




Policy Title:	Attendance Policy
School:	Bruche Primary School Academy
Linked Policies:	This policy should be read alongside the following school policies: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Safeguarding policy• SEN policy• Behaviour Policy
Other Guidance Reading References & Research:	This policy is based on the recommendations of the non-statutory guidance "Working together to improve school attendance" in place from September 2022 and written with due regard to guidance documents and legislation as detailed in Appendix 2 where you will also find reading references.
Written By:	Mr C Jones
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1. Organisation and facilities

- 1.1. Securing good attendance is not seen in isolation. Warrington Primary Academy Trust's (WPAT's) effective practices for improvement involve close interaction with curriculum planning, positive behaviour, bullying prevention, safeguarding, special educational needs and medical needs support, mental health and wellbeing, and effective use of resources. WPATs foundation for securing good attendance is that school is a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environment where all pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn.

2. Rationale

- 2.1. WPAT promotes the benefits of good attendance for all pupils. It sets and expects high standards of attendance for every pupil, communicates those expectations both clearly and consistently to pupils and parents/carers and systematically analyses their data to identify patterns to target their improvement efforts. We are committed to working together with children and parents to promote 100% attendance wherever possible.
- 2.2. For some pupils 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. Some pupils find it harder than others to attend school and therefore at all stages of improving attendance, WPAT and partners will work with pupils and parents/carers to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place.
- 2.3. Improving and supporting attendance is the responsibility of everyone in school. We believe that good attendance is essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances.

3. Policy aims (based on DfE guidance and best practice)

- 3.1. We will ensure:
 - a culture of good attendance that reflects WPAT's guiding principle and core values and that is embedded and enacted in everything we do.
 - a named Trustee/Governor responsible for the attendance portfolio will be in place and knowledgeable about school attendance.
 - strong school leadership, where leaders are highly visible and ambitious attendance goals are set.
 - attendance and punctuality are set as a priority for all those associated with the school including Trustees, Governors, pupils, parents/carers and teachers.
 - an improved overall percentage of pupils at school.
 - accurate admissions and attendance registers in place in all schools.
 - there is a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks.
 - a first day response in all schools as part of their robust daily response to absence.
 - there is a dedicated senior leader responsible for attendance and championing and improving attendance.
 - there is a Trust and school Data Manager who will provide training on

attendance data management, supporting early identification and risk reduction for schools.

- there are monitoring reports for the Trust, Governor Committees, and schools.
- all school staff receive annual attendance training, and that attendance is part of school induction protocols.
- the Trust has a Strategic Lead for attendance who works with schools to improve attendance and is point of contact for advice and support.
- the WPAT Education Inclusion Hub supports the sharing of good practice for attendance across the Trust.
- each school has a Welfare Team in place and resources to support families at risk of poor attendance.
- work takes place with families to address the reasons for absence including in school barriers.
- vulnerable pupil groups including LAC, receive targeted and bespoke support plans.
- processes for engagement with Local Authority EWO Fast Track Prosecution services are in place.
- engagement with multi-agency professionals, early help assessment, whole family support, including special educational needs professionals.
- access to school resources in the first instance where there are out of school barriers for families.
- Children's Social Care are involved where there are safeguarding concerns and build support into attendance planning.

4. Expected attendance and legalities

- 4.1. 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.
- 4.2. Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

5. Roles and responsibilities

5.1. Senior Leadership

- The Headteacher has overall responsibility for attendance in school. Each school within WPAT has a senior leader responsible for attendance. They will be the first point of contact should parents/carers have any concerns about their child's absence. The Senior Leader responsible for attendance in Bruche is Mr C Jones.
- Responsibilities of the senior leader include championing and improving attendance in school, offering a clear vision for attendance improvement, evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes, oversight of data

analysis, and communicating messages to pupils and parents.

