

Reach Academy Trust



Attendance Policy 2023-24

Reach Academy Feltham works in partnership with parents, children and the School Attendance Support Service in Hounslow to monitor and ensure good attendance for all children.

Attendance is critical to achieving our ambitious vision. We aim to create an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to reach for excellence. For pupils to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital they attend regularly - this policy sets out how we will ensure that pupils will be at the Academy, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for absence is unavoidable.

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Contents:

1. Introduction	5
2. Aims of the Policy	5
3. Legislation and Guidance	5
4. Roles and responsibilities	6
4.1 The trustees and local governing body	6
4.2 The Co-Headteachers - Matilda Browne and Beck Owen	6
4.3 The Attendance Officer - Jerome Barlow	6
4.4 Senior Leadership Team	6
4.5 Class Teachers	6
4.6 School office staff	6
4.6 The Local Authority	6
5. Recording attendance	6
5.1 Attendance register	7
5.2 Monitoring attendance	7
6. Practices to secure good attendance	7
6.1 Strategy for using data to target attendance improvement	8
7. Authorizing Absence	8
7.1 Authorizing student absence because of illness	8
7.2 Authorizing student absence for Term-Time Leave	9
7.3. Absence for three consecutive days	9
8. Unauthorized Absence	10
9. Attendance Updates	10
10. Late Pupils	10
11. Unplanned Absences	10
12. Unplanned School Closures	10
13. Promoting regular attendance	11
14. Absence guidance	11
15. Targets and triggers	11
16. Referrals to School Attendance Support Service	12
17. Tracking and following up on non-attendance and Children Missing Education (CME)	13
17.1 For non-statutory age children:	13
17.1.1 Nursery	13
17.1.2 Sixth Form	13

17.2 If students have been absent for 3 consecutive days and we have had no contact with the parent/carer	13
17.3 If a student takes unauthorized Term-Time leave (for e.g. holiday during Term-Time)	14
17.4 Support for cohorts of pupils with lower attendance than peers ie. If a student has less than 95% attendance	14
17.5 Once referred to Education Welfare	14
17.6 Children Missing Education (CME)	14
17.6.1 Our process for Children Missing Education	15
18. Working with the school attendance support officer	15
19. Pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent	15
19.1 Parents are expected to:	16
19.2 The school will:	16
19.3 The trustees and local governing body	16
19.4 Local authorities are expected to	16
19.5 Process	16
20. Persistently absent pupils	17
20.1 Parents are expected to:	17
20.2 The school will:	17
20.3 The trustees and local governing body	17
20.4 Local authorities are expected to	17
20.5 Process	17
21. Severely absent pupils	18
22. Support for pupils with medical conditions or SEND with poor attendance	19
20.1 Parents are expected to:	19
20.2 The school will:	19
20.3 The trustees and local governing body	19
20.4 Local authorities are expected to	19
23. Chronic illness / long term illness or poor mental health	20
24. Fast Track Policy	21
25. Support for pupils with a social worker	21
20.1 Parents are expected to:	21
20.2 The school will:	21
20.3 The trustees and local governing body	21
20.4 Local authorities are expected to	22
26. Emotionally Based Non Attendance	22
27. Part-timetables	23
28. Sharing information	23

27. Links with other policies	23
Appendix 1: attendance codes	
Appendix 2: absence procedures flow chart	23

1. Introduction

All children of school age have the right to an efficient full-time education, regardless of age, aptitude, ability or any special need s/he may have. Regular school attendance is essential if a child is to make the most of the educational opportunity available to them. Parents are expected to ensure their child attends every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies.

Reach Academy Feltham takes the responsibility to monitor and promote the regular attendance of all its students very seriously. It acknowledges that irregular attendance can disrupt continuity of learning, undermines educational progress, can lead to underachievement/low attainment and impedes the child's ability to develop friendship groups within school.

The Governors and staff of Reach Academy Feltham recognise that we have duties under the Equality Act 2010 in relation to the school community to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations. We believe that the whole school community should take responsibility for attendance. This policy seeks to ensure that all parties involved in the practicalities of school attendance are aware and informed.

The Academy has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to ensure that children attend. All Academy staff are committed to working with parents and students as the best way to ensure a high level of attendance as possible.

We will do all we can to ensure that this policy does not discriminate, directly or indirectly. We shall do this through regular monitoring and evaluation of the policy and practices. On review we shall assess and consult relevant stakeholders on the likely impact of our policies on the promotion of race equality, equality for disabled persons, gender equality and community cohesion using an appropriate Equality Impact Assessment. The policy may be amended as a result of this assessment.

2. Aims of the Policy

We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

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.

Attendance - To ensure all stakeholders are aware of the vital importance attendance plays in pupil's wellbeing and achievement

Monitoring - To ensure that attendance is monitored effectively and reasons for absences are recorded promptly and consistently

Punctuality - To ensure all stakeholders are aware of the importance of punctuality and ensure effective monitoring.

Celebration - Promote opportunities to celebrate and reward children for attendance and punctuality achievements

3. Legislation and Guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)

Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)

Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)

[The 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.

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 The trustees and local governing body

The governing board 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 and ensures leaders fulfill expectations and their statutory duties. They will also ensure school staff receive training on attendance.

Trustees and governing bodies are expected to take an active role in attendance improvement, supporting Reach Academy to prioritize attendance, and work together with leaders to set the whole school culture.

