

Attendance Policy

Sherburn High School



Achievement for all

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1. Guiding Principles in Student Attendance

[Working Together to Improve School Attendance](#) (DfE): 'The barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates, and are often specific to individual pupils and families. The foundation of securing good attendance is that school is a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environment where all pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn.' Securing good attendance... cannot solely be the preserve of a single member of staff, or organisation, it must be a concerted effort across all teaching and non-teaching staff in school, the trust or governing body, the local authority, and other local partners.'

The Trustees of the STAR Multi-Academy Trust and Sherburn High School Local Governing Body are committed to:

- Meeting our statutory obligations with regard school attendance;
- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence;
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled;
- Ensuring every pupil on our school roll maximises their attendance and punctuality, including those of non-statutory school age;
- Acting early to address patterns of absence;
- Raising awareness of the effects of absence and lateness;
- Ensuring effective systems are in place to monitor absence and to address any underlying barriers that students face; and
- Establishing effective systems for incentives and rewards that acknowledge the efforts of young people to improve their attendance and timekeeping.

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

The guiding principles and detail under which our Student Attendance Policy has been developed and operated are as follows and have been agreed by the Trust Board and Local Governing Body:

Leadership and Management:

1. Offer a clear vision for attendance, underpinned by high expectations and core values, which are communicated to and understood by staff, pupils and families.
2. Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance.
3. Make sure staff, pupils and families understand that absence from school is a potential safeguarding risk and understand their role in keeping children safe.
4. Expect good attendance and punctuality from all members of the school community and make sure that pupils understand its importance.
5. Convey clear messages about how absence affects attainment, wellbeing and wider outcomes.
6. Empower *all school staff* to take responsibility for attendance.
7. Recognise attendance as an important area of school improvement. Make sure it is resourced appropriately (including through effective use of pupil premium funding) to create, build and maintain systems and performance.
8. Have a designated attendance champion in the senior leadership team with clearly assigned responsibilities which are identified within the attendance policy, escalation of procedures and school development plan.
9. Make sure staff receive professional development and support to deploy attendance systems effectively.
10. Ensure Governors have an accurate view of school attendance and engage in escalation procedures where appropriate.
11. Fully collaborate with all aspects of the local authority Attendance Support arrangements to ensure best possible impact at school, local and regional level

Inclusion:

1. All schools must maintain the same ambition for attendance for all pupils including those with complex or specific needs and work with pupils and parents to maximise attendance.
2. Whilst every pupil has a right to a full-time education and high attendance expectations should be set for all pupils, this attendance policy should account for the specific needs of certain pupils and pupil cohorts.

3. The policy should be applied fairly and consistently but in doing so schools should always consider the individual needs of pupils and their families who have specific barriers to attendance.
4. In development and implementation of their policy, schools should always consider their obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Relationships and Communication:

1. Build respectful relationships with staff, pupils, families and other stakeholders in order to secure their trust and engagement. Make sure there is a welcoming and positive culture across the school.
2. Communicate openly and honestly with staff, pupils and families about their expectations of school life and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them.
3. Liaise with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, for example, where a young person has a social worker or is otherwise vulnerable.
4. Model respectful relationships and appropriate communication for staff and pupils. This will help relationships between pupils and staff to reflect a positive and respectful culture. All staff members should:
 - treat pupils with dignity, build relationships rooted in mutual respect and observe proper boundaries
 - take into consideration the vulnerability of some pupils and the ways in which this might contribute to absence, handling confidential information sensitively
 - understand the importance of school as a place of safety where pupils can enjoy trusted relationships with staff and pupils particularly for children with a social worker and those who have experienced adversity
 - communicate effectively with families regarding pupils' attendance and well-being
5. Parents and carers should:
 - treat staff with respect
 - actively support the work of the school
 - call on staff for help when they need it
 - communicate as early as possible circumstances which may affect absence or require support

Systems and Data:

1. Use clear and consistently applied systems and processes to improve, reward and incentivise attendance and address absences. Make sure these systems are inclusive and appropriate for all pupils.
2. Make sure escalation procedures to address absence are initiated proactively, understood by pupils and families, implemented consistently and their impact reviewed regularly.
3. Every member of staff should know and understand their responsibilities for attendance.
4. Robust school systems provide useful data at cohort, group and individual pupil level to give an accurate view of attendance, reasons for absence and patterns amongst groups such as:
 - children who have a social worker including looked-after children young carers
 - children who are eligible for free school meals
 - children who speak English as a second language
 - children who have special educational needs and disabilities
5. Monitor and analyse attendance data regularly to allow early intervention to address issues. This includes raising concerns with other agencies such as children's social care and early help services which are working with families.
6. Attendance leaders may consider providing regular reports to staff across the school to enable them to track the attendance of pupils and to implement attendance procedures.
7. School attendance, safeguarding and pastoral support policies should clearly outline:
 - the key principles
 - rules pupils need to follow
 - routines
 - consequence systems
8. The escalation of procedures to address absence needs to be:
 - understood by pupils, parents and carers
 - implemented consistently
 - reviewed regularly

Intervention:

1. Deliver intervention in a targeted way, in response to data or intelligence.
2. Monitor and analyse attendance data regularly to ensure that intervention is delivered quickly to address absence (register inspections, code analysis, cohort and group monitoring, punctuality, lesson attendance across subjects and benchmarking).
3. Use attendance, pastoral and SEND staff who are skilled in supporting pupils and their families to identify and overcome barriers to attendance.
4. Recognise children missing education can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, sexual abuse and child sexual and criminal exploitation.
5. Create action plans in partnership with families and other agencies that may be supporting families, for example, children's social care and early help services. Commission or deliver interventions to improve attendance.
6. Monitor the impact of any intervention, making adjustments if necessary and using findings to inform future strategy.
7. Where interventions fail to address attendance issues, identify the reasons why and, where appropriate, change or adjust the intervention.
8. Follow local authority codes of conduct, policies and procedures and make referrals for statutory intervention when interventions have not resulted in improved attendance and relevant triggers / thresholds are met.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the current [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). It is aligned to meet the revised guidance which comes into effect September 2022 and is planned to be statutory September 2023. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- [Framework for Securing Full Attendance – actions for schools and local authorities](#)
- [Working Together to Improve 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](#), [2016](#) amendments)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. Roles and responsibilities

The named responsible contact for parents with regard student attendance are:

- Our attendance officer
- Our Family Liaison Officer

The school senior leader designated attendance champion is: Ms Ruth Marsh

3.1 The Governing Board

The governing body is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy. It reports on these figures to the Trust Board. The governing body is also responsible for ensuring all key roles indicated within this policy are in place, including the school senior leader designated as attendance champion, that they have effective training pathways and are facilitated in completing their roles.

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
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

3.3 The Attendance Officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Reporting concerns about attendance to the appointed Senior Leader, attendance champion.
- Working with NYCC officers to tackle persistent absence

The Family Liaison Officer

The school Family Liaison Officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring attendance data and uses this information to inform intervention and support
- Contacting families to investigate reasons for absence.
- Reporting concerns about attendance to the appointed Senior Leader, attendance champion.
- Attending attendance meetings within school with Heads of Year to analyse data and implement intervention and attendance plans.
- Attending multi agency meetings to work collaboratively with external services to provide a supportive network to improve attendance.

3.4 Class teachers/form tutors

Class teachers/form tutors are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.

3.5 School admin/office staff

School admin/office staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system.

3.6 Students (esp secondary) – optional section

Students have a responsibility to themselves and others to play a positive role in the life of the school and to make the most of the education opportunities available.

We ask that students will:

- Ensure that they attend school and are on time.
- Be aware of their current attendance record and targets.
- Be aware of the consequences of poor attendance or truancy.
- Arrive for lessons punctually.
- Do not leave school without permission.
- Follow correct procedures for known absences.
- Inform a trusted adult if they feel that they are unable to attend school for any reason such as bullying.

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 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 keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8:35am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8:35am and will be kept open until 9:00am. The register for the second session will be taken at 12:30 pm and will be kept open until 1pm.

4.2 Unplanned absence

Parents/carers must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 09:00 or as soon as practically possible on the first day of absence and each subsequent day (see also section 7).

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

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, 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 in advance.

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. *However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours wherever 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. 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:

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

The school will always seek to support families and students to eliminate lateness to school and to lessons.

Students are expected to arrive at school promptly each day. Students that arrive after 8.35 a.m. will receive a Back to Basics signature in their planners. If a student receives four Back to Basics signatures an after school detention will be issued. A fifth signature will lead to a session in the school's Isolation unit. Heads of Year will also contact home for students who are persistently late, and some students will be placed on Punctuality Reports.

Lateness to lessons is recorded through the school's MIS. Those students that are over 30minutes late in a week are issued a 30 minute after school detention. Over 30 minutes will lead to a 60 minute after school detention. Repeated lateness to lessons will lead to an Isolation session, contact with parents/carers and a Punctuality Report.

4.5 Following up absence

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, the school will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason or absence. The school will contact parents/carers within the first hour (Between 9-10am) if a parent/carer has not notified school and given a reason for absence.
- Pupils identified as vulnerable are prioritised as the first to be contacted during this first hour.
- Ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary

- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use

4.6 Reporting to parents

The school will **regularly** report to parents/carers on their child's attendance record. This is done through our termly Progress Reports and face-to-face Progress meetings.

In addition the Head's letters home and Attendance Bulletins will reinforce our key messages about the importance of attendance, this Policy and the correlation between good attendance and good outcomes.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to pupils during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion and if a leave of absence is granted, it is for the headteacher to determine the length of the time the pupil can be away from school. *As head teachers should only grant leaves of absence in exceptional circumstances it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.*

The STAR MAT Termtime Leave of Absence Policy states that 'exceptional circumstances could include (evidence would be required in each case):

- Service personnel returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced that the individual would 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 close family member.
- To attend the wedding or funeral of a close family member
- Other out of the ordinary, life changing or future career influencing events that affect the individual pupil in question or a close family member (such events to be decided upon at the discretion of the headteacher). It is expected that the Headteacher will require evidence to substantiate applications of this nature.

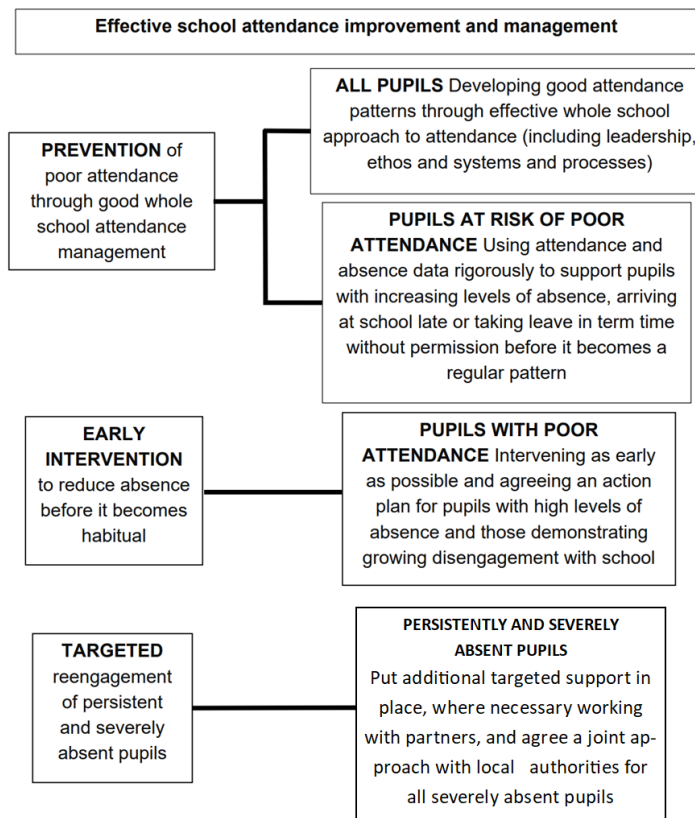
The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. *As head teachers should only grant leaves of absence in exceptional circumstances it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.*

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
- Traveller pupils 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

5.2 Persistent and Severe Absence

Effective student attendance improvement and management is best facilitated through a proactive approach as laid out below:



- The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.
- The severe absence threshold is 50%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 50%, the pupil will be classified as a severe absentee.

Where a student's attendance is considered to be an area of concern, we will always look to engage to provide effective and timely support and improve attendance.

Our school Strategy For Reducing Persistent and Severe Absence is detailed under appendix 2 i

5.3 Legal sanctions

As absence is so often a symptom of wider issues a family is facing, our school will always work together with other local partners to understand the barriers to attendance and provide support. Where that is not successful, or is not engaged with, the law protects pupils' right to an education and provides a range of legal interventions to formalise attendance improvement efforts, and where all other avenues have been exhausted, enforce it through prosecuting parents. Attendance legal intervention can only be used for pupils of compulsory school age and decisions should be made on an individual case by case basis.

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

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

Where they are used, it should be clear that it will change parental behaviour and in making the decision to use an intervention, headteachers and local authority officers should have regard to their safeguarding duties as set out in the statutory guidance on Keeping Children Safe in Education.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

The school will regularly recognise and promote good attendance, through the following:

- Regular assemblies to promote good attendance
- Daily /weekly communication with students about their attendance by teachers and form tutors
- Reward breakfasts for good and improved attendance
- Termly assemblies to reward and recognise students good and improved attendance

7. Students With Medical Conditions or Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include pupils who suffer from long term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities. Their right to an education is the same as any other pupil and therefore the attendance ambition for these pupils should be the same as they are for any other pupil. That said, in working with their parents to improve attendance, our school will be mindful of the barriers these pupils face and put additional support in place where necessary to help them access their full-time education. This will include:

- Having sensitive conversations and developing good support for pupils with physical or mental health conditions;
- Making reasonable adjustments where a pupil has a disability or putting in place an individual healthcare plan where needed;
- Considering whether additional support from external partners (including the local authority or health services) would be appropriate for example via [NYCC Medical Education Service](#);
- Working with parents to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities;
- We will work with families to help support routines where school transport is regularly being missed and work with other partners to encourage the scheduling of additional support interventions or medical appointments outside of the main school day;
- Establish strategies for removing the in-school barriers these pupils face, including considering support or reasonable adjustments for uniform, transport, routines, access to support in school and lunchtime arrangements;
- Ensure joined up pastoral care is in place where needed and consider whether a time-limited phased return to school would be appropriate, for example for those affected by anxiety about school attendance;
- Ensure data is regularly monitored for these groups including at board and governing body meetings and in Targeting Support Meetings with the local authority so that additional support from other partners is accessed where necessary;

Specifically, pupils with long term illnesses or other health needs may need additional support to continue their education, such as alternative provision provided by the local authority through the [NYCC Medical Education Service](#) and parallel services through other related home authorities.

8. Attendance monitoring

The Attendance Officer at our school monitors pupil absence on a daily/weekly basis.

A pupil's parent/carer is expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 4.2). If no communication is received the school will contact the parent/carer to establish why the student is absent.

If a pupil's absence goes above 5 days, the school will contact the parent/carer of the pupil to discuss the reasons for this.

If a pupil's absence continues to rise after contacting their parent/carer, we will consider involving the support of North Yorkshire Early Help service.

Pupil-level absence 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 closely scrutinise attendance data to:

- Track the attendance of individual pupils, cohorts and groups (including their punctuality);
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern;
- Monitor and evaluate those children identified as being in need of intervention and support;
- Help the school achieve its responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty;
- Consider patterns and trends including within sessions in secondary schools;
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full year data to identify patterns and trends. This should include analysis of pupils and cohorts and identifying patterns in uses of certain codes, days of poor attendance and where appropriate, subjects which have low lesson attendance;
- Use this data analysis to provide regular attendance reports to class teachers or tutors to facilitate discussions with pupils and to leaders (including special educational needs coordinators, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads).

Data will be benchmarked (at whole school, year group and cohort level) against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement.

It will be regularly reviewed at Local Governing Body meetings as defined through the Trust Scheme of Delegation and Annual Agenda Planner. This will include thorough examination of recent and historic trends at a school level as well as benchmarking comparator schools within the trust, local authority area, region and nationwide.

It is required that where any school in the Trust is struggling with their attendance, the Trust board and Governing Body would work with school leaders to develop a comprehensive attendance action plan to improve attendance. This should be evaluated and reviewed regularly. This may form part of a wider school improvement plan, including appropriate school-to-school support from system leaders within the Trust or from the wider educational community.

9. Children Missing in Education

All children of compulsory school age, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to an efficient, full time education which is suitable to their age, aptitude and any Special Educational Needs they may have. The Local Authority has a duty to meet the requirements and responsibilities from within the Children missing education – Statutory Guidance for local authorities (DfE Sept 2016) and comply with its duties under Section 436A of the Education Act 1996 by having in place arrangements to identify Children Missing Education.

To assist in it's duties, North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) has developed a [Children Missing Education Protocol](#), which is shared with all partners and stakeholders. All STAR Multi-Academy Trust schools follow the NYCC CME Protocol.

10. Elective Home Education

Any parent has the right to remove their child from school and home educate them.

If any parent is considering this as an option, they must contact the school immediately to discuss the reasons and options for this choice.

Early Help will be informed and will make contact with the family to offer guidance and support. [NYCC Early Help](#)

Further information can be found at:- [Parents considering EHE](#)

11. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the STAR Multi-Academy Trust, North Yorkshire County Council or the DfE is updated, and as a minimum 3 yearly by the Local Governing Body. The LGB will additionally consider that as the

barriers to attendance evolve quickly, this policy should be reviewed and updated as necessary. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full Governing Body.

12. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- STAR MAT Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour policy
- STAR MAT Leave in Term-Time 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
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment

R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