6. First day response and daily absence

- 6.1. School requires first day contact for a child's absence. The procedures for when first day contact is not received are recorded in the attendance protocols.
- 6.2. All other absences will be marked as unauthorised unless prior arrangement has been agreed with the Headteacher.
- 6.3. With regards to unexpected absence during term time, parents and carers should contact school daily during any absence. Pupils arriving after the register has been closed at 8.50 a.m. will be marked as late. Pupils arriving after 8.50 a.m. must report to the School Office so that their attendance can be recorded in the attendance book and a late mark recorded. Registers close at 8.55am and if we do not hear from you and your child is not in school, we will make every endeavour to speak to one of the contacts on your list so that we may ensure your child is safe. If still no contact can be made, school will conduct a home visit for safeguarding reasons. This will be done as soon as possible. If still no contact can be made then social care and the police will be informed. Pupils arriving after 9.30 a.m. will be officially absent for the morning session and marked with a U in the register. This will be considered an un-authorised absence unless satisfactory reasons can be given; for example a doctor's appointment.

7. Managing absence

- 7.1. Attendance is reviewed by the school attendance officer.
- 7.2. Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or is not being engaged, school will work together with families 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 a parenting contract or education supervision order.
- 7.3. The school is supported by The Attendance Service at the Local Authority and will seek advice and representation from this service to assist in the monitoring of poor attendees. The service will formulate a plan of action with the school to improve pupil attendance and if necessary, can instigate legal proceeding through the fast-track process. Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, attendance will be enforced through statutory intervention to protect the pupil's right to an education.

8. Recording attendance and authorising absence

- 8.1. Reasons for non-attendance should always be provided by parents/carers. If this is not the case the school will continue to contact parent/carer until a reason has been given.
- 8.2. WPAT have agreed with the Local Authority that the school will not authorise absence except for medical or illness or faith-based holiday. WPAT follows Local Authority guidelines and will not authorise any absence due to holiday unless exceptional circumstances can be proven. [Appendix 1](#)
- 8.3. School can request that any absence due to illness be verified with a doctor's appointment card or medical note if necessary. Detailed guidelines have been formulated and will be provided upon request.

8.4. Fixed codes for absence and attendance are used consistently throughout the school and are shared with parents/carers. [Appendix 3](#)

9. Requesting authorised absence

9.1. All other planned absences will be marked as unauthorised unless prior arrangement has been agreed with the Headteacher. Leave of absence forms can be found in the protocols.

10. Promoting and incentivising good attendance

10.1. WPAT aims to build strong relationships with families, listen to and understand barriers to attendance and work with families to remove them. They will be provided with support, advice and guidance where required. We will establish an effective and efficient system of communication with pupils, parents/carers and appropriate agencies to provide mutual information, advice and support. We are committed to working together with children and parents to promote 100% attendance wherever possible.

10.2. WPAT visibly demonstrate the benefits of good attendance throughout school life. This may include in displays, assemblies or through curriculum content. This will be done sensitively and without discrimination and may also include praising and rewarding improvements in attendance at whole school, key stage, year group, class and individual level. Praise and rewards systems can be found in the protocols.

10.3. When a pupil has not attended school for a significant period, we will recognise the needs of the individual pupil and carefully plan re-integration.

11. The use of data/tracking and monitoring of attendance

11.1. The Department for Education, Local Authority and WPAT require schools to monitor and report the attendance levels of every pupil. One of the reasons for this is the strong statistical link between attendance and attainment. The higher a pupil's attendance, the higher their levels of achievement. WPAT seeks to ensure that all its pupils receive a full-time education which maximises opportunities for each pupil to realise their true potential.

11.2. WPAT will rigorously and proactively use attendance data to identify poor patterns of attendance at individual and cohort level as soon as possible so that all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.

11.3. WPAT's Data Manager will provide monitoring reports for Trust, Governor Committees, and schools.

12. Strong Partnerships and working together

12.1. WPAT will work collaboratively with external partners to identify and address the root causes of absence and remove barriers to attendance, at home, in school or more broadly. This work may include Early Help assessment, whole family planning and special educational needs assessment. It may also include working with Children's Social Care where there are safeguarding concerns. This support will be built into attendance planning.