4.2 The Co-Headteachers - Matilda Browne and Rebecca Owen

The Co-Headteacher's are 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

4.3 The attendance officer - Jerome Barlow

The school attendance officer:

- Monitors attendance data using the SOL tracker weekly with Heads of Year and Form Tutors across the school and also at an individual pupil level;
- Reports concerns about attendance to the Assistant Headteacher and Phase leaders during SOL tracker weekly review meetings and Phase review provision meetings where solutions are considered and action plans agree;
- Provides SLT and Head Teachers with termly data reports with key headlines and suggestions for improvements. These reports feed into Termly Governors reports;
- Works with school attendance support officers to tackle persistent absence;
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues;
- Is provided with dedicated training to provide the necessary skills to interpret and analyze data.

4.4 Senior Leadership Team

- The Senior Leadership Team and all staff must develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance;
- Accurately complete admission and attendance registers;
- Have robust daily processes to follow up absence;
- Georgia Strong, Designated Safeguarding Lead, is the dedicated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance.

4.5 Class Teachers

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. Training on attendance is included in our training offer for all staff.

4.6 School office staff

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

4.6 The Local Authority

Hounslow Council is expected to have a

- strategic approach to improving attendance for the whole area;
- have a school attendance support team that works with all schools to remove area-wide barriers to attendance;
- support Reach Academy Feltham with queries and advice and offer us opportunities to share effective practice.

5. Recording attendance

5.1 Attendance register

We will keep an 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. In Secondary we take a register at the start of each lesson. The register 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 08:25 on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 08:30 and will be kept open until 08:45.

5.2 Monitoring attendance

The school will regularly update parents/carers on their child's attendance via telephone calls home from the Form Tutor or Head of Year offering support and guidance as required. Pupils with good attendance are often praised in the bi-weekly newsletter which is sent out to all parents.

Attendance data is reviewed by SLT regularly and they come up with goals and areas of focus to improve attendance. This feeds into regular reports to the governors who discuss and challenge trends and support the school with strategies to improve attendance for cohorts or groups that need it most. Our data is benchmarked with national averages and the local area.

6. Practices to secure good attendance

It is the responsibility of all class teachers to take registers accurately within the first five minutes of all lessons (Secondary) and at AM and PM registration (Primary). The Attendance Officer is responsible for checking that registers are completed accurately each morning, afternoon and during lessons. The Attendance Officer will ensure that where another code is appropriate to denote an absence, that this is altered and recorded in the electronic registration system.

Every morning and afternoon if registers are incomplete or inaccurate the Attendance Officer will email the relevant teacher and copy in the member of SLT responsible for attendance, their LM and the tutor. Persistent failure to complete registers or inaccurate completion will be followed up with SLT meetings and target setting. We have a tracking system escalating to the Operations Manager and Headteachers as required.

It is the teacher's responsibility to ensure that the registers are completed for each lesson – the Attendance Officer's role is to check not complete.

The accuracy of the register is of paramount importance in safeguarding children; to provide a solid foundation for analysis of absence and to support any statutory interventions that may be required. Reach Academy Feltham acknowledges that it is an offence not to maintain accurate registers. Head Teachers may be called to Court as witnesses and explain their registration processes and in particular the marking of a register in question. The Student Registration Regulations, Keeping Student Registers (Guidance on applying the Regulations) and Guidance on the use of the Attendance and Absence Codes will all be read and followed by Reach Academy Feltham (Ensuring Children's Right to Education, DfE).

It is also the role of the Administrative team to ensure that paper registers are printed and kept to hand for circumstances such as the failure of ICT systems or a fire alarm or drill. In these instances it is the role of the Administrative team to hand the paper registers to the form tutors, collect them in after the agreed time period taken to complete them and enter the data onto the electronic system at an appropriate time, as close to the closing of the registers as possible.

The Attendance officer meets with each Head of Year weekly to go through the weekly SOL tracker and agree actions for each child whose attendance has deteriorated in the previous week.

6.1 Strategy for using data to target attendance improvement efforts to the pupils or pupil cohorts who need it most

We use the SOL tracker to review our pupils' attendance on a weekly basis. The SOL tracker helps us to understand which groups and pupil cohorts most need support to improve their attendance. This information is used to inform weekly meetings with Heads of Year/Phase. Each week actions are agreed in the meeting with the attendance officer which are cascaded down to year group teams. This could include telephone calls home, individual pupil meetings, emails home or meetings with parents to discuss strategies and support to help children get into school more regularly and effectively. The data also provides a sub group breakdown by gender, EHCP, SEN, FSM, EAL, LAC, Ethnicity and PPG. The data is also broken down in the same manner for Persistent Absentees. This data is frequently used to create a report with summary and key actions for SLT. This information is

presented at SLT meetings for challenge and discussion. This report feeds into termly reports for the Governors so they can provide strategic oversight.

7. Authorising Absence

7.1 Authorising student absence because of illness

- If a student is ill and/or unable to attend school for an unplanned reason, the parent/carer needs to contact the school office to inform them before 8.30 am on the first day of absence, and each subsequent day unless the period of absence is definable at the beginning, in which case the parent/carer must inform the Academy of the date of their child's return.
- On the morning of an absence the school Attendance Officer will telephone the Primary contact on the child's record to determine why the child is absent.
- If no contact is made after 2 days absence, the schools Attendance Officer and/or Head of Year will conduct a home visit.
- Parents/carers must contact the school office rather than the child's form tutor, Head of Year or any other member of staff.
- Reach Academy will only 'authorise' the student's absence if there is sufficient evidence that the student is not able to be, or should not be in school.
- This means that when the student returns to school within 3-5 days, they need to bring in any one of the following, and give this to the Front Office:
 - a doctor's note;
 - a copy of a prescription/appointment card;
 - a receipt for over the counter medicine.
- If the student does not bring sufficient evidence, their absence will be marked as 'unauthorised'. Persistent unauthorised absences will have further consequences.

