Attendance Policy 2025

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This policy is applicable to Rotherfield Primary School and Newington Green Primary School as part of The Growth Learning Collective		

Contents

1 Introduction

At Rotherfield and Newington Green, we believe regular school attendance—from Nursery to Year 6—is essential for academic success, personal growth, and wellbeing. Good attendance builds positive habits, strengthens social connections, and fosters responsibility (DfE, 2022).

However, attendance remains a challenge. In 2023/24, 23% of pupils at Rotherfield and 16.2% at Newington Green were persistently absent, accounting for 60% and 44% of total absences. A large portion were unauthorised: 40% at Rotherfield and 31.8% at Newington Green. Early Years pupils had the lowest attendance, despite evidence linking strong early attendance to better long-term outcomes (Burtonshaw & Dorrell, 2023). These trends reflect wider borough concerns—Islington consistently reports some of London's lowest attendance rates.

Research shows a clear link between attendance and achievement. In 2022–23, 71% of pupils with 99%+ attendance met Key Stage 2 standards in reading, writing, and maths, compared to 50% with 90% attendance and 42% with 85% (Benyon, 2023). Poor attendance in Reception and Year 1 correlates with lower phonics scores and weaker literacy foundations (DfE, 2023; EEF, 2023).

Improving attendance requires early intervention, open communication, and strong partnerships with families. Schools cannot do this alone. We urge parents and carers to engage with staff, share concerns, and support punctuality. With 75% of schools identifying poor attendance as a barrier to progress—especially for disadvantaged pupils (EEF, 2023)—collaboration is key.

This policy outlines the roles of parents, staff, and governors in promoting attendance and tackling persistent absence. Together, we can ensure every child is supported to attend regularly and thrive.

2 Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations 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 (applies from 19 August 2024)](), 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 make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school

3 Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024)](#) and [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of the [Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of the [Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments)](#)
- [The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024](#)
- [https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/1751/contentsThe Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment](#)

[https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/757/regulation/2/made](#)

It also refers to:

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

4 Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Governing Body

The governing body is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations for school leaders, staff, pupils, and parents/carers regarding attendance.
- Ensuring that school leaders fulfil statutory duties, including accurately recording attendance in the register and sharing data with the DfE and local authority.
- Promoting the importance of school attendance across all school policies and the wider ethos.
- Overseeing the effective implementation of attendance management processes, ensuring that pupils who need the most support receive prioritised interventions.
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance.
- Holding the headteacher accountable for the effective implementation of this policy.
- Conducting regular attendance reviews in Full Governing Body (FGB) meetings. Reviewing attendance data, discuss, and challenge trends, and

help school leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most

- By maintaining oversight and actively engaging with school leaders, the governing body ensures that attendance remains a high priority, reinforcing a whole-school approach to improving attendance and reducing persistent absence.

4.2   Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

The Senior Leadership Team is responsible for:

- Ensuring the effective implementation of this policy.
- The DSLA and Phase Leaders regularly meet with the Attendance Champion to identify trends, address persistent absences (PAs), and plan necessary actions.
- Supporting Attendance Champion in addressing attendance issues and attending attendance meetings when necessary.

4.3   Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementing this policy effectively.
- Monitoring school-wide attendance data and reporting to the governing body.
- Ensuring all staff receive regular training on attendance as part of professional development, covering:
    o The importance of good attendance.
    o The recognition of absence as a potential indicator of wider issues.
    o The school's legal requirements for maintaining attendance records.
    o The school's procedures for tracking, following up, and improving attendance, including working with external partners.
- Providing dedicated training for staff with specific attendance-related roles, ensuring they can effectively analyse attendance data.
- Supporting staff in monitoring individual pupil attendance.
- Overseeing attendance strategies and evaluating their impact.
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices where necessary.
- Working with parents/carers of pupils with SEND to develop tailored attendance support.
- Liaising with the local authority regarding attendance concerns for pupils with EHC plans.
- Communicating high expectations for attendance to pupils and parents.
- Overseeing referrals to Access and Engagement where escalation is required.

4.4   Designated Senior Leader for Attendance (DSLA)

This individual is responsible for:

- Leading attendance initiatives and setting a clear vision for improvement.
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating attendance data.
- Establishing and maintaining effective strategies to tackle absence.
- Engaging with pupils, parents, and external agencies to address attendance barriers.