- 12.2. Information will be shared with other schools in the area, Local Authorities, and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.
- 12.3. Developing strong relationships and families will result in reduction in persistent and severe absence. These relationships will ensure families are supported to gain access to wider support services and will be provided with support to remove the barriers to attendance. When appropriate support will be formalised in conjunction with the local authority.

13. Training

- 13.1. All teaching and non-teaching staff will know the importance of good attendance, are consistent in their communication with pupils and parents/carers and receive the training and professional development they need. To ensure this happens all school staff will have received annual attendance training.
- 13.2. Information regarding attendance is part of school staff induction protocols.
- 13.3. The WPAT Education Inclusion Hub will support the sharing of good practice for attendance across the Trust.

14. Attendance protocols which form part of this policy

- 14.1. Bruche Primary School has the following protocols to support the implementation of this policy. The protocols are intended to support staff and parents/carers by providing guidance in procedures and are based on DfE best practice:

Number	School Protocols
1	The school day and registration
2	Absence managing procedure
3	Daily absence procedure
4	Tiered approach to attendance support
5	Praise and rewards systems
6	Leave of absence forms

Protocol 1 - The School Day and Registration

The school day begins at 8.50 am.

- Registration takes place at 8.50 am.
- A child will be marked late after registration, if their class teacher is unaware that they are in the building.
- Registers must be in the school office by 9.00 am and will be officially “closed”.
- Children who arrive after registration closes at 9.15am will be noted in the school’s late book. Children arriving after 9.30am will lose a mark for the morning session. This absence will be marked as unauthorised.
- A letter will be sent home if a child is late after registration closes on two or more days in the week.

Protocol 2 - Absence Managing Procedure

Every 6 weeks the following procedure is followed:

- Notice to improve letters will be sent to parents.
- If attendance has not improved within 6 weeks, the child will be referred to the Attendance Service at Warrington Authority who will write to parents.
- If attendance has still not improved within 6 weeks parents will be invited to a formal meeting with the school and the Attendance Service.
- A plan of action will be put in place to improve attendance which could result in prosecution if there is no significant improvement in attendance.

Protocol 3 – Daily Absence Procedures

The school operates a 'First Day Response' system. If your child is unable to attend school for any reason, would you please contact the office before 8.30am on the first day of their absence and each subsequent day thereafter. If a telephone message is not received, we shall telephone the contacts you have given us. Registers close at 8.55am and if we do not hear from you and your child is not in school, we will make every endeavour to speak to one of the contacts on your list so that we may ensure your child is safe. If still no contact can be made, school will conduct a home visit for safeguarding reasons. This will be done as soon as possible. If still no contact can be made, then social care and the police will be informed. A late entry after 9.30am will be registered as an unauthorised absence. The school has a duty to maintain accurate records of attendance, including unauthorised absence, as the government requires that these be published each year.

All late arrivals recorded on Invenry* and details added to SIMS to complete the morning register by 9.30am.

All messages regarding pupil absence entered into Sims by 9.30am at the latest.

Office staff member making calls is to list all absent children with no given reason, and once reasons for absence are established, this list is signed off by a member of SLT.

Telephone call made to first contact on child's list. Reason for absence recorded on SIMS.

If no response from primary contact, telephone calls made to all contacts on list.

SLT member to **review** all available information and to decide if any further potential contacts known (given all information available in school).

Vulnerable list children identified and Social worker/relevant lead professional notified.

Home visit made by 2 members of staff- attendance/ safeguarding team member plus another. If reason for absence is established, update records and reminder to carer of duty to inform school.

