



Wateringbury Church of
England Primary School

Attendance Policy

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Learning, growing, achieving.....our journey together with God.

WATERINGBURY CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

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Our Vision and Values

Guided by our Christian values and nurturing culture, we aspire to enable everyone to grow green leaves to meet the challenges of our ever-changing world and to send out our roots to the wider community.

Every child is seen as a unique learner, loved by God and is equally valued and championed to grow and achieve their very best in all they do.

LOVE FORGIVENESS JOY RESILIENCE RESPECT COURAGE

1. 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

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 \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) 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](#)
- ◆ [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment](#)
- ◆ It also refers to:
 - ◆ [School census guidance](#)
 - ◆ [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
 - ◆ [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- ◆ Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents
- ◆ 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 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

The monitoring pair for behaviour and attitudes have a responsibility for attendance as part of their monitoring schedule.

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- ◆ The 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
- ◆ Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising the attendance officer to be able to do so
- ◆ Working with the parents 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 through all available channels

3.3 The local authority

The local authority is expected to:

- ◆ Organise termly Targeting Support Meetings with each school in their area so the school's attendance leads and their point of contact in the local authority's School Attendance Support Team can identify, discuss, and agree joint targeted actions for pupils who are persistently or severely absent and those at risk of becoming so. This should include agreeing what support the LA will provide and which (if any) other statutory or voluntary services should become involved.
- ◆ Use these meetings to build strong relationships and work collaboratively with the school's attendance leads, including providing advice on recording in the register, accessing services or the wider area-wide attendance approach

3.4 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
- ◆ Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- ◆ Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- ◆ Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- ◆ Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues

- ◆ Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- ◆ Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Debbie Johnson and can be contacted via 01622 812199 or headteacher@wateringbury.kent.sch.uk

3.5 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- ◆ Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- ◆ 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 education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- ◆ Advising the headteacher (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is Suze Berry and can be contacted via 01622 812199 or sberry@wateringbury.kent.sch.uk

3.6 The Family Liaison Officer (FLO)

The FLO will work with the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the attendance officer and is responsible for:

- ◆ Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed to tackle persistent absence
- ◆ Liaise with and refer to our designated school liaison officer (West Kent).
- ◆ Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues.
- ◆ Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- ◆ Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families.
- ◆ Informing the social worker (if appointed) of any pupil's unexplained absence.
- ◆ Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- ◆ Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies.

The designated senior lead is supported by the FLO, Catherina Henry who can be contacted on 01622 812199 or chenry@wateringbury.kent.sch.uk

3.7 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1), and submitting this information to the school office by 9:15am and 1:15pm via SIMS.

3.8 School office staff

School office staff will:

- ◆ Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system

- ◆ Transfer calls from parents/carers to the SENCO/FLO where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

3.9 Parents

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 are expected to:

- ◆ Make sure their child attends every day on time
- ◆ Call the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence (and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return
- ◆ Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- ◆ Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- ◆ Keep to any attendance contracts/plans that they make with the school and/or local authority
- ◆ Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting our FLO, Mrs Henry, who can be contacted via 01622 812199 or chenry@wateringbury.kent.sch.uk

3.9 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- ◆ Attend school every day
- ◆ Be in school by 8:45am daily
- ◆ Begin taking responsibility for getting themselves ready and into school as they get into the upper Key Stage Two.

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 the first session of each school day and once during the second 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
- ◆ 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 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- ◆ Whether the absence is authorised or not
- ◆ The nature of the activity, where 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.

The school gates open at 8:30am. The classroom doors open at 8:40am and the school day starts at 8:45am. The end of the school day is at 3:15pm.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8:45am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8:45am and will be kept open until 9:15am (as we have a lot of families reliant on public transport or travelling a long way through traffic hotspots). The register for the second session will be taken at 12:50pm and will be kept open until 1:00pm.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9am, or as soon as practically possible, by calling the school office staff, who can be contacted via 01622 812199 or office@wateringbury.kent.sch.uk

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised, unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where the absence is longer than 5 days, or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for 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 will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

Leaves of absence can be requested via our request form which can be submitted in person or electronically via email.

