



# Attendance policy

Giffard Park Primary School

<b>Approved by:</b>	[Teaching and Learning committee, governing board]	<b>Date:</b> 5 <sup>th</sup> December 2025
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Attendance is the essential foundation to positive outcomes for all pupils including their safeguarding and welfare. Good attendance gives pupils a sense of belonging, improves peer relationships and allows pupils to achieve their potential. At Giffard Park Primary School, we are committed to doing all in our power to ensure that each pupil is able to access the full-time education that they are entitled to.

## 1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [Working together to improve school attendance](#) through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

## 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [Working together to improve school attendance](#) and [School attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of the [Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of the [Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- The [Equality Act 2010](#)

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)
- [Ofsted's 2025 framework toolkit](#)

### 3. Roles and responsibilities

As stated in 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance', attendance is the essential foundation to positive outcomes for all pupils including their safeguarding and welfare' and therefore 'improving attendance is everyone's responsibility'. In order to have clear processes and procedures, specific responsibilities are as follows:

#### 1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents/carers
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations, statutory duties and comply with the law on school attendance, including:
  - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
  - Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils' needs
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
  - The importance of good attendance
  - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
  - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
  - The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data

➤ Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

Link Governor for attendance: Rachel Wilde

### **3.2 The headteacher**

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Referring fixed-penalty notices to MK City Council LA, where necessary, and/or authorizing (Louise Cullen, the Attendance Officer and Senior Attendance Champion and Jady Jones, the Attendance Administration Officer) to be able to do so.
- Working with the parents/carers of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents/carers through all available channels
- Sharing information from the school register with the local authority, including:
  - Notifying the local authority when a pupil's name is added to or deleted from the school admission register outside of standard transition times
  - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who fail to attend school regularly, or who have been marked with an unauthorised absence for a continuous period of 10 school days
  - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who the school believes will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness

### **3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance**

The designated senior leader(also known as the 'Senior Attendance Champion') is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Having a strong grasp of persistent lateness data and oversight of lateness data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data

- Liaising with pupils (where appropriate), parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
  - Building productive relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
  - Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils (where appropriate) and their parents/carers
  - Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
  - Consulting with, and asking advice of, the Senior Attendance Officer (Legal Interventions) at the Local Authority

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance (Senior Attendance Champion) is Louise Cullen and can be contacted via [lcullen@giffardpark.milton-keynes.sch.uk](mailto:lcullen@giffardpark.milton-keynes.sch.uk).

### **3.4 The attendance administration officer**

The school attendance administration officer is responsible for:

- Updating and maintaining registers each day
- Alerting teachers when a register is incomplete/not completed
- Take calls/messages from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Processing all notes and communication on absence and disseminate where appropriate. Forward messages from parents to the class teacher/phase leader/attendance officer in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance.
- First day and daily contact with parents who have not contacted the school regarding their child's absence
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see sections 9 and 10)
- Monitoring and analysing persistent lateness data
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- Working with the Senior Attendance Champion to tackle persistent and severe absence
- Advising the Senior Attendance Champion (authorised by the headteacher) when to refer fixed-penalty notices to MK City Council Local Authority
- Refer fixed penalty notices to MK City Council Local Authority when delegated by the Senior Attendance Champion or Headteacher.

The attendance administration officer is Jady Jones and can be contacted via [office@giffardpark.milton-keynes.sch.uk](mailto:office@giffardpark.milton-keynes.sch.uk).

### **3.5 Teaching Staff**

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance for both morning (8:45am) and afternoon sessions (1:15pm) on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see appendix 1), and submitting this information to the school office via SIMS. If the reason for absence is unknown or not verified at the time of taking the register, teachers will use the N code. Teachers will not make any changes to the register after it has been submitted and must notify the attendance administrator if they believe an entry needs to be altered.

Class teachers will pass on any communication from parents regarding children's attendance to the office.

When a class is being covered by another member of staff or supply teacher, the responsibility for recording attendance (as per class teacher responsibility listed above) will be delegated to them.

All members of staff are expected to be curious about absence, recognizing that absence is a symptom and that improving pupil's attendance is part of improving the pupil's overall welfare.

Class teachers are expected to approach parents to discuss and support attendance and lateness issues, and other members of staff are to raise any concerns with the class teacher.