If child is unaccounted for, **given** all **range** of hard and soft data available regarding the family (CPOMS, **SIMS, etc.**), police **welfare** check **requested via** 101.

cases identified for discussion/ referral to Attendance Officer, Local Authority

teachers/ office/ support staff	Record on SIMS
Office team	
Office team	
SLT/ safeguarding team with Office	
SLT/ safeguarding team	Record on CPOMS/ update registers if child's reason for absence is known
SLT/ safeguarding team	
SLT/ attendance team	

•school will attempt to hold at least 2 contacts per child

Protocol 4 – Tiered Approach to Attendance



Warrington Multi-Academy Trust Attendance Strategy "Children First, Resilience, Pioneering"

ref Summary responsibilities for Attendance DFE May 2022

Universal

Attendance policy on MAT Website

Develop attendance culture

Accurate admissions and attendance registers in place in all schools

All schools first day response as part of their robust daily response to absence

All schools have a dedicated senior leader responsible for attendance and championing and improving attendance

All school staff have received annual attendance training and attendance is referenced in school induction protocols

Governance named Trustee / Governor responsible for attendance portfolio in post

Trust Data Manager provides training on attendance data management supporting early identification and risk for schools

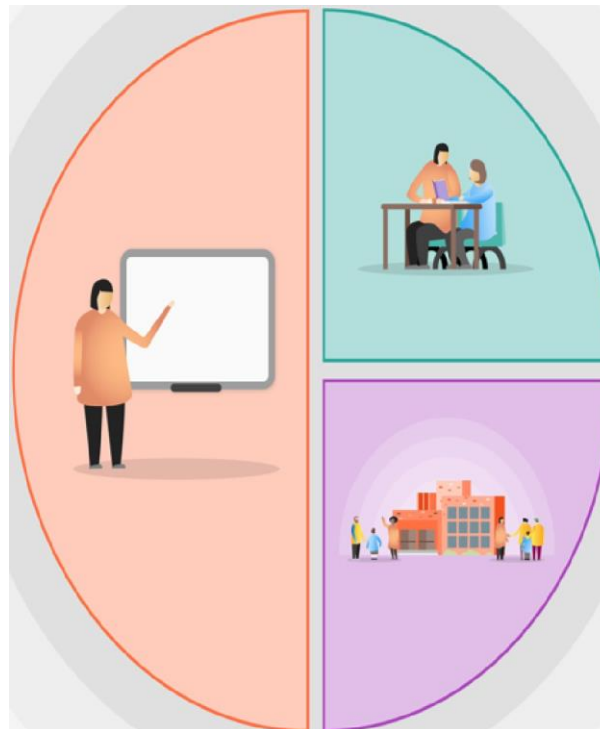
Data manager provides monitoring reports for Trust and school governances and reports at school and Trust level

Trust has an attendance strategic lead who works with schools to improve attendance and is point of contact for advice and support

Trust Education Inclusion Hub that supports sharing of good practice for attendance across the Trust

Termly challenge CEO discussion, and signpost or provide access to services for pupils who are persistently or severely absent

Termly challenge CEO discussion, and signpost or provide access to services for pupils who are persistently or severely absent



2 Targeted

School Welfare Teams support families at risk of poor attendance

Data management teams at school level are proactive in the use of data to identify pupils at risk of poor attendance

Work takes place with families to address the reasons for absence including in-school barriers. Where there is a lack of parental engagement formal conversations identify the potential for legal intervention in the future

Attendance data reviews lead to targeted bespoke support packages for schools where required

Targeted support for vulnerable pupil groups including LAC

3 Specialist

Local Authority EWO Fast Track Prosecution service is in place

Early Help assessments take place. Additional specialist support is sourced including a whole family plan and use of SEND statutory processes

Active collaboration with multi-agency services and professionals. Becoming the lead practitioner when appropriate.

Where there are out of school barriers access to school support and resources can be accessed

Where there are safeguarding concerns intensive support through statutory children's social care is built into attendance plans

Protocol 5 – Praise and reward systems

We use the epraise reward system at Bruche. Once pupils have obtained points for their hard work and for following our school expectations (To listen, To do as asked, To work well with others and To try as hard as we can) and for being I school and on time we want to reward them. We've got three ways for pupils to spend points in epraise: the shop where they purchase things for themselves; the prize draws page where they can enter a draw for a chance to win; and the charitable donations page where they can donate their points instead.

Protocol 6 – Leave of absence forms

Bruche Primary School

Absence Request Form (to be completed at parent interview)

Appointment date: _____ Appointment time: _____

Child's Name: _____ Class _____

Proposed first date of absence from school _____

Proposed date of return to school _____

Total number of school days absent _____

Destination Country: _____

Area/Region: _____

Name of Hotel/Accommodation: _____

Reason for absence _____

Current attainment: Reading..... Writing..... Maths.....

Progress: Reading..... Writing..... Maths.....

Implications of taking absence:

.....

.....

Signed: _____ Parent/Carer

Current attendance %:

Authorised/Not authorised by Executive Headteacher _____

Date _____ Entered on System _____

APPENDIX 1



WPAT Pupil attendance and planned absence (Appendix to policy).

Definition of “exceptional circumstances” for term time holiday authorisation.

Legislative Framework:

It is a parent’s duty under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, to ensure that their child of “compulsory school age” is to receive “an efficient, full time education”. A child is of compulsory school age from age five. A child should attend school from the start of term commencing on or after his / her fifth birthday. We, at WPAT, encourage good attendance from the day a child joins one of our schools.

Parents of registered pupils have a legal duty under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 to ensure that children of compulsory school age attend school on a regular and fulltime basis. Permitting unauthorised absence from school is an offence and parents may be reported to the Trust, and other authorities, if problems cannot be resolved by agreement with the school.

School policies describe the required levels of attendance and punctuality for good progress to be made at school.

The government expects schools to:

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence.
- Ensure that every child has access to full time education to which they are entitled; and,
- Act early to address patterns of absence.

The government also expects:

- Parents to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age, who are registered at school, attend regularly.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendments) Regulations 2013 have amended Regulation 7 of the 2006 regulations to prohibit the Headteacher of a school from granting leave of absence to a pupil except where an application has been made in advance and the Headteacher considers that there are exceptional circumstances relating the request. WPAT and its Headteachers believe it is necessary to define what we consider to be “exceptional circumstances” to give further structure to the decision to decline authorisation of absence.

WPAT have four permitted areas of “exceptional circumstance”:

1. The death or terminal illness of an immediate family member, where immediate

is defined as the parents / carers and siblings of the child in school.

2. Absence recommended by a health professional.
3. Religious observance.
4. Allowances made for the families of service personnel on active duty.

In addition, we apply a further “threshold test” to the fundamental definition of “exceptional”. We believe that the circumstances must be, rare, significant, and unavoidable to qualify.

Where the Headteacher is satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances to warrant the request for leave of absence but has additional concerns about the timing of the absence, or the pupil’s attendance record, they may request a meeting with the parent / carer; the absence may not be authorised without attendance at this meeting.

If you require any further information or clarification, please refer your request to the school Headteacher via the school office.

APPENDIX 2:

This policy is guided by Warrington Borough Council and Department for Education guidance and best practice

The policy has been written with due regard to the following:

DfE Guidance Documents

- Working together to improve school attendance Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities - Published Sept 2022
- Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities – Published September 2022

Legislation

- Section 175 of the Education Act 2002
- Section 7 and 444 of the Education Act 1996
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendments) Regulations 2013
- The Equality Act 2010
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 (KCSIE)

Reading References & Research

- <http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/behaviour/attendance>
- <http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/guidanceandadvice/f00221879/advice-on-school-attendance>
- <https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence/overview>

APPENDIX 3:

ATTENDANCE CODING

The national codes enable schools to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with the regulations. They are also used for collecting statistics through the School Census System. The data helps schools, local authorities and the Government to gain a greater understanding of the level of, and the reasons for, absence. The codes are:

Present at school

Pupils must not be marked present if they were not in school during registration. If a pupil were to leave the school premises after registration they would still be counted as present for statistical purposes.