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Nia Silverwood at Rotherfield and Mairead McDonnell at Newington Green.

4.5   Attendance Champion

The Attendance Champion is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing daily attendance using Arbor and View Your Education Data (VYED), identifying patterns of concern, and responding promptly to unexplained or unauthorised absences.
- Reporting attendance data to DSLA and to the Pastoral team in regular meetings.
- Contacting parents/carers to understand reasons for absence and encourage prompt resolution.
- Coordinating tailored interventions for pupils at risk of persistent absence, working closely with class teachers, pastoral teams, and SLT.
- Providing attendance reports to school staff and leadership, benchmarking data to identify areas for improvement.
- Collaborating with external agencies, such as the School Nurse, Bright Futures, and Family Group, to provide additional support when needed.
- Advising the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices and supporting enforcement actions where necessary.
- Facilitating ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) sessions for pupils with emotional barriers to attendance.
- Working closely with Access and Engagement (Islington Council) to tackle persistent absence.

The Attendance Champion is Nora Achghaf at Rotherfield and Sandra Mahri at Newington Green.

4.6   Class Teachers and Support Staff
Class teachers and support staff are responsible for:

- Recording attendance daily for both morning and afternoon sessions, using the correct codes **(see Appendix A)**, and submitting this information to the school office by 9:05 AM and 1:35 PM.
- Promoting good attendance and punctuality among pupils and their parents/carers by forming positive relationships with families.

- Ensuring that the school's teaching and learning experiences encourage regular attendance and that pupils understand the value of high attendance for their personal progression and achievement.
- Keeping up to date with the school's attendance policy and government legislation and seeking guidance when needed.
- Following the correct procedures for recording attendance and addressing attendance issues.
- Reporting any relevant attendance concerns shared by pupils, parents, or carers to the Attendance Champion promptly.

4.7 School Administration Staff

The school administration staff are responsible for:

- Handling day-to-day calls, emails, and voice messages from parents/carers regarding pupil absences and ensuring all communication is accurately recorded on Arbor.
- Checking registers daily to ensure that all pupils marked as absent are not in school.
- Recording any late arrivals as present on the register and noting the time of arrival on Arbor.
- Following a call script to ascertain the exact reason and details for an absence.
- Redirecting calls to the Attendance Champion or Senior Leadership Team (SLT) for more complex cases requiring further support or intervention.
- At Rotherfield, admin staff are responsible for making first-day calls and informing the Attendance Champion of any concerns or prolonged periods of absence.
- At Newington Green, first-day calls are made by the Attendance Champion; however, if the Attendance Champion is unavailable, this responsibility falls to the admin staff.

4.8 Parents/Carers

Parents/Carers are expected to:

- Ensure that their child attends school every day on time. See **Appendix B** for timings of the school day.
- Contact the school to report their child's absence before 9:00 AM on the first day of absence and each subsequent day of absence.
- Provide the school with more than one emergency contact number for their child.
- Ensure, where possible, that medical and dental appointments are scheduled outside of school hours.
- Keep to any attendance contracts agreed upon with the school and/or local authority.
- Seek support for maintaining good attendance, where necessary, by contacting the Attendance Champion.

- Notify the school in advance if their child has a pre-arranged appointment that cannot be made outside school hours.
- Complete an Application for Leave of Absence form in advance if they wish to take their child out of school. Parents/carers should understand that authorising any leave is at the school's discretion and will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.
- Arrange family holidays outside of school term time, as holidays are not considered exceptional circumstances in most cases.
- Keep the school informed of any circumstances that may affect their child's attendance.
- Provide evidence for exceptional absence requests, including medical documents when necessary.

5 Recording Attendance

5.1 Attendance register

The school will keep an attendance register and place all pupils onto this register. The school will take the attendance register at the start of the morning session of each school day and once during the afternoon session. It will mark whether every pupil is:
- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

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 A** 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

5.2 Unplanned Absences

If a child is unable to attend school due to an unplanned absence, such as illness or an emergency, parents/carers must:
1   Notify the school by 9:30 a.m. on the first day of absence via phone or email, providing the reason and expected return date.
2   Continue to report the absence each subsequent day unless otherwise advised by the school.