However, we encourage parents 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 must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- ◆ After 8:45am but before 9:15am will be marked with the appropriate code L by the office. The teacher may have recorded them as N with a note for number of minutes late.
- ◆ After the register has closed at 9:15am will be marked as absent, using the code N by the teacher and the then appropriate code, U (or other in Appendix 1), by the office staff.

- ◆ All pupils who arrive late must report, with their parent and carer, to the office where the reason for lateness is recorded.
- ◆ Ongoing punctuality issues are responded to by the attendance officer and FLO.

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

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

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

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 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 may ask the FLO to make a home visit. Where we have concerns for the child's well-being and safety, it may be necessary to contact Integrated Children's Services. If, after a discussion with social care, the school continue to have concerns they may alert the police. See first day absence procedures flow chart (Appendix 3).
- ◆ Identify whether the absence is approved 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(s) for which the pupil was absent
- ◆ Call the parent on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving the School Liaison Officer (from the Attendance Service).
- ◆ Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance
- ◆ Identify whether the pupil or family 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, we will seek to issue a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention (see section 5.2 below as appropriate).

4.6 Reporting to parents

The Department for Education expects schools to regularly inform parents / carers of their child's attendance and absence levels. At Watlington CE Primary School this is done 3 times annually as a minimum, or more frequently where there are concerns.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

The table below indicates how what might seem like just a few days absence can result in children missing a significant number of lessons.

Attendance during school year	Days lost in a year	Which is approximately	Approximate number of lessons missed
95%	9.5 Days	2 Weeks	50 Lessons
90%	19 Days	4 Weeks	100 Lessons

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

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

The headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings.

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 circumstances are:

- ◆ Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- ◆ Attending an interview
- ◆ A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- ◆ 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.

Exceptional circumstances could include:

- ◆ Service Personnel returning from a Tour of Duty overseas where it is evidenced the individual will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays.
- ◆ Where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue.
- ◆ The death or terminal illness of a person close to the family.
- ◆ To attend a wedding or funeral of a person close to the family.
- ◆ Any strong personal reasons why a family might need to take a child away from school for a short break.

Any examples provided are illustrative rather than exhaustive. It is acceptable to take a student's previous record of attendance into account when the school is making decisions. The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are rare, significant, unavoidable and short. And by 'unavoidable' it implies that an event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time. It is important to note that Headteachers can agree the absence of a child in exceptional circumstances and this discretion can be used also to determine the length of the authorised absence.

The following reasons are examples of absence that will not be authorised:

- ◆ Persistent non-specific illness e.g., poorly/unwell
- ◆ Absence of siblings if one child is ill
- ◆ Oversleeping
- ◆ Arriving after the register has closed.
- ◆ Inadequate clothing/uniform
- ◆ Confusion over school dates
- ◆ Medical/dental appointments of more than half a day without very good reasons
- ◆ Child's/family birthday
- ◆ Waiting in for parcels, repairs, etc.
- ◆ Shopping trip
- ◆ Family holidays (with some rare exceptions)

Leave of absence will not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

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

Other valid reasons for **authorised absence** include (but are not limited to):

- ◆ Illness (including mental-health 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 parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent’s religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- ◆ Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision
- ◆ If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

Other reasons the school may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, 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
- ◆ Attending work experience
- ◆ If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

5.2 Sanctions

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.

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 it 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

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.

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.

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

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

At Wateringbury, we promote attendance with the school by sharing the whole school and class attendance percentages in weekly newsletters and celebrate the top classes for attendance and punctuality each week in assembly. The top classes take Attendance Ted and Punctuality Pup to their classroom each week. This promotes discussion around the importance of attending and encourages children to be in school every day. The information is shared in a whole school display.

We have a leaflets about the importance of good attendance in the school office and regularly share these with parents. We will also include this information on our website.

The Senior Attendance Champion will ensure that families requiring high levels of support will be provided with this using a range of strategies, including support from the FLO and the Local Authority. Regular analysis of data will be carried out to inform next steps.

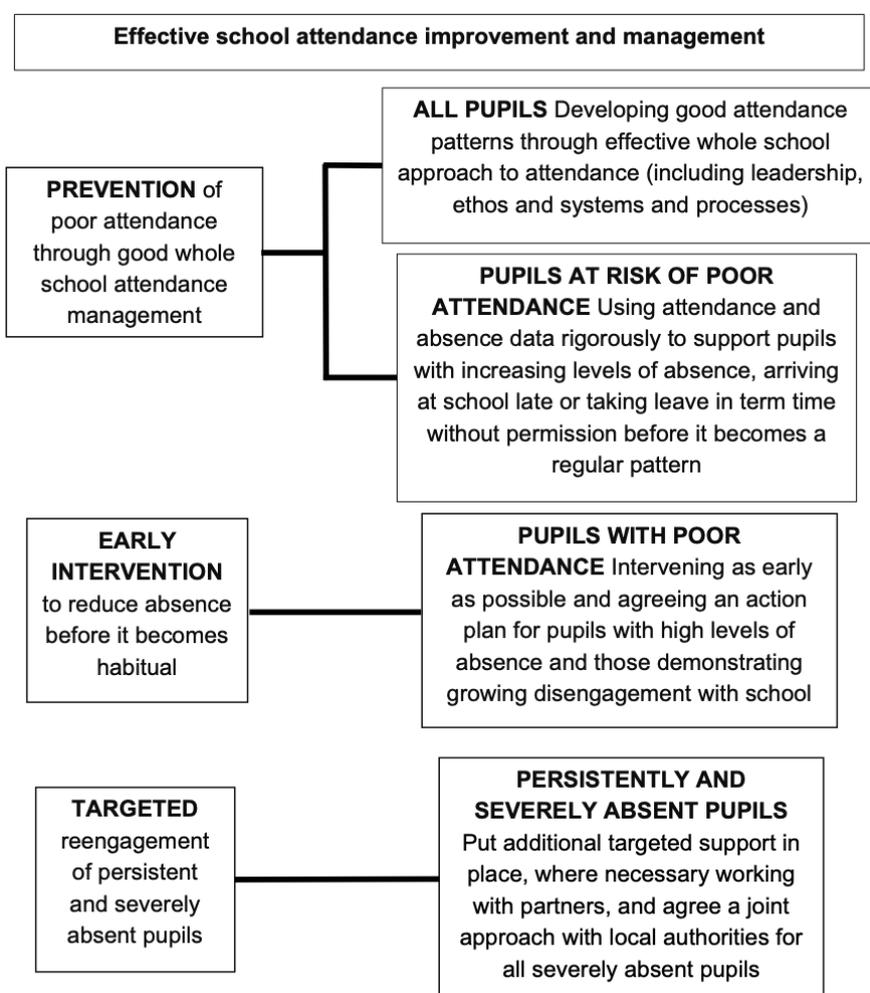
Class teachers will be involved and have knowledge of this on an on-going basis, so that they can support the child and family on a daily basis as the person with most contact with the child in school.

Attendance figures are shared with parents in interim reports in December and April, and in the annual written report. Teachers will also discuss concerns about attendance during consultation evenings in October and March.

The senior attendance champion analyses the data and will share the details of those pupils with attendance concerns with the class teacher in January and April.

Letters are sent to parents sharing concerns about attendance following the monthly analysis and review.

Attendance and punctuality concerns are shared as part of transition discussions both within school and when moving on to secondary.



7. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

7.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

Where a child has complex barriers that impact on attendance, the school may put in place the following support:

- ◆ Reintegration plan co-produced with parents and any other agencies involved to support attendance.
- ◆ Inclusion support programme which is reviewed regularly with parents/carers any other involved agencies
- ◆ Consultation with Educational Psychologist at the local Emotionally Based School Avoiders consultation forum

7.2 Pupils absent due to mental or physical ill health or SEND

If a child is absent due to mental or physical ill health or SEND, the school works closely with the family and any other agencies to make reasonable adjustments to support attendance. This may be with meetings outside of the school hours with the child on the school site, Teams contact, home visits and provision of work. The school may liaise with the local authority for more complex cases.

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 related to the pupil's needs, the school will inform the local authority.

7.3 Pupils returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence

When a child has had a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence the school may put support in place to support reintegration if needed. This may be in the form of informal catch ups with the FLO in advance of return to school and when the child has returned to school. If a phased return is appropriate and supportive this could be put in place. Regular review of the child's success in return to school will be carried out between the parents/carers and the class teacher. These may be informal.

8. Attendance monitoring

Attendance and absence data (including punctuality) is recorded and monitored using SIMS. We can also use our assessment tracking programme Insight and Fischer Family Trust site.

8.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- ◆ monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) weekly, monthly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level.
- ◆ identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern.

Specific pupil information will be shared with the DfE on request.

The school has granted the DfE access to its management information system so the data can be accessed regularly and securely.

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 at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement, and share this with the governing board.

8.2 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
- ◆ 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

8.3 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 8.4 below)
- ◆ Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including 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

Data Returns

(see 'Working together' guidance, chapter 2, page 21 and regulation 13 of the School Attendance Regulations 2024).

Wateringbury CE Primary School follows our statutory duty to share specific information from our registers with Kent County Council at particular points in accordance with Regulation 13 of The School Attendance (Pupil Registration)(England) Regulations 2024, including:

- ◆ When any pupil's name is added or deleted from the admission register outside of standard transition times. (The latter is also known as a deletion return).
- ◆ Names and addresses of all pupils of compulsory school age who have 10 continuous school days of unauthorised absence (codes N, O, G, U) recorded on their register (known as an attendance return).
- ◆ Names and addresses of all pupils of compulsory school age who have accumulated 15 school days of absence (code I) either consecutively and/or intermittently, as well as any pupil the school has reasonable grounds to believe will miss 15 continuous school days because of illness (known as a sickness return).
- ◆ Deletion, attendance and sickness returns must be made via the Digital Front Door on the Kelsi website.

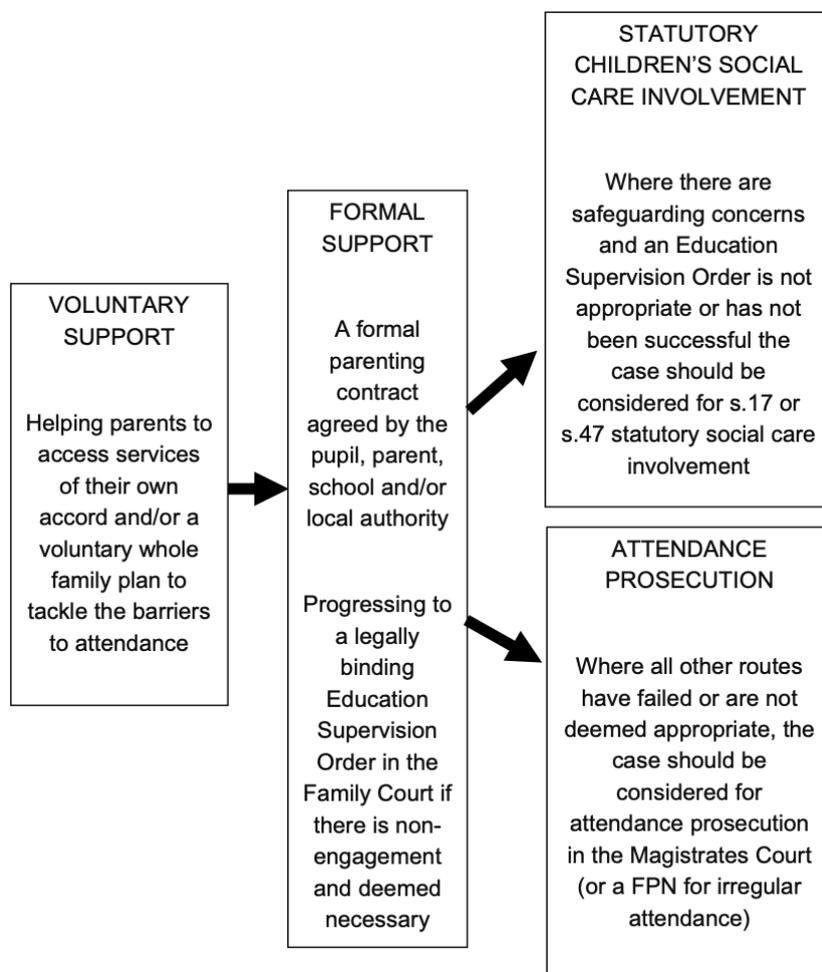
8.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