7.2 Authorising student absence for Term-Time Leave

- Parents/carers need to contact the school Attendance Officer in writing using the Request for Term Time leave form online to request Term-Time leave at least 3 weeks in advance.
- Term-time leave will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances, as our aim is to ensure students do not miss important learning time. Holidays are never exceptional circumstances.
- Parents/carers will be informed if their request for Term-Time leave has been authorised within 1 week of submitting their request.
- If parents/carers decide to take the child on holiday/off school even when this has not been authorised, this will be recorded as an 'unauthorised absence'.
- Details on unauthorised absences are passed onto Reach Academy Feltham's designated school attendance support officer (SASO) at the School Attendance Support Service (SASS) in Hounslow.
- The SASO will send parents a Penalty Notice Warning Letter (PNWL) if this is the first time in the child's whole school career that they have been referred for taking unauthorised Term-Time leave. If there is a second (or more) time in the child's whole school career that they take unauthorised Term-Time leave, and if attendance has fallen below 92% then the SASO will send parents a Penalty Notice (PN). See details of the PN below:
 - The FPN is £60 (per parent/carer, per child) if paid within 21 days.
 - If paid after 21 days but within 28 days, the penalty is doubled to £120 per parent, per child.
 - If payment is not received, then parents/carers may be prosecuted for the offense and could be subject to a fine of up to £2500.
- In addition, pupils may be removed from the school register if the pupil has failed to return following authorised leave of absence exceeding 20 school days for the purpose of a holiday providing all of the following three conditions are fulfilled:
 - The pupil has failed to attend the school within the twenty school days immediately following the expiry of the period for which such leave was granted

- There are no reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend due to sickness or any unavoidable cause
 - Both the school and the Local Authority have made reasonable enquiries and failed to ascertain the child's whereabouts.
- The SASS statutory process, outlined above, highlights how seriously the Local Authority takes unauthorized Term Time leave. We advise parents to take this into account and avoid planning holidays during Term Time.
 - Pupils are entitled to two days authorized absence for religious observance per academic year. Parents should complete the online form as well as telephone the Front Office to advise when these days will be taken. Front office will record this on a spreadsheet shared with the Attendance Officer.

7.3. Absence for three consecutive days

If a student has missed school for a consecutive period of three days, and we have had no contact with the parent/carer during this time, we will refer the student to the SASS.

As a result of this referral, the SASO will conduct a statutory home-visit to speak to the parent/carer and child to establish the reason for absence.

For students who have persistent low attendance, further action will be taken (see section 17).

8. Unauthorized Absence

Unauthorized absences will be followed up immediately. The Attendance Officer will telephone the primary carer by 10am on the day to ascertain the reason for absence. If there is no answer a voicemail will be left asking the parent to make contact with the school. Should there be no facility to leave a message the school will send a text message or email asking the parent to make contact regarding the absence. Should contact not be received, the Form Tutor or Head of Phase will contact the parent on the same day by phone or email to check in about the absence. Any response will be passed on to the Attendance officer so that the register can be updated.

Students will be referred to the SASS when there are cases of: unauthorized term-time absence; persistent unauthorized absence (below 91%); 3 consecutive days of absence with no contact from parents/carers.

The register must show whether any absence is authorised or unauthorized. Authorized absence is where the Head Teacher has either given approval in advance for a student of compulsory Academy age to be absent, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as satisfactory justification for absence. All other absences, including persistent lateness, must be treated as unauthorized. Absence can only be authorised by a person designated to do so by the proprietor [see The Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (SI No. 2006/1751) – reg 7(1)].

9. Attendance Updates

Attendance updates are the responsibility of the Attendance Officer to produce. Each week updates on absence will be produced for all relevant staff to investigate.

In addition 100% attendees each week, month, half term, term and year shall be displayed prominently in each form room and on the communal attendance notice-board. Attendance is also a major feature of payslip which shall be explained fully in the behaviour section below.

10. Late Pupils

It is the role of the Attendance Officer to ensure that late students are registered, monitored and placed in detention (secondary only). Each morning primary students will be considered late if they are not in the Academy building by 8.30am. Students in Phase 3 are considered late if they are not in the building at 8:25am. A member of staff will be on at the reception each morning (usually the Attendance Officer and HOY/SLT). This staff member will record the child's name and a reason why your child was late and the time they arrived at school. Your child will be marked as L if they arrive up to 15 minutes after their scheduled start time. If your child arrives after this time they will be marked as U which is an unauthorised AM absence. If a student arrives late to school, they must provide a valid reason to the Attendance Officer. Traffic conditions will not be accepted as a valid reason for lateness. London traffic's network is congested every day and will cause delays – this time must be factored into the student's morning routine.

At 8.45am the member of staff will cease to be on 'late duty' and late children will instead sign in at the front office and then go to their class.

The reason for high staff presence to monitor and record late students is that it will enable members of staff to have meaningful one to one conversations with students about the importance of being on time and the factors that are preventing them from being on time at the moment.

As with attendance, HOY and form tutors have a key role in improving punctuality.

If your child is late more than three times in any two week period, the parent/carer will receive a phone call from the school Attendance Officer inviting them to a meeting with HOY/SLT where additional support can be discussed.

If your child is Persistently Late (more than 6 lates in a term) you will receive a letter from the school Attendance Officer that will place you on a four week target during which we would expect to see an improvement.

If no improvement, then the school Attendance Officer will invite you to a meeting with HOY/member of SLT to discuss additional support.

11. Unplanned Absences

If absence is unplanned, for example due to sickness, parents will call the Academy by 8.30am. At 10.00am it is the role of the Attendance Officer to phone the parents of all absent students and ascertain the reason for their absence. The Attendance Officer will use the call to stress the importance of regular attendance and punctuality.

If a child is due to be absent for an extended period of time then it is the responsibility of the Attendance Officer to inform the staff who teach that child.

12. Unplanned School Closures

If the Academy were to be closed during the day for whatever reason, for example due to dangerous weather conditions, then it is the role of the Attendance Officer to send a group text to all parents to inform them and to update the Academy website.

In a situation such as closure due to extenuating circumstances it would be advisable for all staff to liaise and send one message rather than two (e.g. collaborate across phases) so that families are not receiving multiple copies of the same message.

13. Promoting regular attendance

It is important that all stakeholders see attendance as their responsibility. Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility.

A range of actions will help to focus on promoting regular attendance.

Actions to promote regular attendance	
Celebrate and display	Celebrate 100% daily, weekly, half-termly, termly and yearly by displaying names of deserving students around the Academy and in phase updates/newsletters.
Report	Weekly attendance report for all students (including payslip for students in Key Stage 3 to 4). Where attendance is not at 100% there will be an action for every child, every week to support them in attending school everyday.
Reward	Reward good attendance through individual rewards such as certificates and payslip points, and group rewards such as form group trips.
Communicate	Encourage open, honest and regular communication between the Academy, parents/carers, students and SASS around all issues concerning attendance and punctuality.

14. Absence guidance

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the Academy (not by the parents), as either authorised or unauthorised. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

Students need to bring evidence that they pass to the Front Office/Attendance Officer on the day that they return to school. This could be:

- a copy of a doctor's note;
- a copy of a prescription/appointment card;
- a receipt for over the counter medicine;
- form tutors need to pass all evidence to the School Attendance Officer. SLT has the discretion to authorize absences;
- absence notes need to be filed by the School Office/Attendance Officer;
- the School Attendance Officer will check daily and inform the School Office whether the absence needs to be changed to 'authorised' in School Base.

15. Targets and triggers

All of the targets and triggers below apply to all key stages including foundation stage and apply to both attendance and punctuality. It is important to note that at early stages of the year when each

absence has a disproportionate effect on attendance percentages, targets and triggers will be adapted as appropriate.

Target/ trigger		Potential action	Level of support
Target	100%	Reward and celebration	Universal support
Minimum target	96%	Reward and celebration	Universal support
Trigger 1	93-95.9%	Telephone contact home Email home Letter of Concern	Targeted support
Trigger 2	91-92.9%	4 week school action parent/pupil contract Parent meeting with HOY/Attendance Officer Support to implement targets in the contract.	Intensive support
Trigger 3	0-90.9%	Referral to SASS External Agency Support Penalty Warning Penalty Notice Prosecution	Intensive support

NB- All improvements in attendance will be celebrated weekly and a supportive conversation will be had by the form tutor with all students' whose attendance has dropped, ensuring, within this conversation, that they are supported in catching up on work missed.

Universal support = support that the Academy feels all families will benefit from

Targeted support = support that the Academy feels only some families will need and will usually only involve the Academy and up to one external agency

Intensive support = support that the Academy feels only a small number of families will need and it will almost always involve external agencies.

At Reach Academy we use the SOL tracker and Attendance Diamond model. Each Phase will have the diamond displayed prominently with each class pinned on the diamond depending on their level of attendance. This is regularly updated by the Attendance Officer. The goal is to get as many students in the green above 96% area. The class with the best attendance weekly will be rewarded with the Reach Diamond Award which is displayed in their classroom.

16. Referrals to School Attendance Support Service

There are three circumstances where Reach Academy makes referrals to SASS. These are as follows:

- A student has less than 91% attendance with persistent unauthorized absences, despite the attempts of the school to engage the child/family
- A student is absent for 3 consecutive days and we have had not been able to establish any contact with the parent/carer
- A student takes unauthorised term-time leave (for e.g. going on holiday during term-time).

17. Tracking and following up on non-attendance and Children Missing Education (CME)

Throughout the Academy year we monitor absences and punctuality. Each week we assess attendance and punctuality for the week just gone and apply the trigger criteria and agree actions with the Head Of Year.

The people responsible for matters relating to attendance at the Academy are:

- Georgia Strong Assistant Headteacher,
Culture and Relationships (DSL)
T: 020 8893 1099 (Academy mainline)
E: georgia.strong@reachacademy.org.uk
- Heads of Year/Phase
- Attendance Officer

The section below outlines the process for monitoring and addressing attendance issues

17.1 For non-statutory age children:

17.1.1 Nursery

When a child is unwell or won't be attending nursery for any reason we ask parents to telephone to let us know that they won't be attending and the reason why. We would ask them to let us know for how long the child won't be in and ask them to call us if this changes for any reason.

If we do not hear from a parent we endeavour to phone them on the first day of absence to clarify the reason for the absence and the expected return date.

If a child's attendance falls below 95% we write a letter to the family informing them of the importance of regular attendance and the impact on the child's learning.

If attendance fails to improve, targets will be set in conjunction with Nursery and failure to meet the targets will result in parents attending the school's Attendance programme with the Hub Team.

Alongside this we also offer support with any difficulties the family may be having or complete an Early help referral with their consent or sign post them to other professionals for guidance.

17.1.2 Sixth Form

Attendance is hugely important. It sets good routines, demonstrates to employers and universities that you are serious about your studies and that you are organized and reliable.

Attendance at Sixth form is measured slightly differently to the rest of the school. Attendance will be reviewed regularly and students and parents/carers will be warned if attendance, without good reason e.g. serious accident/illness, falls below 95%. If a student does not improve the school will invite parents/carers to a meeting with the student where targets will be set and additional support discussed. Should attendance fail to improve, the school reserves the right to charge the student for the examination fees or the school may withdraw the student from exams.

Any further disciplinary proceedings will be decided by one of the Co-headteachers.

17.2 If students have been absent for 3 consecutive days and we have had no contact with the parent/carer

The Attendance Officer is responsible for informing Heads of Year and SLT if there is any occasion where a student has been absent for 3 consecutive days and there has been no contact with the parent/carer. The attendance officer and appropriate member of staff will conduct a home visit to ascertain the reason for absence. Should no contact be made the Attendance Officer will complete a CFAN for Home Contact Visit to be conducted by SASS and supply an up to date registration certificate and send this to Hounslow Children's Services and SASO, copying in the Assistant

Headteacher for Inclusion as applicable.

17.3 If a student takes unauthorised Term-Time leave (for e.g. holiday during Term-Time)

The Attendance Officer will inform HoY and the DSL and log on CPOMS. They will then complete a CFAN form (Pages 1-3) and send this to the SASO, copying in the Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion as applicable.

17.4 Support for cohorts of pupils with lower attendance than peers ie. If a student has less than 95% attendance

The Attendance Officer and the relevant Year Team meet weekly to review each pupil's attendance whose attendance has dropped and actions agreed. These can be a parent conversation in person or by phone call in the first instance, email, meeting or formal letter.

The Attendance Officer sends a letter home to inform parents/carers that their child's attendance has fallen below 95% and that attendance is being monitored. Parents are invited to request a school meeting to discuss if they feel this is required.

If attendance fails to show improvement in two weeks, a meeting is arranged with the Attendance Officer and Head Of Year where barriers to attendance are discussed and a 95% target over four weeks is set. Students are required to improve their attendance and average over 95% over a 4 week period.

If this target is not achieved, a referral to School Attendance Support Officer is made alongside any other referrals for additional support service that may be required.

17.5 Once referred to Education Welfare

Education Welfare receives a referral from school (Non-complex) or the Front Door Social Care (complex) for the unauthorised poor school attendance at 90% or below. The referral is entered on to the School Attendance Support Service recording system, and the school attendance support officer conducts checks with the following for involvement: Children's Social Care, Youth Offending Service and CAMHS.

17.6 Children Missing Education (CME)

Children missing from education (CME), refers to all children of compulsory school age who are not on the roll of a school, nor being educated otherwise (privately or in alternative provision for example) and who have been out of any educational provision for a substantial period of time (usually agreed as four weeks or more.)

Examples of Children Missing Education (CME):

- Failure to start appropriate provision and hence never enter the education system
- Failure to complete a transition between providers, for example by being unable or not trying to find a suitable school place after moving between local authorities
- Do not complete transition between key stages/schools, particularly if parents are unsuccessful with preferred schools
- A parent/carer that does not alert the local authority of the fact they are resident in Hounslow or does not know how to access education provision
- Cease to attend, due to exclusion (for example illegal unofficial exclusions) or withdrawal from provision by parents and schools take the children off roll (for example parents have no confidence in the school, behaviour and truancy issues, fresh start, unauthorised leave over 20 school days)

- Permanent exclusion from schools out of the borough, including independent schools
- Children on alternative curriculum arrangements which are not monitored effectively
- Children who are looked after within family arrangements, unaccompanied from abroad, placed in Hounslow by other local authorities and not known to our looked after children team
- Children placed in Hounslow by other local authorities without notification eg, temporary housing, safety move and witness protection
- Let down by system failures between partners where information is not shared regarding children (other education authorities, schools, parent/carers, social care, health, housing, other councils, Home Office, Immigration Office, asylum/refugee dispersal arrangements, temporary accommodation)
- "Dip in and out" of Elective Home Education at the request of parents/carers

17.6.1 Our process for Children Missing Education

1. Parents notifies us their child is leaving Reach Academy;
2. Parents are invited to attend a meeting with one of the Co-headteacher or their designee.
3. Attendance Officer sends the online leavers form to parent;
4. We diarise date for a week and call to chase up;
5. Once form is returned we establish the new school and diarise start date;
6. On the day the child is due to start we call and confirm within 24 hours;
7. On the Thursday following the start date Admissions Manager adds to Joiners and Leavers LA submission.

If a child does not have a school they remain on our records until reasonable enquiries are made ie:

1. Attendance Officer submits 3 day home contact visit to SASS;
2. A CME referral is submitted;
3. Once the referral is accepted with CME, the child's name can be added to leavers and joiners LA submission.

What happens if we don't hear from parents/sudden departure.

1. Attendance Officer follows daily absence call procedures;
2. On day 3 of no contact a home contact visit referral is sent to SASS;
3. SASS call or visit the home to establish contact, if no contact the referral is kept open for 5 days awaiting contact;
4. Following 5 days of no contact, a referral is made to the CME officer until contact is established. School continue to contact family everyday as per normal absence policy.

18. Working with the school attendance support officer

The Attendance Officer is also responsible for liaising with the school attendance support officer (SASO), in conjunction with the Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion in Primary/Secondary as relevant.

The Attendance Officer may refer students to the SASO and will be the contact person for the SASO in the Academy, along with the Assistant Headteacher for Culture and Relationships.

19. Pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent

19.1 Parents are expected to:

- Work closely with the school and local authority to help us understand any barriers to attendance;
- Proactively engaged with support offered to prevent the need for more formal support.

19.2 The school will:

- Use data to identify pupils at risk of poor attendance;
- Work with each identified pupil and their parents to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in school barriers;
- Where out of school barriers are identified, signpost and support access to any required services;
- Where the issue persists we will take an active part in a multi-agency effort with the Hounslow council and other partners;
- Act as the lead practitioner where all partners agree that the school is the best placed lead service;
- Where the lead practitioner is outside of the school, continue to work with the local authority and partners.

19.3 The trustees and local governing body

- Regularly review attendance data and help leaders focus on support for the pupils who need it.

19.4 Local authorities are expected to

- Hold a termly conversation with every school to identify, discuss and signpost or provide access to services for pupils who are persistently or severely absent or at risk of becoming so;
- Where there are out of school barriers, provide each identified pupil and their family with access to services they need in the first instance;
- If the issue persists, facilitate a voluntary early help assessment where appropriate. Take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the school and other partners. Provide the lead practitioner where all partners agree that a local authority service is best placed to lead. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the local authority, continue to work with the school and partners.

19.5 Process

Students are expected to have 95% attendance or above. Where a student's attendance is irregular and drops below 95% for whatever reason, the school Attendance Officer will notify the parent by sending the parent/carer a letter advising them of our attendance concerns and will be monitoring closely in the next two weeks. Should attendance deteriorate, further communication will follow. Should attendance fail to improve within two weeks, parents/carers are invited to a meeting in school to discuss attendance and a 4 week 95% target is set. This is confirmed in writing to the parent/carer.

The purpose of this meeting is to discuss any difficulties and put in place a plan to improve attendance.

If parents/carers are not responsive and do not come for the meeting, the Attendance Officer will telephone the parent to discuss attendance and support. If a parent fails to engage and there is no evidence of support required, and the target is not achieved, a referral will be made to SASS with supporting paperwork attached as we have a duty to refer all students who are deemed Persistent Absentees to SASS.

20. Persistently absent pupils

20.1 Parents are expected to:

- Work closely with the school and local authority to help us understand any barriers to attendance;
- Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.

20.2 The school will:

- Continued support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent and;
- Where absence becomes persistent, put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers;
- Where necessary this includes working with partners;
- Where there is a lack of engagement, hold more formal conversations with parents and be clear about the potential need for legal intervention in future;
- Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, work with the local authority on legal intervention;
- Where there are safeguarding concerns, intensify support through statutory children's social care;
- Work with other schools in the local area, such as schools previously attended and the schools of any siblings.

20.3 The trustees and local governing body

- Regularly review attendance data and help leaders focus on support for the pupils who need it.

20.4 Local authorities are expected to

- Continued support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent and;
- Work jointly with the school to provide formal support options including parenting contracts and education supervision orders;
- Where there are safeguarding concerns, ensure joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners;
- Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, enforce attendance through legal intervention (including prosecution as a last resort).

20.5 Process

A student becomes a Persistent Absentee (PA) when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects. It is a parent/carers' responsibility to ensure that every measure is taken to immediately improve their child's attendance. The Attendance Officer will conduct regular home visits with Heads of Year/class teacher where appropriate. The Heads of Year/Form Tutor will maintain regular contact with the parent/carer to support the pupil returning to school as soon as possible and ensuring that any learning missed is caught up on.

If there is persistent absenteeism between 90-95%, the school will continue to work with the family to raise attendance levels through regular home visits, telephone calls and emails to parents/carers offering support as required.

In cases where attendance drops below 90% with unauthorized absences, Reach Academy will make a referral to SASS. Following our referral:

- Family will work with the SASO to help raise the child's attendance levels.
- Every effort will be made over a 2-3 month period to help the family improve the child's attendance.
- This could include: signposting the child/family to appropriate support services; facilitating partnerships with other professionals; referring the family for Early Help/Families First Intensive Support Service or Children's Services if required.

If attendance still fails to improve after these interventions, as a last resort the Local Authority may have to consider taking legal action against the parents through the courts or issuing a Penalty Notice as mentioned above:

- The penalty is £60 (per parent/carer per child) if paid within 21 days.
- If paid after 21 days but within 28 days the penalty is doubled to £120 per parent, per child.
- If payment is not received, parents/carers may be prosecuted for the offense and could be subject to a fine of up to £2,500.

Parenting orders are an ancillary order that can be imposed by the Court following conviction for non-attendance alongside a fine and/or community order. Parents' agreement is not required before an order is made. They may be appropriate where the parent has not engaged in support to improve their child's attendance and where compulsion to do so would help change parental behaviour.

Of course, the objective of SASS and Reach Academy is to work proactively with families to ensure good attendance, and we expect that such measures would be extremely rare.

Parents who fail to comply with a school attendance order issued by the local authority to require a parent to get their child registered at a named school (under section 443 of the Education Act 1996). This may result in a fine of up to level 3 (£1,000)

Parents who fail to secure their child's regular attendance at a school, for which there are 2 separate offenses: section 444(1) where a parent fails to secure the child's regular attendance; and section 444(1A) where a parent knows that the child is failing to attend school regularly and fails to ensure the child does so. The section 444(1) offence may result in a fine of up to level 3 (£1,000) and the section 444(1A) offence may result in a fine of up to level 4 (£2,500), and/or a community order or imprisonment of up to 3 months.

Parents who fail to secure the regular attendance of their child at a place where the local authority or governing body has arranged alternative provision (under sections 444 and 444ZA). This may result in a fine of up to level 3 (£1,000), or if the parent is found to have known the child was not attending regularly and failed to ensure that they did so, a fine of up to level 4 (£2,500), and/or a community order or imprisonment of up to 3 months.

Parents who persistently fail to comply with directions under an Education Supervision Order (under Schedule 3 to the Children Act 1989) or breach a Parenting Order or directions under the order (under section 375 of the Sentencing Act 2020). These may result in a fine of up to level 3 (£1,000).

21. Severely absent pupils

The school will continue support for persistently absent pupils and agree a joint approach for all severely absent pupils with the local authority.

Academy trustees and governing bodies regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.

22. Support for pupils with medical conditions or SEND with poor attendance

We maintain the same ambition for attendance and work with pupils with medical conditions or SEND and their parents to maximize attendance. We join up with pastoral support and where required, put in place additional support and adjustments, such as an individual healthcare plan and if applicable, ensuring the provision outlined in the pupil's EHCP is accessed. We consider additional

support from wider services and external partners, making timely referrals. We also regularly monitor data for such groups, including at board and governing body meetings and with local authorities.

20.1 Parents are expected to:

- Work closely with the school and local authority to help us understand any barriers to attendance;
- Proactively engage with the support offered.

20.2 The school will:

- Maintain the same ambition for attendance and work with pupils and parents to maximise attendance;
- Ensure join up with pastoral support and where required, put in place additional support and adjustments, such as an individual healthcare plan and if applicable, ensuring the provision outlined in the pupil's EHCP is accessed;
- Consider additional support from wider services and external partners, making timely referrals;
- Regularly monitor data for such groups, including at board and governing body meetings and with local authorities.

20.3 The trustees and local governing body

- Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.

20.4 Local authorities are expected to

- Work closely with relevant services and partners, for example special educational needs, educational psychologists, and mental health services, to ensure joined up support for families.
- Ensure suitable education, such as alternative provision, is arranged for children of compulsory school age who because of health reasons would not otherwise receive a suitable education.

Where a child is absent from school for over 15 days in an academic year due to illness the school will review the plan, taking into account information received from health practitioners involved in their care, and a referral made (if appropriate) to the local authority medical provision. Attendance will be monitored by the Attendance Officer.

The following sets out the process for identifying and agreeing the support a child with a medical condition/s needs:

1. School made aware of their medical condition. It is the parents' responsibility to inform the school of any medical condition/s their child has. It is also the parents responsibility to notify the school of any changes required in their child's Health Care Plan and/or any changes in medication.
 - New diagnosis;
 - Child moving to new school;
 - Parent or health professional informs school.
2. Delegated lead from school coordinates meeting to agree individual healthcare plan (HCP) Attendees should include: parent, child (if appropriate), specialist nurse, GP physiotherapist, OT or SLT if involved with the child's care, paediatrician or consultant. If any of these are not available, a report will be requested instead.

3. Clarify medical condition and healthcare needs of the child. Write HCP. Identify school staff training needs and put in place a plan to meet them.
4. Specialist nurse delivers training if required and staff signed off as competent.
5. HCP implemented and circulated to all relevant staff.
6. HCP reviewed 3 times per year. HCP sent via email to parents. If updates are required on the HCP it is the responsibility of the parent to communicate this to the medical or delegated lead. HCP updated and re-circulated if needed. Additional training provided for staff members if necessary.

23. Chronic illness / long term illness or poor mental health

Chronic or long term illness can be defined as a long lasting and/or recurring illness or condition which is impacting significantly on a pupil's school attendance. The illness/condition should be professionally diagnosed by a pediatrician, CAMHS or other appropriate health care professional. When a pupil is thought to be suffering with a chronic or long term illness, education and care plans will be developed. These measures will take into consideration the health needs of the pupil, as well as their learning needs which may be impacted upon due to the high level of absenteeism they may experience.

Serious Injury

Where a child or young person who has had a serious injury which has required regular absences or a sustained period of time off school, he/she will also be considered under the chronic illness/long term illness criteria.

Questions to ask when confirming a child or young person meets the Chronic Illness or Long Term Illness criteria:

- has the illness/condition been diagnosed by an appropriate health professional (in the majority of cases a pediatrician or mental health practitioner would be considered appropriate).

A serious injury may not require a formal diagnosis depending on individual circumstances.

- is there a formal education and health care plan in place?
- if an education plan is not immediately viable, has a plan been put in place to support the pupil at a later date to prevent absenteeism impacting on his or her learning needs?
- is SASO involved and/or has an oversight of the case?
- where appropriate, has a back-to-school plan been put in place?

Examples of long term or chronic illness

- life limiting illnesses
- juvenile arthritis
- disabilities (complex needs)
- crohn's disease
- mental health challenges – supported by CAMHS
- chronic skin conditions

24. Fast Track Policy

'FAST-track Attendance' is an Early Intervention approach to improving pupil attendance which also seeks to act quickly where there is unauthorised absence, low attainment, behaviour issues or school refusal.

1. Attendance Officer or Phase lead to discuss in phase provision meeting so AEN team aware.
2. Attendance Officer to make referral to Family Support Worker in inclusion meeting
3. Intensive home visits conducted by attendance officer, safeguarding team, FSP, HOY or SLT
4. Consider referral to Place2Be/CAMHS
5. Consider reduced timetable with Head of Year and HeadTeacher
6. Offer 1:1 coaching with preferred member of staff
7. Offer to meet the child for sporting/leisure activity/Coffee/hot chocolate
8. Meet pupil via online chat via zoom or email or text
9. Discuss consent with parents for the case to be presented at the CAPP panel. If no consent, present anonymous case study

If under 95% School Action Target set for 4 weeks as soon as possible, if not achieved and under 91% child is referred to SASO.

25. Support for pupils with a social worker

The attendance for pupils with a social worker are prioritized each morning. The school has a special tag to be able to identify whether children with social workers are in school as soon as the registration is complete. We also have a daily tracking system to follow up on any absences or check in depending on the reason provided.

The attendance officer always informs a pupil's social worker if there are unexplained absences from school. Children missing education officers in Hounslow also inform a pupil's social worker if their name is to be deleted from the school register.

The school will:

- Inform the pupil's social worker if there are any unexplained absences and if their name is to be deleted from the register.

The trustees and local governing body

- Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.

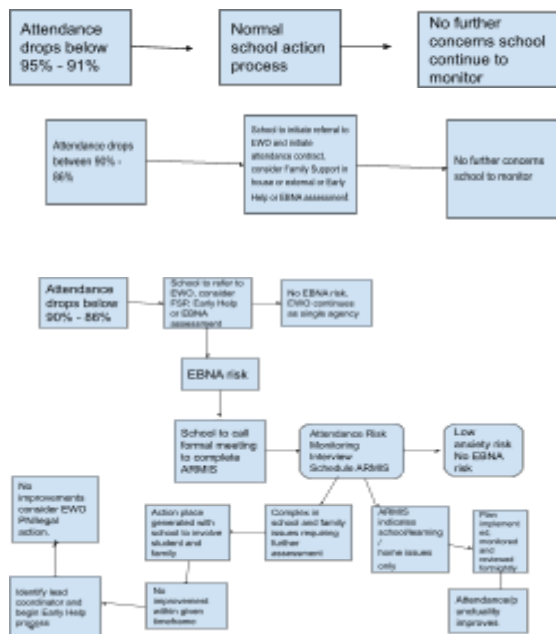
Local authorities are expected to

- Regularly monitor the attendance of children with a social worker in their area;
- Put in place personal education plans for looked after children;
- Secure regular attendance of looked-after children as their corporate parent and provide advice and guidance about the importance of attendance to those services supporting pupils previously looked after.

26. Emotionally-based Non-attendance

It is important to distinguish between non-school attendance, truancy and emotionally based non-school attendance, the latter being considered an emotional need. There could be a number of contributing factors to EBNA. We use the EBNA Assessment Tool to establish the route of the

problem. Once this process has been completed we would request the appropriate involvement of services such as Education Psychologists, in order that the appropriate support can be put in place to support the pupil.



26. Part-time timetables

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package. A part-time timetable is only to be in place for the shortest time necessary and not be treated as a long-term solution. Any pastoral support programme or other agreement should have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend full time, either at school or alternative provision. There should also be formal arrangements in place for regularly reviewing it with the pupil and their parents. In agreeing to a part time timetable, a school has agreed to a pupil being absent from school for part of the week or day and therefore we will treat absence as authorised.

27. Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe

We work with the local community (including voluntary and community groups) to help remove the barriers to attendance that families experience. In some cases, families will experience the same or similar barriers to attendance for multiple children who attend different schools in the area. As such, it is of mutual benefit for such schools to work together where possible. This is particularly beneficial in supporting transition between feeder schools.

We work jointly and share data on individual cases where it is of benefit to the pupil (e.g. health services where there are medical conditions or the police where there are extra-familial harms). The Attendance Officer, school attendance support officer and link social worker meet termly to discuss children who are persistently absent from school. During these meetings information shared and appropriate support is discussed. The School Attendance Support Service regularly conduct register checks to the school.

Local authorities and schools (of all types) are expected to have regular Targeting Support Meetings at least termly. Further, to facilitate timely collaborative working across partners, all schools are also legally required to share information from their registers with the local authority. We work closely with the Admissions team and update them with leavers and joiners weekly. The attendance officer and admission manager at school meet fortnightly and liaise as needed to go to ensure children who are moving or joining are not missed.

Our attendance data is automatically collected by Wonde which connects to Schoolbase and securely transfers the data to the DfE. This collaboration allows local authorities to facilitate quicker, more efficient joint working and better target their area wide attendance strategy. We provide the local authority with access to our data as requested to support joint working between schools, trusts and local authorities.

26. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour 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

Appendix 2: Daily Absence procedures