3   If no contact is made by 10:30 a.m., the school administration team will attempt to reach parents/carers via phone calls and email.
4   If no response is received, the absence will be recorded as "O" (unauthorised) and daily follow-up attempts will continue until contact is established.
5   In cases of prolonged absence where no contact has been made, a home visit may be conducted as a safeguarding measure to ensure the child's welfare.

- Absences due to physical or mental illness will be marked as authorised, unless the school has concerns about the authenticity of the illness.
- If the absence exceeds 5 days or the school has doubts about its validity, parents may be asked to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, or appointment confirmation. However, unnecessary requests for medical evidence will be avoided.
- If sufficient evidence is not provided and the school remains concerned, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, and parents will be informed in advance.

5.2.1 Unauthorised Minor Illness

Children should attend school unless they are too unwell. Minor illnesses such as colds, sore throats, or mild headaches are not usually a valid reason for absence and will be marked as 'O' (Unauthorised). Parents should assess whether their child can manage the school day before deciding to keep them at home. For guidance on common childhood illnesses and attendance recommendations, parents can refer to **Minor Illnesses and School Attendance – A Guide for Parents**, available from the school office or online here.

5.2.2 Other reasons Illnesses may be recorded as Unauthorised

- Being prescribed medication during school hours is not a reason to stay home. Parents must bring the medication to the school office, complete a permission form, and the school will administer it as needed.
- If an illness-related absence lasts more than 48 hours or if a child's attendance falls below 90%, medical evidence (e.g., a doctor's note, prescription, or appointment card) will be required for the absence to be authorised.
- Medical evidence is also required for any illness-related absences immediately before or after a holiday for a period longer than 48 hours. In some instances, this may trigger a home-visit.

5.3 Planned Absences

Parents/carers must request approval for any planned absences in advance.

- Medical and Dental Appointments:
  - Attending a medical or dental appointment will be authorised as long as the school is notified before the appointment and medical evidence is provided.

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- Acceptable forms of medical evidence include an appointment note, text message confirmation, discharge summary, or prescription.
- Parents are encouraged to schedule these appointments outside of school hours where possible. If this is unavoidable, the child should be absent for the minimum time necessary.
- Other Types of Planned Absence:
  - Parents must apply for any other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible.
  - For guidance on which absences the school can authorise, refer to Section 7 of this policy.
- Religious Observance:
  - Rotherfield and Newington Green recognise that children of different faiths may observe religious festivals that fall outside of school holidays.
  - The school will authorise absence for religious observance, typically for one day per festival.
  - Parents must inform the school in advance of any planned absence for religious reasons.

5.4 Following up on unexplained Absences

When a pupil expected to attend school does not arrive and no reason has been provided, the school will take the following steps to ensure their safety and address any barriers to attendance:

- First-Day Contact: The school will call the parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school is unable to reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, further steps may be taken, including:
  - Contacting other schools where siblings may be registered.
  - Conducting a home visit if concerns persist.
  - Making enquiries with friends, neighbours, or known school contacts.
  - Consulting services or agencies already involved with the pupil or family.
- Safeguarding Measures: If no contact is established and there are safeguarding concerns, the school may escalate the case, which could include notifying relevant authorities or contacting police or social services where necessary.
- Attendance Recording: The school will determine whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised and apply the correct attendance code as soon as the reason is confirmed. This will be done within 5 working days of the missed session.
- Ongoing Absence: If the absence continues without explanation, the school will make daily follow-up calls and take appropriate safeguarding measures. If the absence persists, the case may be referred to Access and Engagement (AES) for further intervention.
- Support and Intervention: The school will assess whether the pupil and their family require additional support to improve attendance and make referrals to external agencies where needed.

- Legal Action: Where support is not appropriate, unsuccessful, or refused, the school may issue a Notice to Improve, a Penalty Notice, or consider other legal interventions in line with attendance enforcement policies.

5.5 Children Missing in Education

If families move away from the area or wish to transfer their child to another school, the Headteacher must be informed prior to leaving by completing the Off-Rolling Notification Form, available from the school office.