Parents can contact class teachers for support with attendance issues via the class email address (class name)@giffardpark.milton-keynes.sch.uk

### **3.7 Parents/Carers**

Where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult the school and/or local authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them)

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day that the school is open on time, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school
- Call the school (or notify via Studybugs or email) to report their child's absence by 9am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence
- Provide specific illness or reason for absence and/or lateness (and any appropriate evidence when requested) for, in order for the school to accurately authorise unavoidable absences.
- Provide the school with more than two emergency contact numbers for their child.
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Be supportive of the school's expectations surrounding pupil attendance
- Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or local authority
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting the class teacher via (classname)@giffardpark.milton-keynes.sch.uk or by contacting Mrs Jones or Mrs Cullen via the office email office@giffardpark.milton-keynes.sch.uk

### **3.8 Pupils**

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day that the school is open, on time

## **4. Recording attendance**

### **4.1 Attendance register**

We will keep an electronic attendance register and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of each school day and at the start of the afternoon session. It will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.40am, with the gates being open from 8.30am. This is to allow them time to reach their classroom in time for the register being taken.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.45am and will be closed at 9:15am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1.15pm and will close at 1:45pm.

## 4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9am by contacting the school office staff in one of the following ways:

Via telephone on 01908 617868

Via email to [office@giffardpark.milton-keynes.sch.uk](mailto:office@giffardpark.milton-keynes.sch.uk)

Via the Studybugs app (<https://studybugs.com/about/parents>)



To support parents in deciding whether their child is well enough to attend school, we will refer them to the NHS guidance – Is my child too ill for school?

- NHS ([www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)) – which outlines when it is best to keep children off school and what minor illnesses they can attend with if they feel well enough.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless any of the following apply:

- Where the absence is 5 days or longer
- If the child currently has an attendance of 90% or below (classed as persistently absent, or severely absent if below 50%)

- If the cumulative illness codes across a year are greater than 15 days
- If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt

In any of these circumstances, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, and parents/carers will be notified of this.

Where there are issues with attendance, Giffard Park endeavours to support pupils and parents by working together to address any barriers to attendance. The school will endeavor to recognise and support those pupils with medical conditions, SEND or other complex needs which impacts on their attendance to school. (see section 8).

### **4.3 Planned absence**

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment and provides evidence to the school office eg appointment card/text.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. In order to do this, parents can collect a form from the school office. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise. Any term-time leave that is taken without requesting permission in advance, will be marked as an unauthorised absence and cannot be applied for retrospectively.

### **4.4 Lateness and punctuality**

Good time-keeping is a vital life skill which will help children as they progress through their school life and out into the wider world. Pupils who arrive late disrupt sessions and, if a child misses the start of the session, they can feel unsettled and embarrassed and miss important messages from their teacher.

A pupil who arrives late after the gates have closed (Gates are open between 8:30-8:40):

- Must be signed in at the school office by a parent or carer. Where a child is in Y5 or Y6 and has permission to walk to school by themselves, they will sign themselves in at the office and we will notify a parent of punctuality concerns.
  - Before the register has closed (by 9:15am) will be marked as late, using the appropriate code (L)
  - After the register has closed (after 9:15am) will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code (U).

If parents are struggling to get their child/children to school on time, we encourage them to speak to us so that we can support them and work together to improve the situation.

Those who arrive late to school on a regular basis are contacted by the Attendance Administrator or Attendance Officer. Persistent lateness may contribute towards unauthorised absences.

### **4.5 Following up unexplained absence**

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

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school will make

a home visit for safeguarding purposes and may contact MK Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) or the police if no contact can be made.

- Use the N code whilst we investigate the reason for the absence.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session for which the pupil was absent. If school is not provided with a reason or any requested evidence within 5 days, the absence will be marked as unauthorised.
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation.
- Conduct a home visit after 4 continuous days of absence, regardless of whether the parent has been reporting the absence or not. This is to ensure safeguarding action can be taken where necessary.
- When staff complete home visits, if they cannot make contact with you and your child, then they have the right to ask neighbours if they have seen you. This is to ensure the safety of your child.
- Report the unexplained absence to the pupil's social worker or youth offending team officer where applicable
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with the school will issue a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention (see section 7 below) as appropriate.

## 4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels. This will happen during parent consultations and in the summer term written report as a minimum.

# 5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

## 5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher can only grant a **leave of absence** to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the [2024 school attendance regulations](#). These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as rare and unexpected circumstances which are unlikely to reoccur.

Exceptional circumstances will not be holiday, birthdays etc. Generally, the DfE 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.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. The length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for is at the Headteacher's discretion.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 2 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with the leave of absence request form, accessible via the school office. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

If your child is absent from school without authorisation, you will be committing an offence under the Education Act 1996.

