



The Collective Community Trust

Primary Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Policy created/updated

November 2024

Approved by Trustees (EC Committee)

March 2025

Due for review

September 2026

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Policy Cover Note

Title of the Policy	Attendance and Punctuality Policy
Summary/Reason for bringing to Board for Approval	This policy has been reviewed to reflect the move away from the Local Authority and is a Trust-wide policy specific to the Collective Community Trust.
Statutory Requirement Y/N	Y
Decisions to be made / recommendation on options	Recommended for approval by the Ethos and Culture Committee.
Name of the author	Kelly Macadam CEO
Date written	November 2024
Date for next review	September 2026
Summary of amendments / updates to policy	

Statement of Intent

The Collective Community Trust believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school. Children with poor attendance very often fall behind in their learning or fail to achieve their full potential, and the longer this goes on, the bigger the gap becomes.

We understand that barriers to attendance are complex, and that some pupils find it harder than others to attend school; therefore, we will continue to prioritise cultivating a safe and supportive environment at school, as well as strong and trusting relationships with pupils and parents/carers.

We take a whole-school approach to securing good attendance, and recognise the impact that our efforts in other areas – such as the curriculum, behaviour standards, bullying, SEND support, pastoral support and the effective use of resources such as pupil premium – can have on improving pupil attendance.

We are committed to:

- Promoting and modelling high attendance/punctuality and its benefits.
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence.
- Ensuring equality and fairness for all.
- Ensuring this Attendance Policy is clear and easily understood by staff, pupils and parents/carers.
- Intervening early to address patterns of absence/punctuality and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.
- Building strong relationships with families to overcome barriers to attendance.
- Working collaboratively with other schools in the area and within our Trust, as well as other agencies.
- Ensuring parents/carers follow the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any SEND they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- Regularly monitoring and analysing attendance/punctuality data to identify pupils or cohorts that require more support.

Each school's Attendance Officer can be found on the school website along with their contact details. Staff, parents and pupils will be expected to contact the Attendance Officer for queries or concerns about attendance.

1. Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)
- The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Children and Young Persons Act 1963
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- DfE (2024) 'Working together to improve school attendance'
- DfE (2024) 'Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE) 2024'
- DfE (2024) 'Children missing education'
- DfE (2024) 'Providing remote education'
- DfE (2024) 'Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Children Missing Education Policy
- Home Visit Policy
- Pupils with Additional Health Needs Attendance Policy

2. Roles and Responsibilities

The local Governing Committee has overall responsibility for:

- Setting high expectations of school leaders, staff, pupils and parents/carers.
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties including:
Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the Trust and the DfE.
Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate.
- Monitoring the implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Promoting the importance of good attendance through the school's ethos and policies.
- Arranging attendance training for all relevant staff that is appropriate to their role.
- Working with the SLT to set goals for attendance and providing support and challenge around delivery against those goals.
- Regularly reviewing attendance data and evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils needs
- Working with school leaders to ensure a comprehensive action plan is in place to improve attendance if the school is struggling with attendance.

- Sharing effective practice on attendance management and improvement across schools.
- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the Trust's Complaints Procedures Policy.
- Having regard to KCSIE when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Ensuring there is a Children Missing in Education Policy in place and that this is regularly reviewed and updated.

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting to local governors and The Trust Board.
- Appointing a member of the SLT to the Attendance Officer role. (In most schools this is the Headteacher)
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents/carers through all available channels.
- Ensuring all parents/carers are aware of the school's attendance expectations and procedures.
- Ensuring that every pupil has access to full-time education and will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence.

Staff are responsible for:

- Following this policy and ensuring pupils do so.
- Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.
- Ensuring SLT and the school Attendance Officer is aware of any attendance/punctuality concerns immediately.
- Where designated, taking the attendance register at the relevant times during the school day.

The Attendance Officer is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school.
- The overall strategic approach to attendance in school.
- Developing a clear vision for improving attendance.
- Analysing attendance data and identifying areas of intervention and improvement.
- Monitoring attendance and the impact of interventions.
- Communicating with pupils and parents/carers with regard to attendance.

- Leading a compassionate approach when listening to parents and pupils regarding barriers to attendance.
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies where needed.
- Following up on incidents of persistent poor attendance.
- Enforcing attendance through statutory interventions in cases of persistent poor attendance where other supports have not succeeded.
- Advising the Headteacher when to issue fixed penalty notices.
- Informing the Trust/ LA of any pupil being deleted from the admission and attendance registers.

Pupils are responsible for:

- Attending their lessons and any agreed activities when at school.
- Arriving punctually to lessons when at school.
- Following any support provided by the school to improve attendance.

Parents/Carers are responsible for:

- Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.
- Providing the school with more than one emergency contact number.
- Updating the school if their details change.
- The attendance of their children at school.
- Promoting good attendance/punctuality with their children.
- Proactively engaging with any attendance support offered by the school and the LA.
- Notifying the school as soon as possible when their child has to be absent.
- Requesting leave of absence only in exceptional circumstances, and in advance.
- Booking any medical appointments around school where possible.
- Following any family-based support implemented by the school to improve attendance.

3. Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

Absence:

- Arrival at school after the register has closed.
- Not attending the registered school for any reason.

Authorised Absence:

- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave.
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave.
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave.
- An absence due to a family emergency.

Unauthorised Absence:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason.
- Truancy before or during the school day.

- Absences which have never been properly explained.
- Arrival at school after the register has closed.
- Absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
- Absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed.
- Leaving school for no reason during the day.

Persistent Absence (PA):

- Missing 10 percent or more of schooling across the year for any reason.

Missing Education

- Not registered at a school and not receiving suitable education in a setting other than a school

4. Absence Procedures

Parents will be required to contact the school office via telephone or Class Dojo before 9:00am on the first day of their child's absence – they will be expected to provide an explanation for the absence and an estimation of how long the absence will last, e.g. one school day.

Where a pupil is absent, and their parent has not contacted the school by the close of the morning register to report the absence, administrative staff will contact the parent by telephone call as soon as is practicable on the first day that they do not attend school.

The school will always follow up any absences in order to:

- Ascertain the reason for the absence.
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is being taken.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
- Identify the correct code to use to enter the data onto the school census system.

Where a pupil is absent for more than three school days in a row, or more than 10 school days in one term, the pupil's parent will be expected to provide a signed letter with an explanation for the absence(s).

The school will not request medical evidence in most circumstances where a pupil is absent due to illness; however, the school reserves the right to request supporting evidence where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness.

In the case of PA, arrangements will be made for parents to speak to the Attendance Officer. The school will inform the LA, on a termly basis, of the details of pupils who fail to attend regularly, or who have missed 10 school days or more without authorisation.

If a pupil's attendance drops below 85 percent, the Attendance Officer will be informed, and a formal meeting will be arranged with the pupil's parent.

Where a pupil has not returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence, or is absent from school without authorisation for 20 consecutive school days, the school will remove the pupil from the admissions register if the school and the LA have failed to establish the whereabouts of the pupil after making reasonable enquiries.

5. Lateness and Punctuality

A pupil who arrive late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed using the appropriate code

Pupils who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education, but also that of others.

Lateness is monitored on a regular basis with a “late gate” session. The parent/carer receives a reminder slip and the reason why they are late is recorded.

The number of late marks is then monitored on a half termly basis. Where persistent lateness gives cause for concern, an initial letter (Letter 1) is sent out to families highlighting the number of lates and that punctual attendance is needed. After further monitoring, if there is still concern, then a further letter (Letter 2) will be sent out requesting the parent to attend a meeting in school with the Attendance Lead. This will discuss what help and support the school can put into place for the family to improve the child’s punctuality and also any other outside agencies that can help through completing an Early Help Referral. If punctuality suddenly decreases then Letter 2 will be sent out straight away for a meeting to take place.

6. Attendance Register

The school uses Integris to keep attendance registers to ensure they are as accurate as possible and can be easily analysed and shared with the appropriate authorities.

Designated staff members will take the attendance register at the start of each school day and at the start of the afternoon session. This register will record whether pupils are:

- Present.
- Absent.
- Attending an approved educational visit.
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

The school will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way.

The following codes will be used:

- # = planned whole school closure
- / = Present in the morning
- \ = Present in the afternoon
- L = Late arrival before the register has closed
- C = Leave of absence granted by the school for exceptional circumstances
- S = Study leave
- C1 = Leave of absence for participating in a regulated performance or employment abroad
- C2 = Leave of absence for part-time pupils
- E = Suspended or permanently excluded but no alternative provision made
- J1 = Leave of absence for job or education interviews
- I = Illness
- M = Medical or dental appointments
- K = Attending provision arranged by the LA
- R = Religious observance
- B = Off-site education activity
- G = Unauthorised holiday
- O = Unauthorised absence
- U = Arrived after registration closed
- N = Reason not yet provided
- X = Not required to be in school
- T = Traveller absence
- Q = Absent due to a lack of access arrangements or due to the pupil having to attend a school that does not qualify for travel arrangements and is more than walking distance from where they live.
- V = Educational visit or trip
- P = Participating in a supervised sporting activity, with supervision being physically provided by an appropriately trained and knowledgeable person
- D = Dual registered – at another educational establishment
- W = Attending work experience
- Y1 = Absent due to their regular transport not being available
- Y2 = Absent due to travel disruption
- Y3 = Absent due to part of the school premises being closed
- Y4 = Absent due to the school site being closed
- Y5 = Absent due to being in criminal justice detention
- Y6 = Absent due to public health guidance or law, despite the pupil being well enough to attend
- Y7 = Absent due to any other unavoidable cause, the nature of which must be documented by the school.
- Z = Pupil not on admission register

When the school has planned in advance to be fully or partially closed, the code '#' will be used for the relevant pupils who are absent. This code will also be used to record year groups who are not due to attend because the school has set different term dates for different years, e.g. induction days.

Where there is more than one afternoon session, and therefore the attendance register is taken more than once in the same afternoon, the school will use the codes from the last afternoon session as the basis for its statistical attendance data.