- Children cannot be removed from the school roll until confirmation has been received from the new school or Local Education Authority that a place has been offered and accepted.
- If a child is absent from school for 10 consecutive days and parents/carers do not respond to school attempts to establish their whereabouts, the child will be reported to the local authority using a Missing Pupil Alert Form.

5.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents/carers about their child's attendance and absence levels at parents' evenings and through written reports upon request. Parents/carers are also able to access their child's attendance records via Arbor.

6 Lateness and Punctuality

Arriving at school on time is essential for pupils to settle into the school day, participate fully in lessons, and develop good routines. Punctuality is a key part of the school's commitment to high attendance standards.

6.1 Arrival Time

- The school gates open at 8:45 a.m. to allow for a soft start to the school day.
- Pupils must arrive by 9:00 a.m., when registers are taken.
- Any pupil arriving after 9:05 a.m. will be marked as late (code L).

6.2 Late Arrivals

- Pupils who arrive between 9:05 a.m. and 9:30 a.m. will be recorded as late (code L).
- Any pupil arriving after 9:30 a.m. will be marked as having an unauthorised absence (code U) unless a valid reason is provided.

6.3 Addressing Persistent Lateness

Persistent lateness negatively impacts learning. To address ongoing punctuality concerns:

Pupils with 12 or more instances of lateness in any 6-week period will be subject to formal intervention, including:

- Meetings with parents/carers to identify and address barriers.
- Attendance monitoring and punctuality contracts where necessary.
- Referral to external services if lateness persists.
- Possible issuance of a Penalty Notice for continued non-compliance.

6.4 The Impact of Persistent Lateness

- Arriving 5 minutes late every day = 3 days of lost learning per school year.
- Arriving 15 minutes late every day = 2 full weeks of lost learning per school year.

For more details on the morning school schedule, refer to **Appendix B – Punctuality Pyramid**.

7 Authorised and unauthorised absence

7.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will 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 include:

- Taking part in a regulated performance or regulated employment abroad.
- Attending an interview.
- Study leave.
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable.
- Other exceptional circumstances.

A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

7.2 Term-Time Holidays

Term-time holidays are not usually considered exceptional circumstances and will therefore be classified as unauthorised absences. Unauthorised term-time leave often results in a penalty notice. If term-time leave is taken without authorisation, parents/carers must maintain contact with the school. Failure to respond to the school's efforts to confirm a child's whereabouts for more than 10 days will lead to a Children Missing in Education referral, involving outside agencies such as the police or social services (See section 5.5).

Each application for term-time leave will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, considering specific circumstances and relevant background context. Requests should be submitted as early as possible and, where feasible, at least six weeks in advance using the Term-Time Leave Request Form, available from the school office. The headteacher may request supporting evidence, such as flight details, contact information while abroad, and the intended address.

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Any unauthorised absence related to term-time leave may result in a Fixed Penalty Notice, in accordance with the Access and Engagement Services at Islington Council. Penalty notices are issued per parent, per child, meaning families may incur multiple fines. If a penalty notice remains unpaid, legal proceedings may be initiated under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

The headteacher will determine how many school days a child may be absent if leave is granted. Applications for leave must be made by the resident parent (i.e., the parent with whom the child normally resides) and must be submitted in advance. If an application is refused, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, which may lead to further legal action.

7.3   Other Authorised Absences

Other valid reasons for authorised absence include (but are not limited to):
- Illness (including mental health concerns) and medical/dental appointments (see Sections 5.2 and 5.3).
- Religious observance, where a 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 parent's religious body to confirm the date.
- Parental occupational travel, applying to families of Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people), circus performers, bargees (occupational boat dwellers), and new travellers. Absence may be authorised when a traveller family is known to be travelling for work purposes and has agreed this with the school.
- Suspension or exclusion, where no alternative provision has been arranged.

7.4   Absences That Are Not Classified as Absences

Some instances where a pupil is not in school will not be classified as an absence, including:
- Attending an approved offsite educational activity, school-arranged sporting event, trip, or visit.
- Attending another school where the pupil is dual registered.
- Participating in alternative provision arranged by the local authority.
- Attending work experience.
- Experiencing unavoidable disruptions, such as emergencies affecting travel, lack of access arrangements, or school closure.