- **Registration code / \: Present in school / = am \ = pm**
Present in school during registration.
- **Code L: Late arrival before the register has closed**

Schools should have a policy on how long registers should be kept open; this should be for a reasonable length of time but not that registers are to be kept open for the whole session. A pupil arriving after the register has closed should be marked absent with code U, or with another absence code if that is more appropriate.

Present at an approved off-site educational activity

An approved educational activity is where a pupil is taking part in supervised educational activity such as field trips, educational visits, work experience or alternative provision.

Pupils can only be recorded as receiving off-site educational activity if the activity meets the requirements prescribed in regulation 6(4) of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. The activity must be of an educational nature approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school. The activity must take place during the session for which the mark is recorded.

Attendance codes for when pupils are present at approved off-site educational activity are as follows:

Code B: off-site educational activity

This code should be used when pupils are present at an off-site educational activity that has been approved by the school. Ultimately schools are responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils educated off-site. Therefore by using code B, schools are certifying that the education is supervised and measures have been taken to safeguard pupils. This code should not be used for any unsupervised educational activity or where a pupil is at home doing school work. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the alternative activity notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils. The school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

Code D: dual registered - at another educational establishment

This code is not counted as a possible attendance in the School Census. The law allows for dual registration of pupils at more than one school. This code is used to indicate that the pupil was not expected to attend the session in question because they were scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered.

The main examples of dual registration are pupils who are attending a pupil referral unit, a hospital school or a special school on a temporary basis. It can also be used when the pupil is known to be registered at another school during the session in question.

Each school should only record the pupil's attendance and absence for those sessions that the pupil is scheduled to attend their school. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby all unexplained and unexpected absence is followed up in a timely manner.

Code J: at an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment

This code should be used to record time spent in interviews with prospective employers or another educational establishment. Schools should be satisfied that the interview is

linked to employment prospects, further education or transfer to another educational establishment.

Code P: participating in a supervised sporting activity

This code should be used to record the sessions when a pupil is taking part in a sporting activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school.

Code V: educational visit or trip

This code should be used for attendance at an organised trip or visit, including residential trips organised by the school, or attendance at a supervised trip of a strictly educational nature arranged by an organisation approved by the school.

Code W: work experience

Work experience is for pupils in the final two years of compulsory education. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the work experience

placement provider notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils. Any absence should be recorded using the relevant code.

Authorised absence from school

Authorised absence' means that the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence.

Absence codes when pupils are not present in school are as follows:

Code C: leave of absence authorised by the school

Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. Schools should consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Code E: excluded but no alternative provision made

If no alternative provision is made for a pupil to continue their education whilst they are excluded but still on the admission register, they should be marked absent in the attendance register using Code E. Alternative provision must be arranged for each excluded pupil from the sixth consecutive day of any fixed period or permanent exclusion. Where alternative provision is made they should be marked using the appropriate attendance code.

Code H: holiday authorised by the school

Head teachers should not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. The application must be made in advance and the head teacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case which warrant the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the head teacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the head teacher's discretion.

Code I: illness (not medical or dental appointments)

Schools should advise parents to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness. Schools should authorise absences due to illness unless they have genuine cause for concern about the veracity of an illness. If the authenticity of illness is in doubt, schools can request parents to provide medical evidence to support illness.

Schools can record the absence as unauthorised if not satisfied of the authenticity of the illness but should advise parents of their intention. Schools are advised not to request medical evidence unnecessarily. Medical evidence can take the form of prescriptions, appointment cards, etc. rather than doctors' notes.

Code M: medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence. Schools should, however, encourage parents to make appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.

Code R: religious observance

Schools must treat absence as authorised when it is due to religious observance. The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong. Where necessary, schools should seek advice from the parents' religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance.

Code S: study leave

Schools must record study leave as authorised absence. Study leave should be used sparingly and only granted to Year 11 pupils during public examinations. Provision should still be made available for those pupils who want to continue to come into school to revise.

