternoon session
L	Late arrival before the register is closed
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip
P	Participating in a sporting activity
W	Attending work experience
B	Attending any other approved educational activity
D	Dual registered at another school
<b>Authorised Absent – Leave of absence</b>	
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.
M	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance
<b>Absent – other authorised reasons</b>	
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)
E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made
<b>Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable causes</b>	
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause
<b>Absent – unauthorised absence</b>	
G	Holiday not granted by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances
U	Arrived in school after registration closed
<b>Administrative Codes</b>	
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register
#	Planned whole school closure

## Appendix 2 - Roles and Responsibilities

### **The Trust Board**

The Board is responsible for approving the Trust policy.

### **The Local Governing Board/School Improvement Board**

The governing board is responsible for approving the school's adaptations to the policy, and for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school at least 5 times a year. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

### **The Headteacher**

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors. The headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and meets with families to discuss attendance where appropriate. The headteacher makes requests for fixed-penalty notices and requests for other legal action, where necessary. The headteacher and/or their delegate is responsible to attend legal meetings regarding absence.

### **The Senior Leadership Team**

The Senior Leadership Team supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and implementing the attendance policy, meeting with families to discuss attendance where appropriate. The Senior Leadership Team prioritises school actions to support attendance of these children, including school activities to support children to feel a sense of belonging in school.

At least one member of the Senior Leadership Team (leading Attendance) explores data insights to understand attendance by group, such as gender, pupils entitled to Free School Meals, Pupil Premium pupils, pupils with SEND, Children in Care and attendance by Ethnicity and Language (English/EAL), and protected characteristics, and feeds back to the Senior Leadership Team. This member of staff is proactive in mitigating persistent and severe absence through data-oriented approaches and adjusting these plans as necessary. They take responsibility for ensuring the school conforms to all statutory requirements in respect of attendance e.g. maintenance of the school register, daily sharing of attendance data with the DfE and deletion from school roll, and that all school staff complete their attendance responsibilities in line with the school's policies and procedures. This member of staff ensures staff are suitably trained in attendance procedures, and seeks feedback from stakeholders on strengths and weaknesses in school procedures.

### **Attendance Team**

Depending on the size of the school, the attendance team may consist of an attendance lead, office administrator, Heads of Year, pastoral support managers, family support worker, among others. Their role is to monitor attendance data at the school and individual pupil level, report concerns about attendance to the headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) as appropriate, arrange calls/meetings/home visits with parents to discuss attendance issues, proactively work to improve pupil attendance by using knowledge of anticipated absence (e.g. through prior analysis) to support pupils (and their parents) in attending school regularly and on time, and to recognise and praise students (and their parents) whose attendance is improving.

### **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**

The DSL provides safeguarding support and advice to attendance colleagues as appropriate, taking safeguarding action where necessary. The DSL reviews the attendance of the most vulnerable pupils and agrees any action needed.

### **Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO)**

The SENCO meets with the Attendance Team fortnightly to review the attendance of the pupils on the School's SEND Register and agrees any action needed. The SENDCo is proactive in mitigating persistent and severe absence through data-oriented approaches and adjusting these plans as necessary.

### **Class Teachers**

Class teachers are responsible for recording their pupils' attendance twice daily, using the correct codes, and submitting this information via the school's information management system. Where there are attendance concerns, either the class teacher or the form tutor (as appropriate to the school) will 'check-in' with the pupil/family to find out about any reasons for absence as part of their responsibilities under the school's Safeguarding Policy. Class teachers/form tutors (as appropriate to the school) may also be asked to contact and/or meet with parents/carers whose child has a falling level of attendance and is flagged as a concern by the Attendance Team. Teachers are responsible for delivering an enriching and stimulating pastoral curriculum for supporting engagement with learning.

### **All members of staff**

School staff are responsible for providing a warm and welcoming environment for all pupils, conducive to creating a sense of belonging.

### **Staff Training on Attendance**

Improving attendance requires knowledge of guidance and regulations but also expertise in working with families to remove barriers to attendance and safeguard pupils. Just as those barriers are regularly evolving, so too is the training that school staff require to address them. The school therefore will facilitate training for all staff to understand:

- the importance of good attendance and that absence is almost always a symptom of wider circumstances
- the law and requirements of schools including on the keeping of registers
- the school/trust strategies and procedures for tracking, following up and improving attendance
- the most effective processes for working with other partners to provide more intensive support to pupils who need it.

For staff with specialist attendance responsibilities, training includes:

- the necessary skills to interpret and analyse attendance data
- Elective Home Education, Children Missing Education and School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- Notices to Improve, preparation for penalty notices and prosecution
- any additional training that would be beneficial to support pupils and pupil cohorts overcome commonly seen barriers to attendance.

### **Appendix 3 - Part Time Timetables / Phased Return to Full-Time Education**

In line with the expectations of the Department for Education, all pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education, suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and any special educational needs or disabilities that they may have.

In very exceptional circumstances there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet a pupil's 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.

If, for any reason, the school is unable to provide a pupil with a full-time education due to the pupil's needs, staff will work with the pupil, parents/carers and other agencies where appropriate, to come to an arrangement that is deemed to be in the best interests of the child wherever possible.

Any part-time timetable should be in place for the shortest amount of time possible, it must not be treated as a long-term solution. It should be reviewed at least every two weeks, whilst arrangements are made to support the pupil's return to full-time education at the academy or, where appropriate, at alternative provision.

A decision to place a pupil on a part-time timetable should be approved by the Headteacher and must be agreed by the parents/carers.

The SENCO and DSL, as well as any other relevant members of staff, should also be aware of such arrangements and involved with decision making where appropriate.

Discussions and agreements should be clearly documented in writing and relevant information should be recorded in the school's management information system and CPOMS. The school will be mindful of any additional safeguarding risks to the pupil when they are not timetabled to attend school and will therefore consider carefully whether a part-time timetable is an appropriate measure.

If the pupil's part-time timetable means the pupil is expected to arrive at the academy after the register closes in the morning and/or be absent for the school's afternoon registration period, any such am and/or pm registrations must be recorded with the C code 'Leave of absence authorised by the school'.

All part-time timetables must have the Trust Part Time Timetable Agreement Form completed and shared with the Director for SEND, Safeguarding and Inclusion.



## Appendix 4 - Notice to Improve

A Notice to Improve is issued as a final opportunity for a parent(s) to engage with the school in support for improving their child's attendance, prior to a Penalty Notice being issued.

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate but offers of support have not been engaged with by the parent, or have not worked, a Notice to Improve should usually be sent to give parents a final chance to engage in support. A Notice to Improve does not need to be issued in cases where support has not been appropriate and an authorised officer can choose not to use one in any case, including cases where support is appropriate but they do not expect a Notice to Improve would have any behavioural impact (e.g. because the parent has already received one for a similar offence).

A Notice to Improve should be issued in line with the Local Authority's Code of Conduct for the school at which the pupil attends. A Notice to Improve includes:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and details of the offences.
- The benefits of regular attendance and parents' duty under section 7 of the Education Act 1996.
- Details of the support provided so far.
- Opportunities for further support and the option to access previously provided support that was not engaged with.
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued or prosecution considered if sufficient attendance improvement is not secured within the improvement period.
- A clear timeframe for the improvement period of between 3 and 6 weeks.
- Details of what sufficient improvement within that timeframe will look like.
- The grounds on which a Penalty Notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period.

'Sufficient' improvement in attendance should be considered on a case-by-case basis and taken into account the individual family's circumstances. This should be made clear in the Notice to Improve.

In cases where it is clear that attendance improvement is not being made, it may be appropriate to issue a Penalty Notice prior to the improvement period ending (for example, if the agreed target for unauthorised absence is exceeded early within the improvement period). The parent should be informed before a Penalty Notice is issued if this is before the end of the improvement period.

## Appendix 5 - Issuing of Penalty Notices

Schools should consider when to issue Penalty Notices on a case-by-case basis where one of their pupils reaches the national threshold for a Penalty Notice being considered, and the effectiveness of any existing support. The threshold of absence is detailed in The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024, and is as follows:

*10 sessions of unauthorised absence per rolling period of 10 school weeks, where a school week is any week with at least one school session. This unauthorised absence can include a combination of, for example, term time holiday with sessions of morning lateness following register closure and may, or may not, be consecutive within the 10-school week period. The rolling 10 school weeks can span terms, including the Summer term into the Autumn term.*

When a school becomes aware of the threshold being met, they should consider the following factors prior to issuing a Penalty Notice:

- Is support appropriate in this case?
  - If yes, the existing support should be continued without a Penalty Notice being issued, or a Notice to Improve (see below) should be issued if the support is not working, or not being engaged with. A Penalty Notice can be issued if either has not worked.
  - If no, for example in the case of a term time holiday, a Penalty Notice should be issued, subject to the conditions below.
- Is a Penalty Notice likely to be the most appropriate and effective means of improving regular school attendance for this pupil and/or change the parental engagement with the school?
- Would issuing a Penalty Notice be appropriate having considered the obligations of the Equality Act 2010 (as amended), such as if the pupil has a disability?
- Would issuing a Penalty Notice risk contributing to the heightening of socio-economic disadvantage and/or not risk alienating a family from future fruitful partnership with the school?

### Two Penalty Notice limit

If repeated penalty notices are being issued and they are not working to change behaviour, they are unlikely to be most appropriate tool for securing improved attendance. Therefore, only 2 Penalty Notices can be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within a 3-year rolling period. Any second Notice within that period is charged at a higher rate:

- The first penalty notice issued to a parent in respect of a particular pupil will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.
- A second penalty notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.

### Escalation

A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of issue of the first. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action should be taken instead. This will often include considering prosecution, but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions.

Once 3 years has elapsed since the first Penalty Notice was issued, a further penalty notice can be issued, but in most cases it would not be the most effective tool for changing what may have now become an entrenched pattern of behaviour.

For the purpose of the escalation process, previous Penalty Notices include those not paid (including where prosecution was taken forward and the parent pleaded or was found guilty), but not those which were withdrawn.

### **Cross border checks**

In cases where a pupil has moved school or local authority area in the previous 3 years an additional check should be made to try and ascertain whether previous Penalty Notices have been issued to the parent in respect of the pupil. These checks can be made by the school and/or Local Authority ([crossborder.penaltynotice@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:crossborder.penaltynotice@bristol.gov.uk)) depending on the agreed local process. In cases where the previous local authority is not known or the information cannot be, or is not, provided by the previous local authority, it should be assumed that the parent has not previously received a penalty notice and the escalation process started as a new case.

The payment of the Penalty Notice must be directly to the Local Authority, regardless of who issued it.

Parents have no right of appeal against a Penalty Notice.