7.5   Sanctions For Unauthorised Absence

Our school will make use of the full 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. Please refer to **Appendix C** for steps towards statutory action and **Appendix D** for Attendance support and escalation procedures.

7.6 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.

If the school issues a penalty notice, it will check with the local authority before doing so and send a copy of any penalty notice issued.

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)
- 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.

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.

7.7 Notices to improve

If the national threshold has been met 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 engage with support.

Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

They 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](#)
- Details of the support provided so far
- 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 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

8 Strategies for Promoting Attendance and Punctuality

At Rotherfield and Newington Green, we are committed to creating a positive school environment where all children feel valued, respected, and motivated to attend regularly.

Our approach to improving attendance includes:
- Fostering a welcoming school environment where children feel safe, engaged, and supported in their learning. When pupils experience success and enjoyment in school, they are more likely to attend regularly.
- Working closely with parents and carers to build strong relationships that reinforce the importance of school attendance and punctuality.
- Raising awareness about the impact of absence through newsletters, parent meetings, and the school website.
- Providing reasonable adjustments where needed, such as staggered drop-offs, alternative entrances, or soft starts, to support pupils struggling with attendance or punctuality.
- Celebrating attendance achievements, ensuring that children receive recognition and encouragement for attending regularly.

8.1 Support for Pupils with Barriers to Attendance

We recognise that some pupils face additional challenges that affect their ability to attend school regularly. Our school is committed to reducing persistent and severe absence by ensuring that students and their families receive the right support at the right time.

This includes:
- Early identification and intervention, ensuring attendance concerns are addressed before they become entrenched.
- Personalised support plans for pupils facing barriers to attendance, including those with medical conditions, mental health challenges, or special educational needs.
- Regular review and monitoring, including home-school communication and referrals to external services when necessary.

- Collaboration with external agencies, such as the School Nurse, CAMHS, Bright Futures, Bright Start, the School Wellbeing Service (SWS), and our school Educational Psychotherapist (Family group therapy), to ensure that students and their families receive the necessary help.
- Tailored in-school interventions such as ELSA group sessions.
- Notifying the local authority when a pupil with an Education, Health, and Care (EHC) plan has declining attendance or faces in-school barriers that affect their participation.

8.2   Incentives and Rewards for Good Attendance

To encourage excellent attendance and punctuality, we offer a variety of rewards for pupils and classes who demonstrate commitment to attending school regularly:

- Weekly Attendance Awards – The class with the highest attendance each week will be rewarded with a popcorn party to encourage collective responsibility for attendance.
- Termly Recognition – Pupils achieving 97% attendance or higher will be entered into a prize draw for a chance to win a £50 voucher, redeemable at a restaurant of their choice.
- End-of-Year Celebration – Pupils with 100% attendance throughout the academic year will receive a certificate and a special reward, presented in a school assembly.
- Recognition for Most Improved Attendance – Awarded to pupils who have made significant progress in improving their attendance.

By implementing these strategies, we aim to ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to attend school regularly, benefit from their education, and develop lifelong habits of responsibility and punctuality.

9   Attendance Monitoring

9.1   Monitoring Attendance and Absence Data

The school is committed to tracking attendance data to identify patterns, intervene early, and provide targeted support. To ensure a proactive approach, the school will:

- Regularly monitor attendance data at individual, class, and whole-school levels on a half-termly, termly, and yearly basis.
- Identify groups of pupils with attendance concerns, particularly those showing patterns of persistent or severe absence.
- Compare school attendance rates to national averages to inform improvement strategies and share findings with the governing board.
- Provide pupil-level attendance data to the Department for Education (DfE) as required and ensure the school's management information system is securely accessible to the DfE for regular monitoring.

Pupil absence data will be collected and published at the local authority and national levels as part of the DfE's school absence national statistics releases.

9.2   Analysing Attendance Trends
To ensure a data-driven approach to attendance management, the school will:
- Analyse attendance data regularly to identify pupils, groups, or cohorts needing additional support.
- Detect persistent or severe absence trends and assess historical and emerging patterns.
- Use this analysis to implement interventions and adjust attendance strategies to address specific challenges.
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9.3   Using Data to Improve Attendance
The school will use attendance data to:
- Develop targeted interventions for pupils, groups, or cohorts showing concerning absence patterns.
- Support pupils at risk of persistent or severe absence by working closely with their families and providing tailored interventions.
- Share attendance reports with class teachers and school leaders to facilitate discussions and track pupil progress.
- Monitor and evaluate the impact of interventions, modifying them where necessary to improve effectiveness.
- Collaborate with local authorities, other schools, and external agencies to support at-risk pupils and ensure appropriate interventions are in place.