## **5.2 Other reasons for authorised absence**

Other valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart for religious observance
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

## **5.3 Absences from the school site (which are not classified as absences)**

The headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings. These are not classified as absences. Reasons include (but are not limited to):

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
- Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority

## **6. Strategies for promoting attendance**

Improving attendance is everyone's business. All staff are expected to build strong relationships with families, listening to and understanding barriers to attendance and working in partnership with families to remove them.

We want our pupils to succeed and develop their skills. To do this, pupils need to avoid missing lessons and days of school as much as possible. As a school, we want to reward high attendance and not just penalise pupils for poor attendance.

Every week, each classes attendance is displayed on their class door and whole school attendance is displayed on the front door of the school.

Each week at Giffard Park the class with the highest attendance receives a trophy and certificate and their attendance is celebrated in a whole school assembly. The classes in second and third place also receive a certificate. These are displayed in school.

Every term and annually children are awarded 3 levels of attendance awards:

- Gold 100%
- Silver 98-99.9%
- Bronze 96-98%

## 7 Supporting pupils with poor attendance

Our school will make use of the full range of support and potential sanctions – including, but not limited to, those listed below – to tackle poor attendance and protect pupils' right to a full-time education. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

### 7.1 Attendance contract

We use attendance contracts as a form of attendance support.

Where an attendance contract would be an appropriate form of support, the school will arrange a meeting with the parent (and pupil if they are old enough to understand) to discuss how we can work in partnership to improve the pupil's attendance.

An attendance contract is a formal written agreement between a parent and the school to address irregular attendance at school. An attendance contract is not legally binding, but it provides a more formal route where previous support has not worked or would not have been appropriate.

Parents cannot be compelled to enter an attendance contract, and the school cannot agree an attendance contract in a parent's absence. Where an attendance contract cannot be agreed, the school may seek an alternative course of action.

### 7.2 Education supervision order

In cases where voluntary early help plans **and attendance contracts** have been unsuccessful, we may work with the local authority to issue an education supervision order. If an education supervision order is considered, the local authority will inform the parent(s) in writing and will set up a meeting.

An education supervision order is a formal intervention but **not** criminal prosecution.

An education supervision order initially lasts for 1 year, but it can be extended within the last 3 months for a period of up to 3 years at a time.

In cases where parents persistently fail to meet the directions given under the education supervision order, they may be liable to a fine of up to £1,000 upon conviction.

### 7.3 Notice to Improve

If the national threshold has been met (10 unauthorised absences within 10 rolling school weeks) and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to address their child's irregular attendance by working with the school and/or other agencies. It is part of a scaled approach and affords the parents an opportunity to avoid receiving a Penalty Notice. If there are further unauthorised absences / lateness after the register following the Notice to Improve and after due consideration of the facts of the case, the school may refer for a Penalty Notice to be issued.

A notice to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the 'Code of Conduct for the Issuing of Penalty Notices and Enforcement Policy' by MK City Council <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/schools-and-lifelong-learning/information-parents/school-attendance>

It will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under section 7 of the Education Act 1996
- List the attempts which have been made and support which has already been offered to resolve the absence concerns.
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with

- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued, or prosecution considered, if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

## 7.4 Penalty notices

The headteacher (or someone authorised by them), local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice. The Milton Keynes City Local Authority administers the issuing of all Penalty Notices. Referrals will be sent to the school attendance team at MK local authority along with copies of any relevant paperwork for checking and issuing of the fine.

Penalty notices will only be used in cases where support is not appropriate (e.g. a term time holiday) or where support has been provided and has either not been engaged with or has not worked. In cases where there is more than one child in a family with unauthorised absences, Penalty Notices may be issued for more than one child.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks) The threshold may be met with any combination of the following unauthorised absence codes – i.e. G (unauthorised leave/holiday taken during term time), O (unauthorised absence) and/or U (arriving late after registers have closed) codes.
- Parental engagement with support offered by school in regards to attempting to improve their child's attendance
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

Each parent who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice. MK City Council will follow their procedure as laid out in their Code of Conduct for the Issuing of Penalty Notices and Enforcement Policy <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/schools-and-lifelong-learning/information-parents/school-attendance>

If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

If a **second** penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days.

A **third** penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day). These penalty notices are not included in the National Framework, not subject to the same considerations about support being provided, and do not count towards the limit as part of the escalation process. In these cases, the parent must pay £60 within 21 days, or £120.

## **8. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school**

In order to protect all children's right to an education, the school has the same high expectations for the attendance of all pupils whilst also being mindful of the extra support that children, with more complex barriers to attending school, will require in order to achieve this. Staff with specific roles will lead or support these cases as appropriate eg the Pupil Premium lead, the SENCO, DSL/Deputy DSLs.