Pupils who are absent from school but are receiving remote education for any reason will be marked as absent in the register.

All amendments made to the attendance register will include the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date of amendment and the name and role of the person who made the amendment.

Every entry received into the attendance register will be preserved for three years.

7. Authorising Parental Absence Requests

Parents will be required to request certain types of absence in advance. All requests for absence will be handled by the headteacher – the decision to grant or refuse the request will be at the sole discretion of the headteacher, taking the best interests of the pupil and the impact on the pupil's education into account. The headteacher's decision is not subject to appeal; however, the school will be sympathetic to requests for absence by parents, and will not deny any request without good reason.

Leave of Absence (Planned)

The school will only grant a pupil a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. In order to have requests for a leave of absence considered, the school will expect parents to contact the headteacher in writing/or via email at least two weeks prior to the proposed start date of the leave of absence, providing the reason for the proposed absence and the dates during which the absence would be expected to occur.

Any requests for leave during term time will be considered on an individual basis and the pupil's previous attendance record will be taken into account. Where the absence is granted, the Headteacher will determine the length of time that the pupil can be away from school.

Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:

- Immediately before and during statutory assessment periods.
- When a pupil's attendance record shows any unauthorised absence.
- Where a pupil's authorised absence record is already above 10 percent for any reason.

The following will not be deemed to be exceptional circumstances:

- A pupil or parent/carer's birthday
- Family trips or holidays
- Availability of a less expensive holiday
- Availability of holiday accommodation
- Parent/carers working commitments
- Holidays pre-booked by another family member

If term-time leave is not granted, taking a pupil out of school will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and may result in sanctions, such as a penalty notice. The school cannot grant leaves of absence retrospectively; therefore, any absences that were not approved by the school in advance will be marked as unauthorised.

Absences will always be unauthorised in cases such as:

- Lateness-arriving after the register is closed without good reason
- Oversleeping, getting up late
- Family trips/holidays
- Finishing off homework
- Looking for uniform

Illness and Healthcare Appointments

Parents will be expected to make medical or dental appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, parents will be expected to obtain approval for their child's absence to attend such appointments as far in advance as is practicable. Parents will be responsible for ensuring their child misses only the amount of time necessary to attend the appointment.

Performances and Activities, including paid work

The school will ensure that all pupils engaging in performances or activities, whether they receive payment or not, which require them to be absent from school, understand that they will be required to obtain a licence from the LA which authorises the school's absence(s).

Additional arrangements will be made by the school for pupils engaging in performances or activities that require them to be absent from school to ensure they do not fall behind in their education – this may involve private teaching. These arrangements will be approved by the LA who will ensure that the arrangements are suitable for the pupil.

The pupil will receive education that, when taken together over the term of the licence, amounts to a minimum of three hours per day that the pupil would be required to attend a school maintained by the LA issuing the licence. This requirement will be met by ensuring a pupil receives an education:

- For not less than six hours a week; and
- During each complete period of four weeks (or if there is a period of less than four weeks, then during that period), for periods of time not less than three hours a day; and
- On days where the pupil would be required to attend school if they were attending a school maintained by the LA; and
- For not more than five hours on any such day.

Where a licence has been granted by the LA and it specifies dates of absence, no further authorisation will be needed from the school. Where an application does not specify dates, and it has been approved by the LA, it is at the discretion of the Headteacher to authorise the leave of absence for each day. The Headteacher will not authorise any absences which would

mean that a pupil's attendance would fall below 96 percent. Where a licence has not been obtained, the headteacher will not authorise any absence for a performance or activity.

Religious Observance

Parents will be expected to notify school about an absence for religious observance at least two weeks advance.

The school will only accept requests from parents for absence on grounds of religious observance for days that are exclusively set apart for religious observance by the relevant religious body. The school will define this as a day where the pupil's parents would be expected by an established religious body to stay away from their employment to mark the occasion.

The school may seek advice from the religious body in question where there is doubt over the request.

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Absence

Where a pupil's parent belongs to a community covered by this code and is travelling for occupational purposes, the parent will be expected to request a leave of absence for their child at least two weeks in advance. Absences will not be granted for pupils from these communities under this code for reasons other than travel for occupational purposes.

8. SEND- and Health-related Absences

The school recognises that pupils with SEND and/or health conditions, including mental health issues, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers, and will incorporate robust procedures to support pupils who find attending school difficult.

In line with the SEND Policy and Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy, the school will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for disabled pupils to reduce barriers to attendance, in line with any EHC plans or IHPs that have been implemented. The school will secure additional support from external partners to help bolster attendance where appropriate.

Where the school has concerns that a pupil's non-attendance may be related to mental health issues, parents will be contacted to discuss the issue and whether there are any contributory factors to their child's lack of attendance. Where staff have a mental health concern about a pupil that is also a safeguarding concern, they will inform the DSL and the Safeguarding Policy will be followed.

If a pupil is unable to attend school for long periods of time due to their health, the school will:

- Inform the LA if a pupil is likely to be away from the school for more than 15 school days.
- Provide the LA with information about the pupil's needs, capabilities and programme of work.
- Help the pupil reintegrate at school when they return.
- Make sure the pupil is kept informed about school events and clubs.
- Encourage the pupil to stay in contact with other pupils during their absence.

The school will incorporate an action plan to help any pupils with SEND and/or health issues cope with the stress and anxiety that attending school may cause them. Such plans will be regularly monitored and reviewed until the pupil is attending school as normal and there has been signs of significant improvement.

To support the attendance of pupils with SEND and/or health issues, the school will consider:

- Holding regular meetings to evaluate any implemented reasonable adjustments.
- Incorporating a pastoral support plan.
- Identifying pupils' unmet needs through the Common Assessment Framework.
- Using an internal or external specialist.
- Enabling a pupil to have a reduced timetable.
- Ensuring a pupil can have somewhere quiet to spend lunch and breaktimes.
- Implementing a system whereby pupils can request to leave a classroom if they feel they need time out.
- Temporary late starts or early finishes.
- Phased returns to school where there has been a long absence.
- Small group work or one-to-one lessons.
- Tailored support to meet their individual needs.

9. Truancy

Truancy will be considered as any absence of part, or all, of one or more days from school, during which the school has not been notified of the cause behind such absence.

All staff will be actively engaged in supporting the regular attendance of pupils, and understand the importance of continuity in each pupil's learning.

All pupils are expected to be in their classes for morning and afternoon registration, where the teacher will record the attendance electronically. Any pupil with permission to leave the school during the day must sign out at the school office and sign back in again on their return.

Immediate action will be taken when there are any concerns that a pupil might be truanting. If truancy is suspected, the headteacher is notified, and they will contact the parent in order to assess the reasons behind the pupil not attending school.

The following procedures will be taken in the event of a truancy:

- In the first instance, a letter of warning will be sent to the parents of the pupil, informing them of the truancy and stating that any future occurrences could result in further action being taken.
- If any further truancy occurs, then the school will consider issuing a penalty notice.
- A penalty notice will be issued in line with the Penalty notices and legal intervention section of this policy where there is overt truancy, inappropriate parentally-condoned absence, excessive holidays in term-time and persistent late arrival at school.

The DSL will be involved where an instance of truancy may be linked to a safeguarding concern. Any safeguarding concerns will be dealt with in line with the Safeguarding Policy.

10. Absent Pupils

Pupils will not be permitted to leave the school premises during the school day unless they have permission from the school. The following procedures will be taken in the event of a pupil going missing whilst at school:

- The member of staff who has noticed the absent pupil will inform the headteacher immediately
- The office staff will also be informed as they will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search
- A member of staff will stay with the rest of the class, and all other available members of staff will conduct a thorough search of the school premises as directed by the headteacher
- The following areas will be systematically searched:
 - All classrooms
 - All toilets
 - Any outbuildings
 - The school grounds
 - Any rooms such as the Library/Pastoral Room
 -
- Available staff will begin a search of the area immediately outside of the school premises, and will take a mobile phone with them so they can be contacted.
- If the pupil has not been found after 10 minutes, then the parents of the pupil will be notified
- The school will attempt to contact parents using the emergency contact numbers provided
- If the parents have had no contact from the pupil, and the emergency contacts list has been exhausted, the police will be contacted.
- The absent pupil's teacher will fill in an incident form, describing all circumstances leading up to the pupil going missing
- If the absent pupil has an allocated social worker, is a looked-after child, or has any SEND, then the appropriate personnel will be informed
- When the pupil has been located, members of staff will care for and talk to the pupil to ensure they are safe and well
- Parents and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the pupil has been located

The Headteacher will take the appropriate action to ensure that pupils understand they must not leave the premises, and sanctions will be issued if deemed necessary, in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

The Headteacher will carry out a full investigation and will draw a conclusion as to how the incident occurred. A written report will be produced, and policies and procedures will be reviewed in accordance with the outcome where necessary.

11. Attendance Intervention

In order to ensure the school has effective procedures for managing absence, the Attendance Officer, supported by the SLT, will:

- Establish a range of evidence-based interventions to address barriers to attendance.
- Monitor the implementation and quality of escalation procedures and seek robust evidence of the escalation procedures that work.
- Attend or lead attendance reviews in line with escalation procedures.
- Establish robust escalation procedures which will be initiated before absence becomes a problem by:
 - Sending letters to parents.
 - Engaging with LA attendance teams.
 - Action plan in place
 - Using fixed penalty notices.

The school will use attendance data, in line with the 'Monitoring and analysing absence' section of this policy, to develop specific strategies to improve attendance where patterns of absence are emerging. These strategies will be developed on a case-by-case basis, and will consider the particular needs of the pupils whom the intervention is designed to target.

12. Working with Parents/Carers to Improve Attendance

The school will work to cultivate strong, respectful relationships with parents and families to ensure their trust and engagement. Open and honest communication will be maintained with pupils and their families about the expectations of school life, attendance and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them. The school will liaise with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, e.g. social services.

The school will ensure that there are two sets of emergency contact details for each pupil wherever possible to ensure the school has additional options for getting in touch with adults responsible for a pupil where the pupil is absent without notification or authorisation.

The school will ensure that parents are aware of their legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and to facilitate their child's legal right to a full-time education – parents will be made aware that this means their child must attend school every day that it is open, save for in certain circumstances, e.g. sickness or absences that have been authorised by the headteacher in advance. The school will regularly inform parents about their child's levels of attendance, absence and punctuality, and will ensure that parents are aware of the benefits that regular attendance at school can have for their child educationally, socially and developmentally.

If a pattern of absence becomes problematic, the Attendance Officer will work collaboratively with the pupil and their parents to improve attendance by addressing the specific barriers that prevent the pupil from being able to attend school regularly. The school will always take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for pupil absence and will approach families to offer support rather than immediately reach for punitive approaches.

Where these barriers are related to the pupil's experience in school, e.g. bullying, the Attendance Officer will work with the Headteacher and any relevant school staff, e.g. the DSL and SENCO, to address this. Where the barriers are outside of the school's control, e.g. they are related to issues within the pupil's family, the Attendance Officer will liaise with any relevant external agencies or authorities, e.g. children's social care or the LA, and will encourage parents to access support that they may need.

Strategies to Promote Attendance (See Appendix Two)

13. Reporting to Parents/Carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels through parents' evening and in their end of year report. If there are concerns about attendance and/or punctuality letters will also be sent detailing those concerns and parents/carers will be invited into school to discuss concerns and offers of advice/help and support will be given.

14. Persistent Absence (PA)/Severe Absence (SA)

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

There are various groups of pupils who may be vulnerable to high absence and PA/SA, such as:

- Children in need
- CLAC
- Young carers
- Pupils who are eligible for FSM
- Pupils with EAL
- Pupils with SEND
- Pupils who have faced bullying and/or discrimination

The school will use a number of methods to help support pupils at risk of PA/SA to attend school. These may include:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education.
- Hold regular meetings with parents/carers of pupils
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the LA, where relevant
- Offering catch-up support to build confidence and bridge gaps.
- Meeting with pupils to discuss patterns of absence, barriers to attendance, and any other problems they may be having.
- Establishing plans to remove barriers and provide additional support.
- Leading regular check-ins to review progress and the impact of support.
- Assessing whether an EHC plan may be appropriate.

- Considering what support for re-engagement might be needed, including for vulnerable groups.
- Implement Sanctions where necessary

The school will focus particularly on pupils who have rates of absence over 50 percent, and will work with the LA and other partners to engage all relevant services needed to identify and address the wider barriers to attendance these pupils are facing.

Where a pupil at risk of PA is also at increased risk of harm, the school will work in conjunction with all relevant authorities, e.g. social services, to support the pupil in line with the school's duty of care. The school will also bear in mind that the continuation of severe PA following intervention may, in itself, constitute neglect, and will escalate any concerns in this regard in line with the Safeguarding Policy.

15. Sanctions- Penalty Notices and Legal Intervention

The school will make full use of the range of potential sanctions-including, but not limited to, those listed below to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case by case basis.

The school will allow sufficient time for attendance interventions and engagement strategies to improve pupils' attendance; however, where engagement strategies to improve attendance have not had the desired effect after one term, the attendance officer will consider:

- Holding a formal meeting with parents and the school's Attendance Officer
- Working with the LA to put a parenting contract or an education supervision order in place.
- Engaging children's social care where there are safeguarding concerns.

Where the above measures are not effective, the Headteacher will issue a notice to improve as a final opportunity for parents/carers to engage in support and improve attendance before a penalty notice is considered.

Where a pupil reaches the national threshold of 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks, the school will consider whether a penalty notice is appropriate. Each case will be considered individually to determine whether a penalty notice or another tool or legal intervention should be used to improve attendance.

A fixed penalty notice will be issued in line with the LA's code of conduct and the DfE's ['Working together to improve school attendance'](#) guidance.

Penalty notices for unauthorised absences will be charged at £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.

A penalty notice of £120 may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first five days of a fixed period or permanent exclusion. This will be reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days.

Parents will only get up to two fines for the same child in a three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action such as a parenting order or prosecution will be considered.

Where attendance still does not improve following a fixed penalty notice, the school will work with the LA to take forward attendance prosecution as a last resort.

Parents who are prosecuted and attend court because their child has not been attending school may be fined up to £2,500.

Education Supervision Orders (ESOs)

Where interventions have not been successful, an ESO can be an alternative to provide formal legal intervention without criminal prosecution. ESOs are made through the Family or High Court and give the LA a formal role in supporting the pupil and parents to improve their attendance. LAs will issue parents with a notice of the intention to consider an ESO, set up a meeting to discuss with the parent and pupil, and decide whether the case will be taken forward.

Once an SEO is secured, a supervisor from the local authority will decide any actions or requirements. These may include:

- Requiring the parents to attend support meetings.
- Requiring the parents to attend a parenting programme.
- Requiring the parents to access support services.
- Requiring an assessment by an educational psychologist.
- Review meetings involving all parties to be held every 3 months.

Failing to comply with an SEO will result in a fine and decisions will be made about whether further action is required.

16. Monitoring and Analysing Absence

The Attendance Officer will monitor and analyse attendance data regularly to ensure that intervention is delivered quickly to address habitual absence at the first signs.

The school will collect data regarding punctuality, truancy, and authorised and unauthorised absence, for:

- The school cohort as a whole.
- Individual year groups.
- Individual pupils.
- Demographic groups, e.g. pupils from different ethnic groups or economic backgrounds.
- Other groups of pupils, e.g. pupils with SEND, LAC and pupils eligible for FSM.
- Pupils at risk of PA.

The Attendance Officer will conduct a thorough analysis of the above data on a termly and full-year basis to identify patterns and trends. This will include identifying, for each group:

- Patterns in uses of certain codes.
- Particular days of poor attendance.
- Historic trends of attendance and absence.
- Barriers to attendance.

The Attendance Officer will provide regular reports to staff across the school to enable them to track the attendance of pupils and to implement attendance procedures. The Attendance Officer will also be responsible for monitoring how attendance data changes in response to any interventions implemented to increase attendance in future.

The Local Governing Committee will regularly review attendance data, including examinations of recent and historic trends, and will support the SLT in setting goals and prioritising areas of focus for attendance support based on this data.

The school will also benchmark its attendance data against local-, regional- and national-level data to identify areas of success and areas for improvement, and will share practice which has been shown to be effective with other schools.

The Board of Trustees will ensure staff from different schools within the trust regularly share expertise and collaborate on interventions.

17. Training of Staff

The school will recognise that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, staff will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk pupils as part of their induction and refresher training.

The Local Governing Committee will ensure that teachers and support staff receive training in line with this policy as part of their induction. Following this initial training, staff will receive regular and ongoing training as part of their development.

Training will cover at least the following:

- The importance of good attendance
- That absence is almost invariably a result of wider circumstances
- The legal requirements on schools, e.g. the keeping of registers
- The school's strategies and procedures for monitoring and improving attendance
- The school's procedures for multi-agency working to provide intensive support for pupils who need it

The Local Governing Committee will provide dedicated and enhanced attendance training to the Attendance Officer and other staff with specific attendance functions in their role – this will include training regarding interpreting and analysing attendance data and supporting pupils to overcome barriers to attendance.

Staff will receive training to ensure they understand that increased absence from school could indicate a safeguarding concern, and know how such concerns should be managed.

18. Deletions of Names from the Admission Register

The school will ensure that it only deletes names from the admission register for a reason set out in regulation 9 of the School Attendance Regulations. A pupil's name will never be removed for any other reason and the school is aware that doing so could constitute off-rolling.

The school will make returns to the LA when pupils' names are deleted from the admission register. This will be with the exception of pupils whose name has been deleted from the

register at or after the end of the last term of the school year when they are in the most senior year group, unless the LA has requested this information.

When the school is notifying the LA that a pupil's name is being deleted from the admission register, the following information about the pupil will be provided:

- Full name
- Address
- The full name and address of any parent the pupil normally lives with
- At least one telephone number by which any parent the pupil normally lives with can be contacted in an emergency
- If applicable, the pupil's future address, the full name and address of the parent who the pupil is going to live with and the date the pupil will start living there
- If applicable, the name of the pupil's other school and when the pupil began or will begin to attend the school
- The reason under which the pupil's name has been deleted from the admission register

Names will never be retrospectively deleted from the admission or attendance register – these registers will remain an accurate record of who is a registered pupil and their attendance at any given time. Pupils' attendance will be recorded up until the date that their name is deleted from the admission register.

19. Links to Other Policies

Safeguarding Policy

Behaviour Policy

Children Missing in Education

20. Monitoring and Review

Attendance and punctuality will be monitored throughout the year. The school's attendance target is 96 percent – full details of the school's absence levels can be found on the school website.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Trust. The next scheduled review date for this policy is November 2025

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

Appendix A

Attendance Monitoring Procedures

The Collective Community Trust has adopted the following attendance monitoring procedures, to ensure that pupils' attendance meets the expected standard, and effective intervention is provided where pupils' attendance falls below the standard:

1. A spreadsheet is sent to the Head by the Attendance Officer detailing **weekly** and **annual** attendance to date.
2. Attendance is discussed and monitored by classroom teachers. Any attendance/punctuality trends noticed by classroom teachers are passed immediately to the Attendance Officer.
3. Contact is made with parents on the first day of absence for any pupil absence not reported. 'N' codes are used to indicate that the pupil is absent for a reason not yet provided; these N codes are reported to the Attendance Officer daily.
4. Contact is made to the parents of any pupils marked using the N code. Any N codes not established after a week are recorded as an unauthorised absence.
5. If a pupil's attendance falls to **96 percent**, the Attendance Officer speaks to the pupil (if appropriate) in school to discuss any issues or problems to ascertain how the school can help to improve their attendance. The Attendance Officer also makes a phone call home to discuss this with parents.
6. If a pupil's attendance falls below **94 percent**, a letter is sent home raising concerns that their attendance has fallen below the school's expected standard. The letter also has an attached leaflet outlining how parents can work with the school and their child to improve attendance.
7. If a pupil's attendance falls below **90 percent**, a letter is sent home explaining that the pupil's attendance is now being monitored, and the Attendance Officer contacts the parents to discuss this.
8. The pupil's attendance is monitored for **two weeks** and, if attendance does not improve after this time, parents are required to attend a meeting in school with the Attendance Officer and set targets for their child. If parents are unwilling to cooperate, or are genuinely unable to attend, a referral may be required to the local education welfare officer (EWO), who will then conduct a home visit.
9. After the **two-week** monitoring period, and if targets are met, a letter is sent home from the Headteacher to congratulate the pupil and their parents on improving attendance. Monitoring and communication with the parents continues until attendance stabilises to **96 percent**.
10. If targets are not met, the classroom teacher makes a referral to the EWO. Education welfare protocol is followed, and a parental contract is drawn up. A **four-week** monitoring period is established and, if there are no improvements, a final written warning is issued to the parents if there is no improvement after an additional **four weeks**, a fixed-penalty notice is issued.

Appendix B

Strategies to Improve Attendance

We will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance. These may include:

- A recognised whole school approach that celebrates achievement in school
- Reward systems for positive behaviours
- Discussion with parents and pupils
- Discussion with the Virtual School where the child is looked after and/ or has a social worker
- Working with attendance professionals, internal and/ or external to the school
- Attendance panels
- Attendance support plans
- Referrals to support agencies
- Pastoral support
- Pupil Voice Activities
- Friendship groups
- Personal, social and health education
- Anxiety-based school avoidance resources
- Trauma-informed approaches
- Early help referral options
- Family learning
- Time limited part-time timetables
- Additional learning support
- Behaviour support
- Inclusion resources
- Reintegration support packages

Appendix C Our Approach

EXPECT

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

MONITOR

Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual, cohort, school and Trust 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/carers to listen, understand barriers to attendance/punctuality and to 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 a parenting contract or education supervision order.

ENFORCE

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory interventions or prosecution to protect the pupil's rights to an education.

Appendix D Template Letters Using the Bury LA Model

Application declined (first offence)

UNAUTHORISED LEAVE IN TERM TIME

Date _____

Dear _____

Re: Unauthorised Leave during term time - declined

Following your recent application for unauthorised leave taken in term time for (name of child/children), I would like to confirm the reason why your application has been declined.

The DfE Working Together to Improve School Attendance guidance 2024, states that all children must attend school regularly and it does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.

If you feel your request is an exceptional circumstance, please provide evidence to the Head Teacher for consideration.

I must inform you that taking your child/children out of school when an unauthorised leave is not authorised/requested, you may face legal action under Section 444 (1) or (1A) of the Education Act 1996 or be issued with a Penalty Notice under Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003.

I must inform you that Penalty Notices are issued **per parent per child** at £160 each if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.

Failure to pay a Penalty Notice will result in the Local Authority taking legal action against you under Section 444 (1) of the Education Act 1996. The maximum penalty for this offence is a fine of up to £1000 per parent per child.

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.

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 could be taken. This will often include considering prosecution, but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

Application declined (second offence)

UNAUTHORISED LEAVE IN TERM TIME

Date _____

Dear _____

Re: Unauthorised Leave during term time - declined

Following your recent application for unauthorised leave taken in term time for (name of child/children), I would like to confirm the reason why your application has been declined. This is your second request for unauthorised leave for your child/children within a 3 year rolling period.

The DfE Working Together to Improve School Attendance guidance 2024, states that all children must attend school regularly and it does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.

If you feel your request is an exceptional circumstance, please provide evidence to the Head Teacher for consideration.

I must inform you that taking your child/children out of school when an unauthorised leave is not authorised/requested, you may face legal action under Section 444 (1) or (1A) of the Education Act 1996 or be issued with a Penalty Notice under Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003.

I must inform you that this is the second penalty notice issued to the you in respect of the same pupil which is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days. There is no option to pay at a lower amount.

Failure to pay a Penalty Notice will result in the Local Authority taking legal action against you under Section 444 (1) of the Education Act 1996. The maximum penalty for this offence is a fine of up to £1000 per parent per child.

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 could be taken. This will often include considering prosecution, but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

Application declined (third offence)

UNAUTHORISED LEAVE IN TERM TIME

Date _____

Dear _____

Re: Unauthorised Leave during term time - declined

Following your recent application for unauthorised leave taken in term time for (name of child/children), I would like to confirm the reason why your application has been declined. This is the third unauthorised leave request that we have received within a 3 year rolling period. As per the DfE Working Together Guidance, a Penalty Notice cannot be issued at this time. Legal action may be sought and we will seek guidance from the local authority regarding next steps. This may include:

- Education Supervision Order
- Attendance Contracts
- Legal Enforcement Panel
- PACE – (Police and Criminal Evidence Acts)
- Section 4441(a) aggravated offence which can hold a custodial sentence / or a fine up to £2,500 and a criminal record

The DfE Working Together to Improve School Attendance guidance 2024, states that all children must attend school regularly and it does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.

