Charter Academy

ATTENDANCE POLICY 2026

Local Level Policy

Date effective	March 2026
Review Cycle	Annually
Review Date	March 2027
Date of Approval by Governors	
Committee approved by	Charter Local Governing Body
Author	Louise Stewart – Headteacher Rebecca West – Attendance Lead

Date	Notes

Part of the Castle Phoenix Trust
Leading Learning and Excelling Together

Introduction

The Governors and staff at Charter Academy are united in their belief that regular school attendance is the key to enabling children to maximise the educational opportunities available to them. Helping them to become emotionally resilient, confident and competent adults who can realise their full potential and make a positive contribution to their community.

Charter Academy values all children. As set out in this policy we will work with families to identify the barriers to achieving and maintaining excellent attendance and offer the right service at the right time to try to resolve any difficulties.

The Attendance Lead (Rebecca West) and Head Teacher (Louise Stewart) will monitor attendance and use attendance data to identify any patterns of concern, whilst also celebrating success! Attendance concerns will be raised with parents if reasons are either not known by the school, or if levels of absence become unusually high. This information may be shared with the Local Authority where necessary. Where we have continuing concerns, or lack of engagement from families to improve attendance, we will follow the school's escalated approach to improving attendance. The school's escalated approach is child-centred and prioritises support and development of strong working relationships with children and their families. We will use the Early Help process to provide support prior to escalation and consider how we can work with families to enable your child to access their right to education.

Our aim is to always work in partnership with parents. Any referral for consideration of a fixed penalty notice or prosecution is deemed to be a last resort at Charter. Attendance figures for each child will be reported weekly to parents/carers by email, and as part of their annual report. We will also share a child's attendance profile with relevant agencies if we have concerns regarding a child's attendance. Throughout the school year the Attendance Team will report on the overall attendance figures for specific groups, this will be closely monitored for support and reported to the Governing Body.

To support good attendance, and safeguarding, at Charter we:

- Ensure the school is welcoming, and that every child feels a sense of belonging and connectedness.
- Ensure the school site is open at the stated times.
- Ensure the regular, efficient, and accurate recording of attendance is completed by every class teacher each day. This further supports our approach to safeguarding within the school.
- Take safeguarding seriously - we will always contact you on the first day that your child is absent from school, this includes before and after-school clubs. If we cannot contact you, we will follow our unexplained absence procedure which includes carrying out a well-being visit to the child's home address.
- Carry out regular and routine home visits where a child's level of absence is unusually high, where a period of absence continues for more than 3 days, or where we have reasonable and genuine doubt regarding the reasons for absence.
- Support any children arriving late to school (after 9:00am) with arrival and transition to their classroom.
- Consider any requests for leave of absence in term time individually, and process requests in line with the current National Framework introduced on 19th August 2024.
- Notify the Local Authority within 5 days if a new child is joining the school roll.
- Promptly inform the Local Authority of children whose parents/carers have notified the school in writing of their intention to Electively Home Educate their child.
- Work closely with the Local Authority Inclusion and Attendance teams.
- Promptly notify the Local Authority of Children Missing Education (CME) – aligned to the DfE Statutory Guidance (August 2024).

Key Definitions

Authorised Absence
An absence that the school has accepted as unavoidable and for which satisfactory evidence or explanation has been provided. Examples include verified illness, medical appointments that cannot be arranged outside school hours, recognised religious observance days, or other exceptional circumstances agreed in advance by the Headteacher.

Unauthorised Absence
An absence that is not approved by the school. This includes absence without an acceptable explanation, family holidays taken without permission, late arrival after registers close (U code), or repeated illness without medical evidence when requested.

Persistent Absence (PA)
A child is classed as persistently absent when their attendance falls below 90% across the school year. This is equivalent to 19 or more missed days of school.

Severe Absence
A child is classed as severely absent when their attendance falls below 50%. This level of absence is considered a significant safeguarding concern.

Compulsory School Age
A child becomes of compulsory school age at the start of the term after their 5th birthday. Compulsory school age ends on the last Friday in June of the school year in which the child turns 16.

Session / School Day
Each school day is divided into two sessions—morning and afternoon. Attendance and absence are recorded for each session.

1 day absent = 2 sessions missed

Late (L Code)
A child who arrives after the register opens but before it closes. This is recorded as 'late'.

Late After Register Closes (U Code)
A child who arrives 30 minutes or more after the close of registration will receive a U code. This is an unauthorised absence unless exceptional evidence is provided.

Leave of Absence
Any planned time away from school during term time. Leave can only be authorised in exceptional circumstances and must be applied for at least 20 days in advance.

Medical Evidence
Documentation needed when a child's absences for illness become frequent or prolonged, or where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the reason being provided for absence. Examples of medical evidence include GP or hospital appointment cards, clinic letters, and prescriptions.

Parent
For the purposes of attendance law, Parent includes:

- Natural parents
- Any adult with parental responsibility
- Any adult with day-to-day care of the child (including relatives or carers)

Children Missing Education (CME)
A child of compulsory school age who is not registered at a school and is not receiving a suitable education elsewhere. CME cases must be reported to the Local Authority immediately.

Reduced Timetable
A temporary, time-limited timetable agreed with parents in exceptional circumstances to support a child's phased integration or reintegration into school. Reduced timetables must:

- Be formally agreed
- Be regularly reviewed
- Never be open-ended
- Be used only as a short-term strategy

Exceptional Circumstances
Situations where absence during term time may be authorised because the event is unavoidable. Cost of holidays, family celebrations, or travel convenience are not exceptional circumstances.

Attendance Contract
A voluntary agreement between the school, parent, and child (where appropriate) outlining clear expectations, support strategies, and review points designed to improve attendance.

Penalty Notice
A Penalty Notice is a financial penalty issued by the Local Authority as an alternative to prosecution. It is used when a child has a level of unauthorised absence that meets the national threshold. If the fine is paid within the required timeframe, the case is closed and no prosecution takes place. If the fine is not paid, the Local Authority may proceed to prosecution under the Education Act 1996.

Parental Legal Responsibility
Parents have a legal duty under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 to ensure their child receives a full-time, efficient, and suitable education, either by regular attendance at school or through education otherwise than at school. When a child is registered at a school, parents have an additional legal obligation to ensure their child attends regularly, punctually, and without unauthorised absence. Failure to do so may result in statutory intervention, including penalty notices or prosecution.

Safeguarding
Safeguarding means protecting children from harm and ensuring their welfare. Schools must act quickly on any concerns, work with families and agencies to keep children safe, and recognise that patterns of absence can be a safeguarding risk.

A whole school approach to supporting attendance at Charter

Improving attendance is everyone's business. 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. Good attendance begins with school being somewhere pupils want to be and therefore the foundation of securing good attendance is that school is a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environment where all pupils are keen and ready to learn. Securing good attendance at Charter cannot be achieved in isolation, and effective practices for improvement will involve working closely with other Leaders within the school. The Attendance Lead will work alongside the Curriculum Leader, Behaviour Leader, SENDCo and Pupil Premium Leader to facilitate a whole school approach.

Successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance, at home, in school or more broadly, requires schools and local partners to work collaboratively in partnership with, not against families. All partners should work together to:

Expect

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

Monitor

Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.

Listen and understand

When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents to listen to and understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.

Facilitate support

Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an Early Help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.

Formalise support

Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through an attendance contract or education supervision order.

Enforce

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention: a penalty notice in line with the National Framework or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

Working in partnership with our parents

Charter Academy recognises that poor attendance is often an indication of difficulties in a child's life and their lived experience. This may be related to problems at home or in school. Parents should inform the school of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and/or behaviour in school, for example, bereavement, divorce/separation, incidents of domestic abuse. This will help the school to identify any additional early help that may be required. Safeguarding is a priority and concerns for any child at any time will be reported to the Designated Senior Lead for Child Protection, Zoe Tite. We will always follow the DfE statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (Sept 2025), and our Child Protection Policy.

Some children are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance, for example, children who are vulnerable, have a medical need or EHCP plan will be monitored and supported in school. At Charter, we will proactively identify and follow up on a child's non-attendance and gather information about the child. This will result in taking early action to prevent non-attendance developing and monitoring the impact of targeted support.

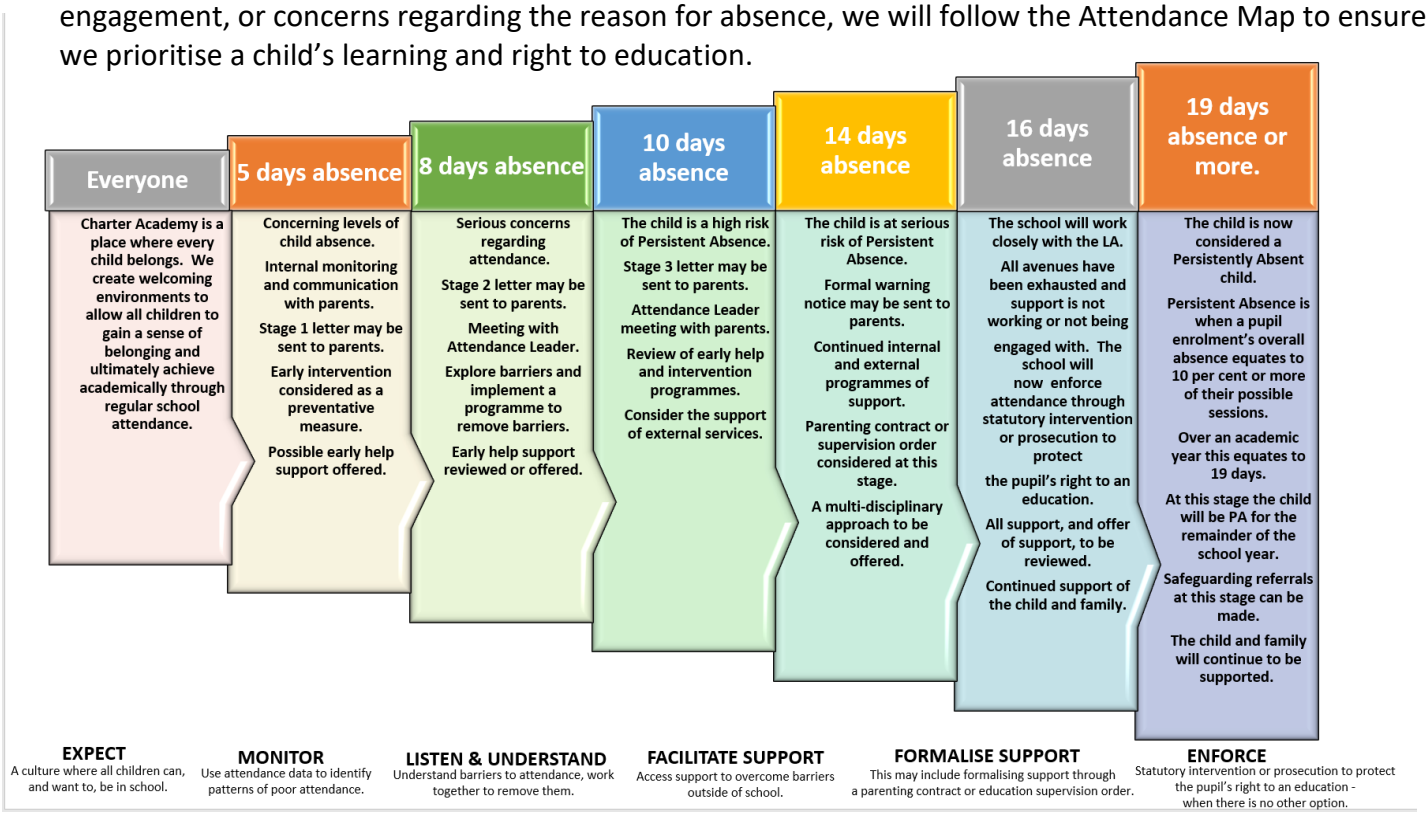
The Attendance Lead will initially:

- Check records, including any from other schools which the child has attended previously.
- Discuss with staff how the child is coping with the curriculum.
- Speak to the Special Educational Needs Coordinator to establish whether the child is on the Special Educational Needs register.
- Consider the voice of the child and understand any difficulties, e.g. curriculum or bullying and their views on how the issue could be addressed.