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
- ◆ Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education

- ◆ Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who 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
- ◆ Where necessary, introduce an 'attendance contract' whereby school and parents agree to supportive actions and review the implementation of these at regular intervals.
- ◆ Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant
- ◆ Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- ◆ 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
- ◆ Make sure that parents are informed about any concerns we have about their child's attendance with an escalating suite of letters (see Persistence Absentee flow chart):
 - Letter 1: bringing attention to attendance concern
 - Letter 2: requesting a meeting about an attendance concern.
 - Letter about unauthorised absence.
 - Letter about lateness notification
 - Letter about meeting request to support lateness
 - Notice to improve letter.
 - Attendance support plan
 - Parenting/Attendance contract
- ◆ Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 5.2, above)



9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every two years by Debbie Johnson, Headteacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

10. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- ◆ Child protection and safeguarding policy
- ◆ Behaviour policy
- ◆ Suspension and exclusion policy
- ◆ Wellbeing Policy

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
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 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 closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: In police detention Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or Detained under a sentence of detention
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
Absent - unauthorised absence		
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
Administrative codes		
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

Appendix 2 - First day absence flow chart



Morning Absence Process

Listen to absence messages on the phone and check emails for absences, mark on SIMS

Get registers in promptly (completed by class teachers by 8.55 am)

Late marks added to the register (manually) and lunches taken to kitchen

Check classroom for any missing pupils as they might have come in late not via the office, or not marked on the register.

Start first day calling for children absent without explanation. ***Call everyone on the contact list until we get an answer.***
Leave messages if there is a voicemail option and send text messages.
Call contact list twice if we do not receive a response first time round.

If no reply to calls contact DSL immediately with all unexplained absences. Consider whether any children have additional agency support, social worker for example. Contact them if necessary. Think about if we have any school intelligence, does anybody know the family?

If there are safeguarding wellbeing concerns: If still not heard by 12pm, TM/CH to conduct a home visit. If no answer, refer immediately to Social Services and if deemed necessary contact Police and request a welfare call. (If they can be seen inside the house avoiding the knock, don't refer - unless it is believed the children are at risk of significant harm.)

Update SIMs under Edit marks, class, pupil and add comment and code with the information you have received either via phone, email, or home visit, with the reason for absence.

Important

***Children with social services support - Contact DSL if any of the children on the list are not in first thing.
Did you hear an overseas ring tone? Is the family taking a holiday they haven't told us about?***

Appendix 3 – Persistent absentee flow chart

Wateringbury CEP School Attendance Management Persistent Absentee (below 90%) flow chart