Code T: Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence

A number of different groups are covered by the generic term Traveller – Roma, English and

Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers.

This code should be used when Traveller families are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision. It should not be used for any other types of absence by these groups.

To help ensure continuity of education for Traveller children it is expected that the child should attend school elsewhere when their family is travelling and be dual registered at that school and the main school. Children from these groups whose families do not travel are expected to register at a school and attend as normal. They are subject to the same rules as other children in terms of the requirement to attend school regularly once registered at a school.

Unauthorised absence from school

Unauthorised absence is where a school is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence. Absence codes are as follows:

Code G: holiday not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the head teacher.

If a school does not authorise a leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday but the parents still take the child out of school, or the child is kept away for longer than was agreed, the absence is unauthorised. The regulations do not allow schools to give retrospective approval. If the parents did not apply for leave of absence in advance, the absence must be recorded as unauthorised.

Code N: reason for absence not yet provided

Schools should follow up all unexplained and unexpected absences in a timely manner. Every effort should be made to establish the reason for a pupil's absence. When the reason for the pupil's absence has been established the register should be amended.

This code should not be left on a pupil's attendance record indefinitely; if no reason for absence is provided after a reasonable amount of time it should be replaced with code O (absent from school without authorisation).

Code O: absent from school without authorisation

If the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence they should record it as unauthorised.

Code U: arrived in school after registration closed

Schools should actively discourage late arrival, be alert to patterns of late arrival and seek an explanation from the parent.

Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)

For the school year 2021 to 2022, a new category was added to record instances when a pupil is 'not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)'. See [this addendum](#) for further information, including advice on the application of Code X.

***Code X: not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)**

(This code is not counted as an absence in the school census)

This code was used to record sessions where the pupil's travel to or presence at school would conflict with:

- guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) from the United Kingdom Health and Safety Agency (UKHSA) or the Department of Health and Social Care¹²
- any legislation (or instruments such as statutory directions) relating to the incidence or transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19)

***In line with our transition to living with COVID-19 and the latest public health advice, we are no longer advising schools to record pupils who are not attending school because of COVID-19 using Code X (not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus).**

Where a pupil is not attending because they have symptoms of COVID-19 or have had a positive test schools should record this using Code I (illness) unless another more appropriate code applies. Schools no longer need to record pupils who do not attend for reasons related to COVID-19, using Code X.

Schools should also continue to use code X to record when a pupil not of compulsory school age is not expected to attend as detailed below.

Administrative codes

The following codes are not counted as a possible attendance in the School Census.

Code X: not required to be in school

This code is used to record sessions that non-compulsory school age children are not expected to attend.

Code Y: unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

This code can be used where a pupil is unable to attend because:

- the school site, or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause
- the transport provided by the school or a local authority is not available and where the pupil's home is not within walking distance
- a local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the pupil from attending school

This code can also be used where a pupil is unable to attend because:

- The pupil is in custody; detained for a period of less than four months. If the school has evidence from the place of custody that the pupil is attending educational activities then they can record those sessions as code B (present at approved educational activity)

This code is collected in the School Census for statistical purposes.

Code Z: pupil not on admission register

This code is available to enable schools to set up registers in advance of pupils joining the school to ease administration burdens. Schools must put pupils on the admission register from the first day that the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school.

Code #: planned whole or partial school closure

This code should be used for whole or partial school closures that are known or planned in advance such as: between terms; half terms; occasional days (for example, bank holidays); weekends (where it is required by the management information system); up to five non-educational days to be used for curriculum planning/training; and use of schools as polling stations.

Different term dates for different pupils

Schools and local authorities can agree to set different term dates for different year groups – e.g. for 'staggered starts' or 'induction days'. Code # can be used to record the year group(s) that is not due to attend. This is only acceptable where the school ensures that those pupils not attending on that day are still offered a full education over the

school year.