If you feel your request is an exceptional circumstance, please provide evidence to the Head Teacher for consideration.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

Reported illness but holiday previously requested

HOLIDAY IN TERM TIME

Date _____

Dear _____

Re: Unauthorised Leave in term time

The DfE Working Together to Improve School Attendance guidance 2024, states that all children must attend school regularly and it does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.

If you feel your request is an exceptional circumstance, please provide evidence to the Head Teacher for consideration.

It has come to my attention that (name of child/children) has been absent from school between the period (dates) and you reported illness as a reason for this absence. Our records show that you had applied for a holiday for this period which had been previously declined.

Please provide medical evidence stating the nature of the illness and the period the medical professional advised your child/children should be absent. Once this is received, the absence may be duly authorised.

Should this information not be forthcoming, I must advise that the absence will recorded as an unauthorised leave as information to school suggests that you were on holiday.

I must inform you that Penalty Notices are issued **per parent per child** at £160 each if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.

Failure to pay a Penalty Notice will result in the Local Authority taking legal action against you under Section 444 (1) of the Education Act 1996. The maximum penalty for this offence is a fine of up to £1000 per parent per child.

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.

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 could be taken. This will often include considering prosecution, but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

Leave of absence not requested (school must have some evidence of a suspected holiday)

UNAUTHORISED LEAVE IN TERM TIME

Date _____

Dear _____

Re: Unauthorised leave in term time denied

The DfE Working Together to Improve School Attendance guidance 2024, states that all children must attend school regularly and it does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.

It has come to my attention that (name of child/children) has been absent from school between the period (dates) for a holiday, however, school have no record of any request from you prior to this absence.

If your child was absent due to illness, please provide medical evidence from a Doctor stating the nature of the illness and the period that the Doctor advised your child/children should be absent. Once this is received, the absence may be duly authorised.

Should this information not be forthcoming, I must advise that the absence will remain as an unauthorised leave.

I must inform you that Penalty Notices are issued **per parent per child** at £160 each if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.

Failure to pay a Penalty Notice will result in the Local Authority taking legal action against you under Section 444 (1) of the Education Act 1996. The maximum penalty for this offence is a fine of up to £1000 per parent per child.

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.

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 could be taken. This will often include considering prosecution, but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

Appendix E Impact of Time Off School

<p>0 – 4 days missed across the school year</p>	<p>98 – 100% attendance</p>	<p>PREVENTION Whole school approach/ celebrating good attendance</p>	<p>Celebrate good attendance through reports and parents' evening</p>
<p>5 – 9 days missed across the school year</p>	<p>95– 97.9% attendance</p>	<p>PREVENTION Pupils at risk of poor attendance</p>	<p>Attendance officer will closely monitor attendance weekly and keep an eye on anyone dipping</p>
<p>10– 19 days missed across the school year</p>	<p>90.1 –94.9% attendance</p>	<p>EARLY INTERVENTION Pupils with poor attendance</p>	<p>Attendance officer will send out letters for anyone who drops below 93% attendance. Hoping to see attendance will improve</p>
<p>20 or more days missed across the</p>	<p>90% or below attendance</p>	<p>PERSISTENTLY ABSENT 10% or more absence SEVERELY ABSENT</p>	<p>Attendance officer and SLT will meet with families to discuss attendance and how school can support them</p>

Appendix F -Check List

Challenging and Improving Attendance Checklist		
ACTION	BY WHO	WHEN
Completed first day telephone calls/home visits?		
Letters sent to share attendance concern?		
Met with parents/carers/wider family network to discuss family circumstances, issues impacting on child's attendance, & what support school can offer?		
Have parents/carers been invited to complete an Attendance Improvement Plan?		
Has information been gathered from Class Teacher/Form Tutor / Head of Year / Pastoral Manager / SENCO		
Have patterns to absences been explored?		
Have school spoken with the child regarding issues impacting on their attendance & discussed their needs?		
Explored any un-met learning needs?		
Has evidence of any ongoing medical needs been received? If yes, health plan completed:		
Have school considered a Penalty Notice?		
Has a Story so Far been completed with the family to identify barriers and opportunities to support?		
Has EBSA toolkit been completed?		
Does Individual Education Plan/Learning Plan need to be put in place?		
If an Individual Education Plan/Learning Plan is in place are the outcomes being supported? Has this been reviewed?		
Does pupil have a Pupil/Pastoral Support Plan in place?		
Have any referrals to other agencies been offered? If so, which:		
If external services are involved is a plan in place to support attendance?		
Has place in breakfast club offered?		
If applicable, contacted siblings' schools & compared attendance / absences?		
Is the child a Young Carer, and is this having an impact on their attendance? If yes, referral to Young Carers done:		
Where appropriate have you consulted with the Schools Attendance Lead for support and advice?		
Has parent/carers been invited to meeting with SLT?		
Has Assess / Plan / Do / Review process been started?		
Has an EHC Assessment been considered?		
Has an Attendance Contract been considered?		