9.4   Reducing Persistent and Severe Absence
Persistent absence is defined as a pupil missing 10% or more of school (equivalent to at least 19 days per academic year), while severe absence refers to pupils missing 50% or more of school. Reducing these levels is a key priority in the school's attendance strategy (see introduction).

To address persistent and severe absence, the school will:
- Monitor attendance patterns to identify pupils at risk of becoming persistently or severely absent.
- Consider potential safeguarding concerns, addressing them in line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education* where appropriate.
- Hold regular meetings with parents of pupils identified as persistently or severely absent to:
  - Discuss concerns and engagement with school.
  - Understand and address barriers to attendance.
  - Offer available support and resources.
  - Explain possible consequences, including legal interventions.
  - Review and adjust existing support strategies.
- Provide access to wider support services, in collaboration with the local authority, to remove attendance barriers.

- Consider alternative support strategies to help pupils re-engage with school while being sensitive to underlying challenges.
- Implement sanctions if necessary (see Section 7.5 on unauthorised absences).

9.5 Appendix A: 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
Attending a place other than the school		
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
Absent – leave of absence		
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

THE GROWTH LEARNING COLLECTIVE
PUNCTUALITY PYRAMID
Every minute counts!

The school gates open at 8.45 am. This allows time for your child to meet their friends and get ready for the morning.

At 8.55 the bell rings and this is the time teachers will start taking the pupils to the classroom.

8.45 to 8.55

9.00
The gate closes

At 9.01 am teachers have taken the register and start lessons for the day.

Children who arrive at 9.05 Have missed registration. They will now miss out on lesson time.

9.01
You are now late

9.05
5 minutes late means 3 days lost a year

Class registers close in the office

9.30
30 minutes late means 18 days lost a year.
Any arrivals after 9.30 will be marked as an unauthorised absence.

Children find arriving at school late unsettling and they miss out on important opportunites such as: Phonics, Maths countdown and guided reading sessions.

Please work with us to provide your child with the best chances of learning by ensuring they are in school **everyday and on time.**

Steps Towards Statutory Action following poor attendance
Process for Schools

Stage 1
Support First approach

Poor attendance

Identify Poor Attendance

Raise concern with Parent / Carer
1st letter sent

Monitor, action and track interventions
3 Weeks

Attendance Improves — Yes / No

2nd Letter sent

Where difficulties with school attendance arise, we will adopt a 'Support First' approach, in line with the *Working Together to Improve School Attendance* guidance..
Our aim is to identify and address the barriers that prevent families from achieving good attendance. Below is a list of interventions we use to support and encourage improved attendance.

School Based Interventions

Academic Support
- Additional support in class
- Small group work
- Target setting

Attendance Engagement
- Attendance plan/contract
- Increased phone calls
- Home visits
- Meetings with form tutor/ Head of Year (secondary)
- Monitoring report (secondary)

Early Support
- Nominate key adult
- Breakfast club
- Home visits
- Team Around the Child (TAC) meeting
- Personalised routines
- Reduced timetable

Enrichment
- Clubs
- Special Events e.g. World Book Day
- School Trips

Health and Wellbeing
- Support from school nurse
- Talking to pupils about their mental health

Incentives and Motivation
- Engaging and fun learning activites
- Rewards and incentives

SEND
- Support from SENCo
- Sensory audit (autism or social communication difficulties)
- Graduated approach and reasonable adjustments

Social and Emotional
- Learning mentor
- Pastoral support
- Mentoring
- ELSA sessions
- Family Group

External Interventions

Health Services
- CAMHS
- Islington Additional Needs and Disability Services (IANDS)

Social Care and Early Help
- Bright Start / Bright Futures / Family Hubs
- School Wellbeing Service
- Virtual School for CLA

Stage 2
Escalation to Attendance Lead

Invite parent to meeting with Attendance Officer

Monitor, action and track interventions
2 Weeks

Return to stage 1 if attendance is less than 94%

Attendance Improves — Yes / No

3rd letter sent (Phone call from Class teacher/ statement of impact or books shown)

Stage 3
Escalation to Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

Has sufficient evidence of Support First been collected?
Sufficient evidence will usually include:

- Written communication sent to parents regarding attendance concerns.
- Opportunities for discussion offered and recorded(e.g., phone calls, meetings) to explore attendance barriers.
- School-based interventions recorded, with outcomes tracked (e.g., home visits, attendance plans, ELSA sessions).
- Attendance contract or plan agreed with parent/carer, outlining mutual responsibilities.
- Referrals to support services made where appropriate.
- Escalation pathway followed, including:
  - Meetings with Attendance Lead
  - Meetings with SLT
- Safeguarding concerns addressed, with evidence of liaison with relevant agencies if applicable.

Invite for a meeting to agree a Plan of action

Monitor, action and track interventions
2 Weeks

Return to stage 2 until attendance is over 94% (continue to monitor, action and track interventions) — Yes

Attendance Improves — No

Formal Meeting with SLT — No / Yes

4th letter sent. Formal action plan agreed with SLT.

Stage 4
Issue Notice to Improve Attendance

After a Notice to Improve is issued:

- The notice remains valid for 4 weeks (up to 20 school days).
- It must clearly outline the support offered to the family and include staff contact details for follow-up.
- Attendance should be monitored daily during this period.
- If there are further unauthorised absences, the school can consider issuing a Penalty Notice.
- In some cases, a Penalty Notice may be issued before the 20-day period ends, depending on parent/carer engagement and attendance progress.
- Improvement means no further unauthorised absences or evidence of agreed and sustained progress between the school, pupil, and family.

After 3 weeks of non improvement Send formal 'Notice to Improve' to Parent / Carer

Monitor attendance daily
4 weeks (20 school days)

Return to stage 2 until attendance is over 94% (continue to monitor, action and track interventions) — Yes

Attendance Improves — No

Consider referral to AES — No / Yes

Notice of improvement sent

Referal to AES or Social Services

Stage 5
Refer to Access and Engagement Team (AES)

Reasons why statutory action following a Notice to Improve Attendance may not be appropriate

- It could damage the school's relationship with the parent or carer.
- The family's circumstances (e.g., financial hardship) mean formal action may not be in their best interest.
- A Penalty Notice is unlikely to improve attendance or change behaviour in this case.
- The family is engaging well and making measurable progress, even if attendance is not yet above 90%.
- There are complex safeguarding, SEND, or health needs requiring ongoing support rather than enforcement.

Complete and return Statutory Action Referral Form with evidence to AES

Return to stage 2 until attendance is over 94% (continue to monitor, action and track interventions) — No

Statutory action agreed by AES — Yes

Statutory Action Begins

Appendix D: Attendance Support and Escalation Procedure
Growth Learning Collective

We know that good attendance is vital for your child's learning, wellbeing, and future success. We also understand that families may need support at times. That's why we follow a support first approach to address attendance concerns early and collaboratively.

Step 1: Support First If your child's attendance drops, we'll contact you with a letter and invite you to discuss support options—such as mentoring, wellbeing check-ins, or flexible arrangements.

Step 2: Attendance Lead Involvement If attendance doesn't improve, our Attendance Champion will meet with you to agree on a plan. Support may include referrals to services like Bright Start, Family Group, or the School Nurse.

Step 3: Senior Leadership Meeting Continued concerns will lead to a meeting with a senior leader. A formal support plan with clear targets and timelines will be put in place.

Step 4: Notice to Improve If attendance remains low, you'll receive a Notice to Improve (valid for 20 school days). We'll monitor progress and continue offering support. If attendance improves, no further action is taken.

Step 5: Referral to Local Authority If there's no improvement, we may refer the case to Islington's Access and Engagement Service. Statutory action (e.g. a fine) may follow, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Statutory action may not be taken if:
- Your family is actively engaging and showing progress
- There are complex needs or exceptional circumstances
- We believe further support is more effective than penalties

We are here to work with you, not against you. Please contact the school if you are experiencing difficulties affecting your child's attendance. Early support makes all the difference.