Children whose attendance falls below 90% are considered 'Persistently Absent' from school. Where a child's attendance falls below 50%, the child is considered 'Severely Absent'. Ultimately, this will indicate that all intervention and support offered by Charter Academy has not had the expected impact of improving overall attendance. Where attendance remains a concern, and all other interventions and support have not made a significant impact, we will escalate with external partners.

Attendance Support Map

We will always support children during each stage of our Attendance Support Map. If there is lack of engagement, or concerns regarding the reason for absence, we will follow the Attendance Map to ensure we prioritise a child's learning and right to education.



Punctuality

Classroom doors open for children at 8:40am; the class register is taken promptly at 9:00am. Children arriving after 9:00am must be brought via the School Office and signed in by the parent. All children who arrive after 9:00am will be recorded as late. Punctuality and the number of minutes late is recorded, and this will be added to your child's Arbor record of attendance. Communication will be sent to parents weekly, and at the end of every half term regarding punctuality and attendance for their child/children.

If a child arrives more than 30 minutes after the close of registration, they will be U coded, which means the absence is recorded as unauthorised and will count towards their attendance figure. The absence will only be authorised if a satisfactory explanation for the late arrival can be provided, for example, attendance at a medical appointment. U codes can and will be used as part of a record of unauthorised absence which may lead to a Penalty Notice or prosecution by the Local Authority.

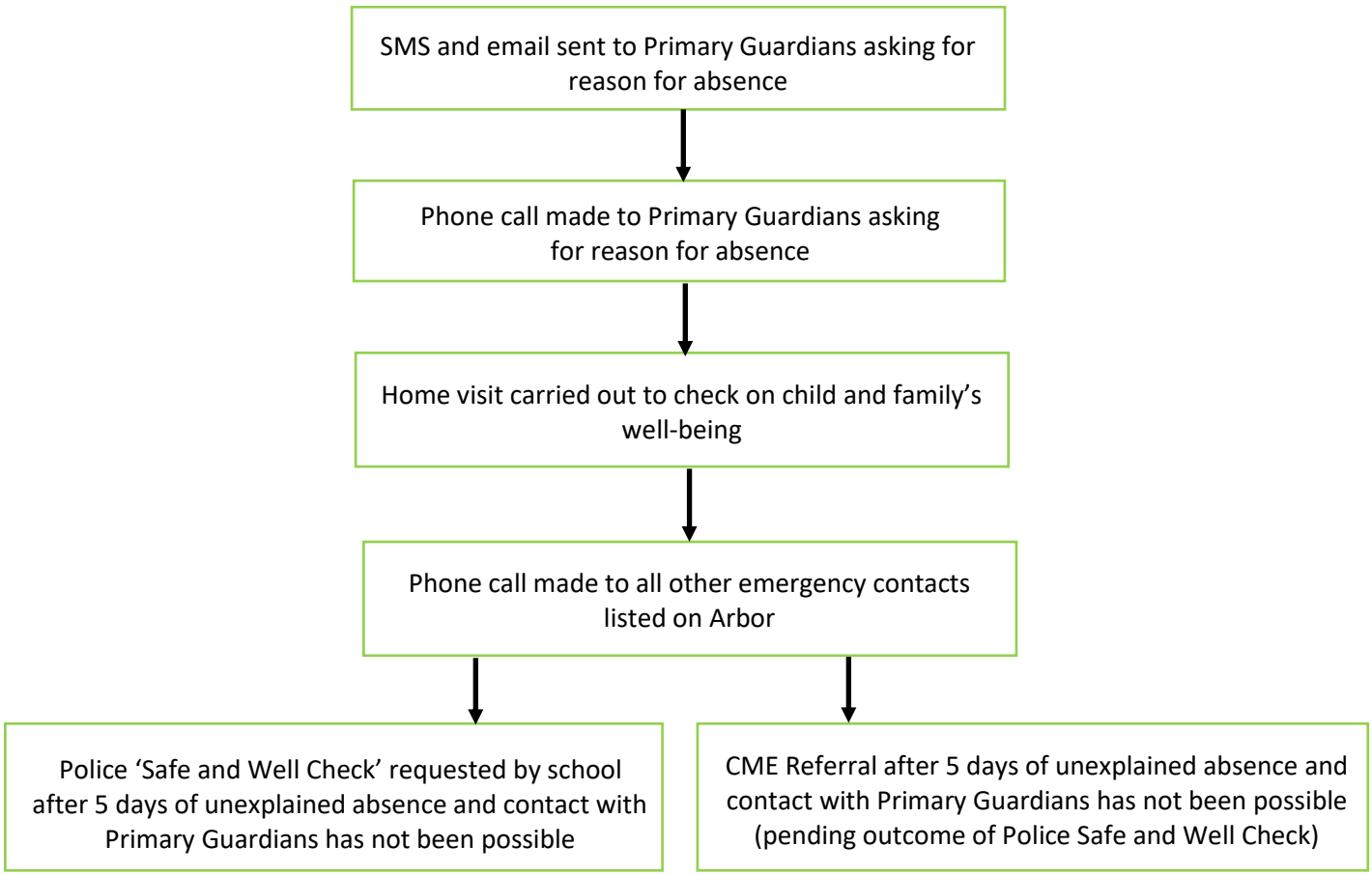
First Day Contact

At Charter Academy we expect our parents to make contact by 9:00am on the first and every subsequent day of any absence. We will always contact you via text message or by calling you if your child is absent and you have not contacted the school to provide a reason for absence. Where contact has not been possible, we will visit the child's home address to check on their well-being. Where we have on-going concerns regarding your child's attendance, we may also visit your home address even when a reason for absence has been provided. We will also write to you regarding our concerns and offering support to improve your child's attendance.

We may invite you to meet with the Attendance Lead and other relevant staff members to discuss any on-going concerns regarding attendance. If there are reasons that your child cannot attend school regularly or if attendance becomes of concern, it is important that you talk to the school and engage with support and strategies implemented; **you are legally responsible under the Education Act 1996 for ensuring that your child is in school every day, and on time.**

Unexplained Absence Procedure

Carried out on every day of unexplained absence



Transition and support following regular or long-term absence due to illness

Regular or long-term absence from school can significantly interrupt the continuity of children's learning and impact their overall development.

During any regular or long-term absence due to illness, Charter Academy will:

- Request medical evidence from a GP, hospital, Consultant or CAMHS/Compass whereby long-term or regular absence from school is deemed necessary or unavoidable.
- Maintain regular telephone, email, and face-to-face contact with the child and parents/carers.
- Carry out regular well-being checks and home visits to ensure the child has continuous support throughout their absence.
- Carefully plan the transition back to school, ensuring the child feels welcome, and regains a sense of belonging.
- Ensure the child feels safe in school and if they experience any concerns, appoint a member of staff to work directly with the child and family.
- Ensure the Class Teacher and Teaching Assistant support the child when returning to class and help them with any work they may have missed.
- Where appropriate, implement a gradual, phased reintegration to support the child with the transition back into full-time school.

Reduced Timetables and Phased Reintegration Plans

A reduced timetable is not an acceptable long-term solution for managing attendance and must only be used in exceptional circumstances to support a child's short-term needs. A reduced timetable is never a behaviour sanction and must not be used to manage persistent absence.

At Charter Academy, a reduced timetable may be considered only when it is in the best interests of the child, for example as part of a phased return following illness, medical treatment, or a period of significant emotional or social need.

When a reduced timetable is used:

- It must be agreed in writing with parents/carers and clearly recorded.
- It must be time-limited, usually for no more than 6 weeks initially.
- It must include a review date and clear criteria for returning to full-time hours.
- The school must ensure the child continues to receive a broad and balanced education during this period.
- The arrangement must form part of a support plan, such as an Individual Support Plan, Early Help Plan or SEND support plan.
- The child's safety and well-being must remain the priority, and attendance during the reduced timetable will be closely monitored.
- The reduced timetable must be shared with the Local Authority in line with statutory reporting requirements.

If, following review, the reduced timetable is not meeting the child's needs or cannot be increased safely, the school will work with parents and external agencies to consider appropriate next steps. A reduced timetable must never be open-ended and cannot be used as an alternative to fulfilling the child's entitlement to full-time education.

Parents are legally responsible for securing full-time education

Parents are responsible by law for ensuring their children receive a suitable full-time education. Each situation will be dealt with on an individual basis, fairly and equitably, always remembering the welfare and safety of the child is the paramount concern.

The term 'parent' includes those who are not a natural parent but have parental responsibility for the child as defined by the Children's Act 1989, or have care of the child as defined by the Education Act 1996.

- Absence can only be authorised by the school; parents do not have this authority. All absences will be treated as unauthorised unless satisfactory evidence for the child's absence has been received. In the first instance contact from the parent will be accepted as evidence. However, if a child's attendance continues to cause concern, parents may be asked to provide medical evidence where absences occur repeatedly due to reported illness. This will usually be in the form of an appointment card, prescription, hospital letter etc. Absence will be coded as unauthorised without evidence.
- Parents should wherever possible make all medical and dental appointments outside of the school day. Where this is not possible (i.e. an emergency appointment), children should attend school for part of the day, both before and after the appointment wherever possible. Appointment cards or appointment SMS/emails should always be provided as evidence of medical appointments.
- Optician appointments (except those scheduled by a hospital or GP) will not be authorised during the school day and should be made outside of school hours.
- **Unless parents have provided a satisfactory explanation as to why the child cannot attend, and it has been accepted by the school, absence will not be authorised.**

Examples of unsatisfactory explanations include:

- The child or a family member's birthday
- Family visits or events/celebrations
- School uniform is not clean/dry, or shopping for new school uniform
- Having their hair cut
- Car has broken down and/or transport to school is unavailable
- Closure of a sibling's school for INSET or other purposes
- Parental illness, or illness of a sibling
- Parent or sibling has a medical appointment
- Child is required to support with translation for a parent or family member
- Being tired or not waking up in time for school
- Illness where the child is considered well enough to attend school without medical authority, and in the absence of a communicable disease.
- Leave of absence during term time taken without prior authorisation of the school
- Head lice – you should let the school know and letters will then be sent to all parents in a confidential manner however your child should still attend school.

Leave of Absence during Term Time

All schools are expected to restrict leaves of absence to the specific circumstances set out in regulation 11 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. **The DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance, nor will absence be approved because of the cost of travel in school holidays.**

Parents wishing to apply for leave during term time must complete a written leave of absence request form available from the school office. All leave of absence requests must be made at least 20 days before the planned absence, and parents must not book travel arrangements prior to approval from the Headteacher. Retrospective requests will not be considered and therefore will result in the absence being recorded as unauthorised. Each leave during term time request will be considered on an individual basis.

If the permission to take leave is not granted and the child is still absent from school, the absence will be recorded as **unauthorised**. In such cases, the school will consider legal action and/or the issue of a Local Authority Penalty Notice.

Only in **exceptional circumstances** will absence be agreed. In such cases, consideration will be given to cultural needs and family circumstances, such as minority ethnic children returning to their country of origin. In these cases, granting leave for longer periods than normal may be considered justified. In all cases though, parents will be required to justify why the leave needs to be taken during term time. The Headteacher will decide whether the absence is *unavoidable,* and the length of absence that can be authorised where exceptional circumstances apply.

If following a leave of absence, a child fails to return to school on the agreed date and contact with the parent has not been made or received, school may de-register the child in compliance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. This means that the child may lose their school place.

Persistent Absence

At Charter, we aim to communicate the importance of good attendance with parents and children. We have a particular focus on reducing Persistent Absenteeism at the school. The Persistent Absence threshold for children is currently 10% and Ofsted will use this threshold in its inspection of schools.

The threshold means that any child will be classed as Persistently Absent when they have missed 38 or more sessions in a single academic year. This equates to 19 or more missed days during the academic year - which is as little as 6 days over each of the three terms. This also equates to the equivalent of 1 or more days of absence every fortnight across a full school year.

We will use a 19-day tracking system to make you aware of the number of days your child has missed in education. This will allow us to work together to reduce the number of days and attempt to prevent your child from reaching the Persistent Absentee threshold.

Once a child has reached an absence level of 10% or more, they will be classified as Persistently Absent from school, and we will report this to the Local Authority. Charter and the Local Authority may follow legal proceedings and/or issue Penalty Notices in these cases.

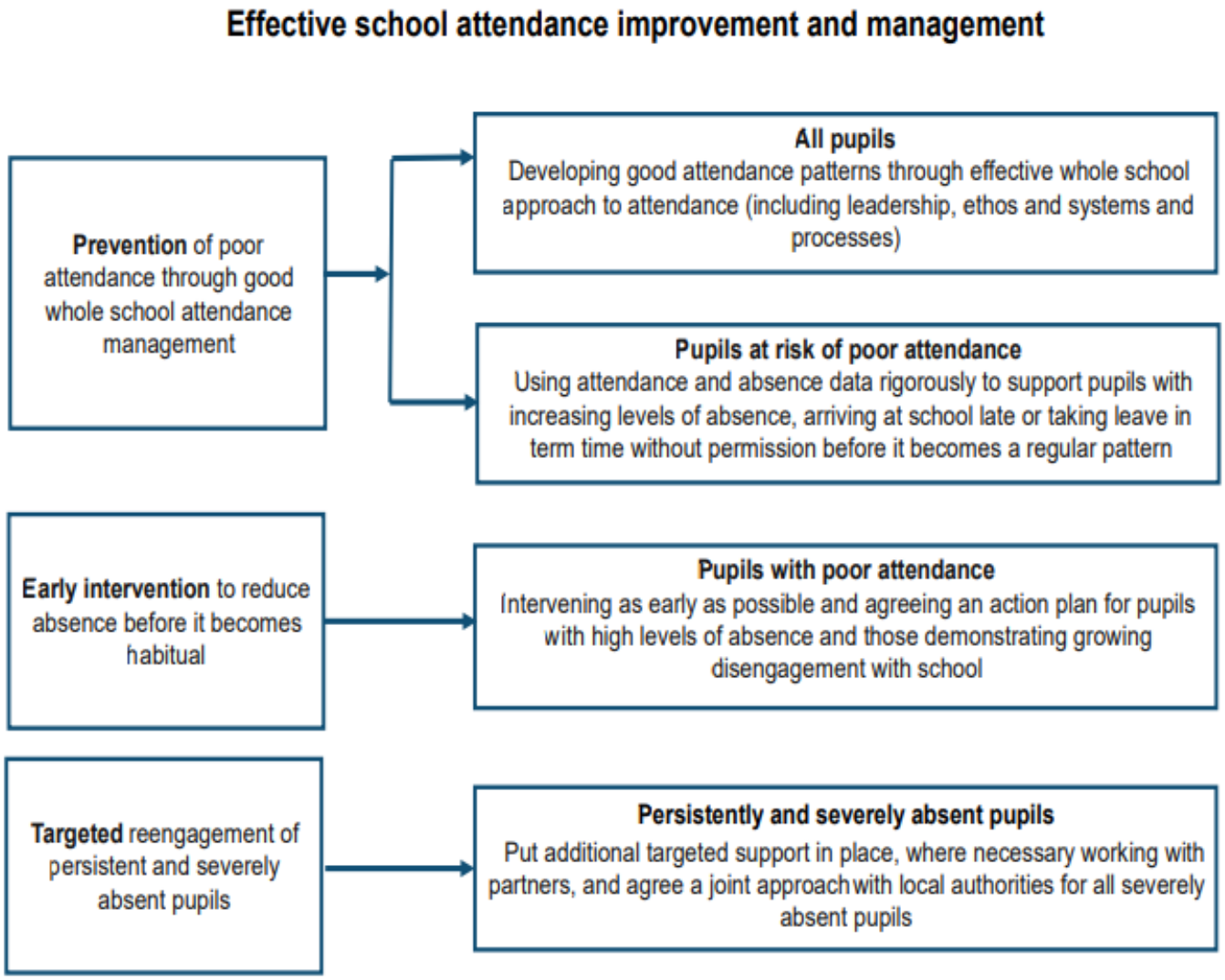
Statutory Duty

A child is of compulsory school age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday.

Under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, the law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school. Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly.

Under the Education Act 1996, the Local Authority (Coventry City Council) has a statutory responsibility to ensure that parents secure education for children of compulsory school age and where necessary, use legal enforcement to protect the child's right to education.

In accordance with the regulations regarding pupils' attendance at school, Charter Academy keeps an attendance register on which at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session, children are marked present or absent. The marks are electronically processed and stored on the school's central administrative system 'Arbor'. This information is also shared weekly with the Department for Education as part of a statutory attendance reporting process.



Legal Sanctions

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or is not being engaged with, there are several sanctions that schools can use to address the issue of irregular or non-attendance.

To understand why a child is missing school, we will always speak with you first so we can explore any challenges or circumstances that may be affecting their attendance. Charter will consistently follow its escalation process, making sure the right support is offered at every stage. When a family does not engage with the support available, or when supportive measures do not lead to improved attendance, legal sanctions may be used.

Chapter 6 of the DfE Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2024) states that 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 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.

Legal interventions available for use by schools and local authorities are:

- Attendance / Parenting Contracts
- Education Supervision Order
- Attendance Prosecution
- School Attendance Order
- Penalty Notices

Penalty Notices

The Local Authority considers that regular attendance at school is of such importance that Penalty Notices may and usually will be issued where unauthorised absence occurs. A penalty notice can be issued if a child is absent from school for any of the following reasons:

- **Leave of Absence** - Leave of absence in term time for 10 sessions (5 or more days). This can be consecutive absence, or non- consecutive.
- **Unauthorised Absence** - Penalty Notices can be requested by schools when there have been 10 sessions (5 or more days) of unauthorised absence in a 10-week period. In these circumstances a Notice to Improve will be sent by the Local Authority on behalf of the school, this will detail the minimum support expected to have been implemented to improve school attendance. The Notice to Improve will also detail the expected improvements that must be made over a 20-day period to prevent the Penalty Notice being issued.
- **Combined Absence** - A Leave of Absence has been taken which is exempt from a Penalty Notice (i.e. less than 5 consecutive days), but further unauthorised absences have occurred during a ten-week period therefore, the Local Authority will now issue either a 20-school day Notice to Improve letter or a Penalty Notice.

The period of 10 school weeks can also span different terms or school years (e.g. 2 sessions of unauthorised absence in the Summer Term and a further 8 within the Autumn Term).

Penalty Notices will be used in accordance with the National Framework (August 2024) and the Coventry City Council Code of Conduct.

National Framework for Penalty Notices

The new National Framework (Introduced 19th August 2024) introduces consistency in the use of Penalty Notices across England by introducing a new national threshold at which they are considered. The framework increases the amount of the Penalty Notice and introduces a new national limit of 2 Penalty Notices within a 3-year rolling period to break cycles of repeat offending.

There will be a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England of 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period. For example: a 5-day holiday would meet the national threshold. The 10-school week period can span different terms or school years.

Penalty Notices are requested by schools and issued by the Local Authority to the parents/carers of statutory school age children, per parent, per child. For example: two children in a family absent from school for a leave of absence may result in each parent receiving a Penalty Notice for each child at the below rates.

- **First offence** - The first time a Penalty Notice is issued the amount will be: £80 per parent, per child paid within 21 days. This increases to £160 per parent, per child if paid after day 21, until day 28. Any non-payment of the Penalty Notice may result in a prosecution.
- **Second Offence** (within 3 years) - the second time a Penalty Notice is issued the amount will be £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days. Any non-payment of the Penalty Notice may result in a prosecution.
- **Third Offence and Any Further Offences** (within 3 years) - the third time an offence is committed a Penalty Notice will not be issued, and the parent(s) may be prosecuted under section 444(1A) of the Act. Fines could be up to £2500 per parent, per child.

Further information on the National Framework can be found within Working Together to Improve Attendance 2024.

Attendance / Parenting Contracts

An attendance contract is a voluntary formal written agreement between a parent, school and or local authority to address irregular attendance at school. This intervention is intended to provide support and offer an alternative to prosecution.

Where it is agreed that an attendance contract would be the most appropriate support it will be explained to the parent (and pupil if they are old enough to understand) what the purpose of the contract is and why using one would be beneficial in the family's circumstances.

Parents will be given the opportunity to outline their views on their child's attendance at school, any underlying issues and how they believe they should be addressed. Parents will also be able to share their views on what type of support they think would be helpful to secure their child's regular attendance.

If there is no change to the pattern of attendance, the attendance contract formalises the support that has been offered. This may be used in evidence and presented to the Magistrates' Court, should it be deemed that an offence has been committed under Section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996.

Education Supervision Orders

An Education Supervision Order (ESO) is a legal measure placing a child under the supervision of a local authority to im prove school attendance while supporting parents in fulfilling their responsibilities.

An Education Supervision Order (ESO) is a court order granted under Section 36 of the Children Act 1989. It is designed to help children of compulsory school age who are not receiving a proper education or are irregularly attending school. The ESO places the child under the supervision of a local authority-appointed officer, often called a Supervising Officer or Attendance Support Officer, who works with the child, parents, school, and other agencies to address the reasons for poor attendance and support the child's education.

An ESO is usually considered when:

- A child is not attending school regularly despite voluntary support plans.
- The local authority has attempted to resolve attendance issues through planning meetings and support, but attendance remains a concern.
- Criminal proceedings under the Education Act 1996 (Sections 443 and 444) are being considered or have been initiated, and the court may direct the authority to apply for an ESO.

School Attendance Order

The Education Act 1996 states: "If it appears to a local authority that a child of compulsory school age in their area is not receiving suitable education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise, they shall serve a notice in writing on the parent requiring him to satisfy them within the period specified in the notice that the child is receiving such education."

Section 437(2) of the Act provides that the period shall not be less than 15 days beginning with the day on which the notice is served. The Local Authority has the power to prosecute parents who fail to comply with a school attendance order under section 443 of the Education Act 1996.

A School Attendance Order will be considered in the following circumstances:

- Parents who have refused all offers of a school place and have not provided evidence indicating a suitable education is being provided may find themselves subject to a School Attendance Order. This applies to all children of compulsory school age.
- Parents who have removed their child from school and it appears are not providing suitable education.
- Parents who have moved into Coventry and have not secured a school place and who have not engaged with the LA in providing information regarding the education of their child.

Prosecution

Section 4441(a) of the Education Act 1996 states that if a parent fails to ensure the regular school attendance of their child if he/she is a registered pupil at a school and is of compulsory school age, then they are guilty of an offence.

Where supportive intervention through the school's process fails to bring about an improvement in attendance, the local authority will be notified and legal proceedings in the Magistrates Court may be taken. The instigation of legal proceedings for unauthorised absence from school may be taken under S444 (1) or S444 (1a) of the Education Act 1996.

The school will provide the Local Authority with evidence required for a prosecution and will appear as a prosecution witness if required by the court.

Children Missing Education (CME)

The DfE defines Children Missing Education (CME) as 'children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school'.

CME includes children who:

- are in the process of applying for a school place
- have been offered a school place for a future date but have not yet started
- are receiving elective home education (EHE) that has been assessed as unsuitable
- have been recorded as CME for an extended period, for example where their whereabouts is unclear or unknown

Children Missing Education (CME) are a vulnerable group of children. CME are at significant risk of underachieving, having poorer health outcomes, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming not in education, employment or training (NEET) later in life. All agencies who work with children have a duty to support the local authority in ensuring all children are safe and looked after appropriately.

If parents are proposing to withdraw their child from school, it is important that they supply information to the school about how their child will be continuing to receive suitable education, for example providing the name and address of the new school the child will be attending. Where this information is not yet available, parents must inform the school of the location where their child will reside.

It is our responsibility as a school to work with the Local Authority Attendance and Children Absent from Education team, by making referrals when a child is considered at risk of being a CME.

To support effective CME processes, Charter Academy has a duty to make a referral to the local authority in line with regulation 13 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 whenever a pupil's name is added to or removed from the admission register outside of standard transition times.

Further information can be found in our full CME Policy.

Celebrating Success

At Charter, we feel it is important to reward children and families who consistently sustain good attendance or have worked to improve attendance.

The school awards good attendance with the following:

- Weekly achievement assembly to celebrate the classes who achieved attendance at or above our expected minimum level of 96%. The class with the highest attendance within their phase receives extra play time. The class with the overall highest attendance wins a spin of the attendance wheel for a prize from the list chosen by the School Council. All classes who have achieved attendance of 96% or above will also receive the prize.
- We notify parents of our whole school and individual class attendance percentage and/or levels of absence in our weekly newsletter.
- All parents receive a weekly email from the Attendance Lead showing their child's attendance and punctuality that week so that praise and rewards can also be given at home. At the end of every half term, an email is sent to all parents by the Attendance Lead providing details of their child's attendance and punctuality that year to date.
- Termly attendance success certificates and awards, including 100% attendance, attendance of above 96%, and attendance improvement.
- Weekly 'Attendance Superstar' postcards issued by the Attendance Lead to those children who have shown an improvement, worked hard to overcome barriers to attending school or those who show consistently good attendance.
- Attendance improvement letters to parents when their child has shown good improvement in attendance when previous concerns were raised, especially those children who have previously been considered Persistently Absent.

Charter Academy will always challenge falling attendance and reward improvements. We are committed to the future of all children that attend Charter Academy, and by working in partnership with the school community we believe that together our children can achieve more. We can only achieve this by working in partnership with our children and their families.

Using attendance data

Children's attendance will be monitored and regularly shared with other agencies, and with the DfE. Attendance data is processed under our statutory duty and in line with GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Regular attendance meetings will be held between the Attendance Lead, Senior Leaders, and Curriculum Leads. Meetings will focus on agreed actions for those children of concern. The purpose of each meeting will be to understand the progress the school is making when supporting identified individuals or groups of children.

Attendance data will be effectively used to identify emerging patterns and trends to inform whole school strategies to improve attendance and attainment.

It is the responsibility of school Governors to challenge and support the school regarding overall attendance, and regular reports will be presented to this body. The governors will therefore examine closely the information provided for them and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they can be.

Other Charter Policies supporting Attendance:

Behaviour Policy

CME Policy

SEND Offer

Pupil Premium Statement and Offer

Safeguarding Offer

Roles and Responsibilities

Charter expectations – Parents

i Parents are legally responsible for ensuring their children attend the Academy regularly and may risk prosecution if they fail in this responsibility.

ii Parents should ensure that their children arrive at school on time, with the correct equipment and in full school uniform.

iii Parents should support the Academy by avoiding, if possible, non-emergency medical/dental appointments for their child during Academy time.

iv Parents should be aware that they do not have the automatic right to take their child out of the Academy for a holiday during term time.

v It is the parents' responsibility to inform the Academy of the reason for a child's absence on the first day of absence and in line with the Academy's procedures for informing of absence.

vi All unexplained absences will be monitored and parents will be kept informed about any attendance concerns relating to their own child. Parents are expected to attend meetings when requested and support the Academy in responding to ongoing attendance concerns.

Charter expectations – Children

i. All children should aim to have an excellent attendance and punctuality record for which there will be appropriate rewards.

ii. All children are expected to be in school on time and ready to learn. Children are expected to be punctual to all lessons and registration.

iii. Children who arrive at school late must follow the correct procedures for recording their lateness and entering their lesson.

iv. Children who need to leave school for a medical appointment must follow the correct procedures for recording that they have permission to leave and have left the building.

v. Children must not leave the Academy without permission, 'truant'; this will be seen by the Academy as a Safeguarding concern as well as a Health and Safety concern.

Charter expectations - Class Teacher

The Form Tutor and Class Teacher are the key staff members in promoting regular punctual attendance. The Form Tutor or Class Teacher will:

i. provide a good example by always being punctual to registration and meeting children at the door – providing a welcoming environment;

ii. keep an accurate and up-to-date register of attendance;

iii. follow the Attendance Policy procedures when dealing with absences and punctuality;

iv. maintain swift action and effective communication with year leaders, phase leaders, Assistant Head Teachers and/or School Attendance Leaders on all attendance matters concerning the tutor or class group;

v. ensure that children and young people are aware of the importance of the school attendance target and their own individual attendance targets - where appropriate assist them in monitoring their own attendance rates;

vi. ensure children receive rewards in relation to attendance and punctuality success – aligned to the Attendance Policy;

vii. build a welcoming atmosphere in the classroom and provide support as necessary when children return after an absence.

Charter expectations - Pastoral Team

The Pastoral team take responsibility for monitoring the attendance of children and regularly promote the importance of attendance and punctuality. They will:

i. ensure that their team is aware of their responsibilities with respect to promoting attendance and punctuality and adherence to the attendance policy and procedures;
ii. ensure that rewards and sanctions for attendance and punctuality follow agreed procedures and align to the Academy Behaviour and Attendance Policy;
iii. monitor and track the attendance of vulnerable groups;
iv. monitor the attendance of individual tutor groups and class groups, following up with irregular patterns of absenteeism that are not being effectively addressed;
v. liaise effectively with the Attendance Lead and work together on ensuring that appropriate action is taken in the management of absenteeism and poor punctuality;
vi. have attendance as a regular item during pastoral meetings;
vii. ensure contact is made with parents of poor attendees – always placing support before sanction.

Charter expectations - Attendance Lead

The Attendance Lead is responsible for regularly checking attendance data and ensuring data is accurate and up to date. The Attendance Lead will:

i. ensure that data is input daily into the attendance management system;
ii. ensure that parents of absent children are contacted where notification of absence has not been received;
iii. respond to any parent seeking support on attendance concerns;
iv. provide regular attendance and punctuality data for relevant staff and external agencies in line with the agreed procedures and timescales;
v. be responsible for disseminating important attendance information including informing the Senior Leader of which children are of concern; in-line with the agreed procedures and timescales;
vi. be responsible for keeping a record of the interventions in place to encourage attendance and for generating all documentation including letters to parents;
vii. be responsible for liaising closely with the Local Authority's Attendance Team to ensure appropriate levels of intervention take place; referrals are made, and attendance meetings are set up;
viii. be responsible for managing and maintaining attendance records and systems;
ix. regularly meet with the Headteacher, reporting on progress, next steps and planning;

Charter expectations – Senior Leader

The Senior Leader responsible for Attendance will promote good attendance and punctuality. They will:

i. provide training and support to staff;
ii. participate in pre-legal meetings;
iii. use attendance data to make links with attendance and academic performance;
iv. lead attendance reward assemblies;
v. ensure that reference to attendance is included in all school documentation e.g. Academy newsletters, letters to parents, school prospectus, information for booklets;

DfE Attendance codes and how they count towards statutory attendance

Code	Full name	Description
The student is counted as present.		
/ or \	Present AM or PM	Present in school during registration
L	Late	Late arrival before the close of registration
The student is counted as present, at an Approved Educational Activity.		
B	Educated off Site	The student is at an off-site supervised educational activity approved by the school.
K	Education provision provided by LA	Education provision arranged by a local authority, rather than the school
P	Sporting Activity (Approved)	Pupil is taking part in a sporting activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school.
V	Educational trip	A residential trip organised by the school or a supervised strictly educational trip arranged by an approved organisation.
W	Work Experience	A student in the final two years of compulsory education is attending work experience.
The student is counted as being absent, authorised.		
C	Other Authorised Absence	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance
C1	Other Authorised Absence	Absence for a regulated performance or employment abroad
C2	Other Authorised Absence	Pupils on part-time timetables
J1	Interview	Leave of absence to attend an interview for employment or admission into another educational institution
E	Excluded	If a student is excluded but still on the admission register, they should be marked E, for up to the sixth consecutive day of any fixed period (referred to as 'suspensions' by the DfE from Autumn 2021) or permanent exclusion.
M	Medical/Dental Appointments	The student is absent due to a medical or dental appointment that could not be made outside of school hours.
R	Religious Observance	The student is absent for religious observance on a day designated by the religious body.
S	Study Leave	Study leave should be used sparingly and only granted to Year 11 pupils for public exams. Students should still be able to come into school to revise.
T	Traveller Absence	Used when Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) or New Travellers are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the school.
I	Illness	This Illness code can be used for any form of illness, if you don't want to distinguish Covid-19 illness.
The student is counted as being absent, unauthorised.		
G	Family Holiday (Not Agreed)	The Holiday was not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the headteacher.

N	No Reason	The reason for the absence has not been provided. If no reason for an absence is provided after a reasonable amount of time, it should be changed to O.
O	Unauthorised Absence	If the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence, they should record it as unauthorised.
U	Late (After Register Closes)	Schools should keep registers open for a reasonable amount of time, after which the student should be marked with a U.
These codes are not counted so will not affect attendance figures.		
D	Dual Registration	The student is registered at another school and attends it during this lesson e.g. students at a pupil referral unit. Schools should only record attendance and absences for sessions the pupil is scheduled to attend at their school.
X	Non-statutory school age absence	Sessions non-compulsory school-age children are not expected to attend. This code should only be used for early years students who have not yet passed the 1st January, 1st April or 1st September following their 5th birthday.
Y1	Unable to attend	Absence due to transport normally provided not being available.
Y2	Unable to attend	Widespread disruption to travel
Y3	Unable to attend	Part of school closed.
Y4	Unable to attend	Unexpected whole school closure (different from # for planned closures).
Y5	Unable to attend	Pupils in the criminal justice system.
Y6	Unable to attend	Absence due to public health guidance or law.
Y7	Unable to attend	Any other unavoidable cause.
Z	Pupil Not on Roll	This code can be used when setting up registers in advance of pupils joining. Schools must take attendance for pupils from the first day the student should be attending the school.
#	School Closed to Pupils	This code should be used for whole or partial school closures that are known or planned in advance such as if the school is used as a polling station.

Relevant Legislation

Education Act 1996
The Children Act 1989
The Children Act 2004
The Crime and Disorder Act 1998
The Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003
The Education and Inspections Act 2006
The Sentencing Act 2020
The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
The Education (Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders) (England) Regulations 2007
The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007

Relevant DfE and Government Guidance

Working together to improve school attendance (Aug 2024)
Parental responsibility measures for attendance and behaviour
Children Missing Education (Sept 2025)
Keeping Children Safe in Education (Sept 2025)
Working together to safeguard children (Dec 2023)
Elective home education (Apr 2019)
Alternative provision: statutory guidance for local authorities (Feb 2025)
Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England (Aug 2024)
Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (Dec 2015)
Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs (Dec 2023)
Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges
Approaches to preventing and tackling bullying
Summary of responsibilities where a mental health issue is affecting attendance (Feb 2023)