### **8.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance**

**We will:**

- Meet with the parent(s) to discuss and seek to understand the individual needs of the pupil and family. Where possible, we will invite external agencies who are already involved with the pupil or family (eg school nurse, social worker etc)
- Work in partnership with the pupil and family to put in-school support in place and work with other agencies where external support is needed (eg health visitors, social workers, family support workers)
- Regularly review and update the support approach to make sure it continues to meet individual needs.

### **8.2 Pupils absent due to mental or physical ill health or SEND**

**We will:**

- Facilitate any relevant pastoral support with the clear aim of improving attendance as much as possible whilst supporting the underlying health/SEND issue.
- Consider any reasonable adjustments that would help to remove in-school barriers and meet the needs of pupils who are struggling to attend school. Any adjustments should be agreed by, and regularly reviewed with the pupil and their parents.
- Consider whether a time-limited phased return to school would be appropriate
- Make a sickness return to the local authority if a pupil is recorded in the attendance register as absent using code I (unable to attend because of sickness) and there are reasonable grounds to believe the pupil will have to miss 15 consecutive school days or more for illness or the pupil's total number of school days missed during the current school year because of illness (whether consecutive or cumulative) will reach or exceed 15 school days.

Where a pupil's health need means that they need reasonable adjustments or support because it is complex or long term, we will seek medical evidence to better understand the needs of the pupil and identify the most suitable provision.

### **8.3 Pupils absent due to other barriers to attendance**

Where a pupil has an education health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that are related to the pupil's needs, the school will inform the local authority as per our mandatory duty. This duty has been delegated to Lisa Clark, SENCO.

In cases where a child is subject to a Child Protection Plan, Child In Need Plan or is a Looked After Child, any absence must be reported to the child's social worker.

## **8.4 Pupils returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence**

A prolonged period of absence may heighten anxious feelings about returning to school and we will facilitate pastoral support as well as any reasonable adjustments we feel necessary.

## **8.5 Absence for children in the EYFS**

Although we recognise that attending pre-school is not statutory, we believe that good attendance is essential if children are to be settled and take full advantage of the learning and development opportunities available to them. We also have a duty of care for safeguarding purposes.

It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to notify us if their pre-school child will be absent for any reason eg illness or holiday etc. If parents know holidays in advance it is greatly appreciated to let us know these.

If a child attends a morning or full day session, parents are to inform us by 9am of any absence or by **12:30pm** for an afternoon session.

In cases of prolonged absence, or when a child is absent without notification, we will attempt to contact the child's parents and alternative emergency contacts (parents to provide at least two when registering their child).

When deciding whether a child's absence should be considered prolonged, we will consider the:

- Patterns and trends in the child's absences and their personal circumstances
- Vulnerability of the child and their parents, as well as the circumstances of their home life

For any concerns we will follow our safeguarding procedures including referrals to local children's social care and/or requesting a police welfare check.

If after one month the child has not attended nursery and a reasonable reason has not been shared, the child's name will be removed from the Pre-School register.

## **9. Attendance monitoring**

### **9.1 Monitoring attendance**

The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) weekly, half-termly, termly and yearly across the school, pupil groups (eg SEN, PP) and at an individual pupil level

In order to meet our statutory duties, MK City Council and the DfE can securely access the school's attendance data through our management information system. No information that identifies a child will be shared publicly.

Data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics.

The school will benchmark its attendance data against local and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement and share this with the governing board.

### **9.2 Analysing attendance**

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

### **9.3 Using data to improve attendance**

The school will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
- Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence, and their families (see section 9.4 below)
- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including the special educational needs co-ordinator, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium lead)
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

### **9.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence**

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's strategy for improving attendance.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence and target attendance improvement efforts to the pupils or pupil cohorts who need it most.
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Communicate with parents via letter, telephone conversations and meetings.
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, at risk of persistent or severe absence, or are persistently or severely absent to:
  - Discuss attendance and engagement at school
  - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
  - Explain the help that is available.
  - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
  - Review any existing actions or interventions
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant

- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
- Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 7, above)

## **10. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every 3 years by the attendance officer. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

## **11. Links with other policies**

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions

## Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's [guidance on school attendance](#).

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
<b>Attending a place other than the school</b>		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
<b>Absent – leave of absence</b>		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study

		for a public examination
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances

**Absent – other authorised reasons**

T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made

**Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause**

Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly	Every pupil absent as the school is closed

	closed	unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	<p>Pupil is unable to attend as they are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In police detention</li> <li>• Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or</li> <li>• Detained under a sentence of detention</li> </ul>
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
<b>Absent – unauthorised absence</b>		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
<b>Administrative codes</b>		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays