



ATTENDANCE POLICY

'This policy will be implemented in a way which honours the vision that every FCJ school is a community of persons - students, staff, governors - bound together in mutual respect and ready to rely on each other in fulfilling their privileged task as educators in a Catholic school.'

1. Aims and Scope

In accordance with our Mission Statement and as part of the FCJ family and as a Catholic school community, we have in place a whole school policy which seeks to promote the maximum attendance of all pupils at Upton Hall School. This policy document provides the basis for good practice within the school for monitoring and facilitating good attendance and punctuality.

At Upton Hall, we firmly believe that for a pupil to reach her full educational achievement, a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards our target of at least 97% attendance for all pupils, which equates to just over five days' absence per year and is achievable for the vast majority of pupils. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents/carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.

Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly, on time. 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.

The Department for Education (DfE) has produced statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities called "[Working together to improve school attendance](#)" and it includes a National Framework in relation to absence and the use of legal sanctions. This policy reflects the requirements and principles of that guidance.

This policy is written with the above guidance in mind and underpins our school ethos to:

- promote children's welfare and safeguarding
- ensure every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- ensure that pupils succeed whilst at school
- ensure that pupils have access to the widest possible range of opportunities at school, and when they leave school.

It seeks to ensure that all parties involved in the practicalities of school attendance are aware and informed of attendance matters in school and to outline the school's commitment to attendance matters. It details the responsibilities of individuals and groups involved and the procedures in place to promote and monitor pupil attendance.

In addition, all schools follow the DfE's statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024](#), which emphasises the importance of understanding the potential vulnerabilities of children who are missing or absent from education.

Our policy aims to raise and maintain levels of attendance by:

- Promoting a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure and valued.
- Raising and maintaining a whole school awareness of the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- Ensuring that attendance is monitored effectively and reasons for absences are recorded promptly and

consistently.

2. Promoting Regular School Attendance

The need for regular school attendance is given a high priority by all Wirral schools.

The Supreme Court ruled in April 2017 (Platt v Isle of Wight) that regular attendance is 'in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school'. In Wirral Schools, this is interpreted as every day that the school requires a child to attend, unless the absence has been approved by the Headteacher.

At Upton Hall, we believe in developing good patterns of attendance and set high expectations for the attendance and punctuality for all our pupils from the outset. It is a central part of our school's vision, values, ethos and day to day life. We recognise the strong connections between attendance, attainment, safeguarding and wellbeing.

The name and contact details of the Senior Attendance Champion (the senior leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in our school) is Mr P Jones.

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is the responsibility of parents, pupils and all members of school staff.

To help us all to focus on this, we will:

- Submit a daily attendance return to the Department of Education, in line with the legal expectations placed on all schools.
- Share attendance information with the Local Authority.
- Build strong relationships and work jointly with families.
- Give parents/carers details on attendance in our newsletters.
- Promote the benefits of high attendance.
- Accurately complete admission and attendance registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence as required by law.
- Celebrate excellent attendance by displaying and reporting individual and class achievements.
- Reward good or improving attendance.
- Report to parents/carers regularly on their daughter's attendance and the impact on her progress.
- Contact parents/carers should their daughter's attendance fall below the school's target for attendance.

Unsurprisingly, children who are absent from school or who are persistently late, can soon fall behind with their learning. Research conducted by the Department for Education (2016) confirmed that, as the level of overall pupil absence increases, the likelihood of pupils achieving what they are capable of decreases.

Parents of children of compulsory school age are, by law, required to ensure that their children receive a suitable education through regular attendance at school or otherwise.

3. Definition of 'Parent'

For the purposes of this policy and other education related issues, a parent is as defined under Section 576 of the Education Act 1996:

- all natural parents, whether they are married or not;
- any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility (as defined in the Children Act 1989) for a child or young person;
- any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person.

Having care of a child or young person means that a person with whom the child lives and who looks after the child, irrespective of their relationship with the child, is considered to be a parent in education law.

4. Links with Safeguarding/Education Neglect

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Safeguarding and promoting the

welfare of children is defined as: protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Schools have a key role in ensuring children and young people are kept safe. School staff are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, and prevent concerns from escalating.

Every school has a designated safeguarding lead who will provide support to staff members to carry out their safeguarding duties and can liaise closely with other services such as children's social care and early help services. Upton Hall's Designated Safeguarding Lead is Mr P Jones.

Schools should be alert to unauthorised absence as being a potential indicator of educational or wider neglect. Neglect is the most common reason for a child to be the subject of a Child Protection Plan in the UK. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 identifies neglect as: 'The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.'

If required, the school would look to instigate Early Help or SEND Support via the Local Authority.

5. Attendance and the Law

This policy meets the requirements of the most recent [school attendance guidance](#) (2024) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#).

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

New legislation has recently been passed. The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 introduced a National Framework in England. By law all children of compulsory school age must receive an appropriate full-time education (Education Act 1996). Parents have a legal duty to ensure their child attends school regularly at the school at which they are registered.

Parents may be recognised differently under education law, than under family law. Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 states that a 'parent', in relation to a child or young person, includes any person who is not a parent (from which can be inferred 'biological parent') but who has parental responsibility, or who has care of the child. A person typically has care of a child or young person if they are the person with whom the child lives, either full or part time and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their biological or legal relationship is with the child.

The Local Authority has a range of legal powers to promote and enforce regular school attendance:

- Penalty Notices (Section 444A Education Act 1996)
- Prosecution of Parents / Carers in Magistrates' Court (Section 444 (1) / Section 444(1A) Education Act 1996)
- Application to the Family Court for an Education Supervision Order in respect of the child (Children Act 1989)
- School Attendance Order (Section 437 Education Act 1996)
- Parenting Order (Section 8 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998)

Each case is considered on an individual basis, but the circumstances in which a Penalty Notice for non-attendance may be issued by the Local Authority include:

- Unauthorised absence from school
- Unauthorised leave of absence during term time
- Unwarranted delayed return from authorised leave of absence, e.g., in excess of the agreed number of days
- Persistent late arrival at school after the register has closed.

5.1 National Framework for Penalty Notices

There is now a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England, of 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period. The 10 sessions of absence do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of

unauthorised absence (G, O and/or U coded within the school's registers). The 10-school week period can span different terms, school years or education settings.

Sanctions may include issuing each parent (for each child) with a Penalty Notice for £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days (for the first offence). A second Penalty Notice issued within a three-year period will result in a fine of £160 per parent, per child. If a third offence is committed the matter may be referred to the Local Authority for consideration of prosecution via the Magistrates Court. If prosecution is instigated for irregular school attendance, each parent may receive a fine of up to £2500 and/or up to 3 months in prison. If a parent is found guilty in court, they will receive a criminal conviction. Parents may also be subject to an Attendance Order or Education Supervision Order.

There is no entitlement in law for pupils to take time off during the term to go on holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure or recreation, or to take part in protest activity in school hours. In addition, the Supreme Court has ruled that the definition of regular school attendance is "in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school."

The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 set out the statutory requirements for schools. All references to family holidays and extended leave have been removed. The amendments specify that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are "exceptional circumstances" and they do not have any discretion to unauthorised up to ten days of absence each academic year.

It is a rule of Upton Hall School that a leave of absence shall not be granted in term time unless there are reasons considered to be exceptional by the Headmistress, irrespective of the child's overall attendance. Only the Headmistress may authorise such a request and all applications for a leave of absence must be made in writing, in advance, on the prescribed form provided by the school. Where a parent removes a child after their application for leave was refused or where no application was made to the school, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. It is likely that penalty notices will be requested, in line with the National Framework in respect of each parent believed to be involved in the absence.

The Local Authority retains any revenue from the Education Penalty Notices to cover enforcement costs.

Non-payment of an Education Penalty Notice will result in the withdrawal of the Notice and would normally trigger prosecution proceedings at Magistrates Court under Section 444 Education Act 1996. There is no right of appeal by parents/carers against an Education Penalty Notice.

6. Deletion from Roll

For any pupil leaving Upton Hall School other than at the end of Year 11, parents/carers are required to notify the school in writing. This provides the school with the following information: Child's name, form, current address, date of leaving, new home address, name of new school, address of new school. This information is essential to ensure that we know the whereabouts and may appropriately safeguard all our pupils, even those who leave us.

It is crucial that parents keep school updated with current addresses and contact details for the pupil and key family members, in case of emergency.

Under Pupil Regulations 2006, all schools are now legally required to notify their Local Authority of every new entry to the admission register within five days of the pupil being enrolled. In addition to this, every deletion from the school register must also be notified to the Local Authority, as soon as the ground for deletion has been met in relation to that pupil, and in any event no later than the time at which the pupil's name is deleted from the register. This duty does not apply when a pupil's name is removed from the admission register at a standard transition point – when the pupil has completed the final year of education normally provided by that school.

Schools can only lawfully remove a child from their school roll under certain circumstances in accordance with Government Regulations. Schools are required to inform the Local Authority of the details of all children who are removed from roll at non-standard transition times.

7. Elective Home Education

One of the grounds under which a child can lawfully be removed from a school roll is if a parent notifies the Headmistress in writing that they are withdrawing their child from school to take full responsibility for provision of the child's education. The school must notify the Local Authority, as the Authority will then have responsibility for assessing the suitability of education that is being provided for the child. The Authority must first consent to elective home education when a child has special educational needs and is placed in specialist provision.

Schools and the Authority respect that it is a parental right to pursue elective home education. It is, however, important that when parents opt to home educate, this is a positive choice and in the best interests of the child, rather than the option of last resort. Parents should be aware that elective home education is not a route to obtaining a place in a school of their choice which may have previously been declined, or a way of accessing alternative provision.

8. Recording Attendance

8.1 Attendance Register

We will keep an attendance register and place all pupils on to this register. Registers are a legal document and as such are to be completed as set out in this policy, using the codes established by the DfE (Appendix 1). This system will be used to identify patterns of irregular attendance.

We will take our attendance register at the start of each lesson. It will show 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

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

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.30am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.40am and will be kept open until 9.10am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1.50pm and will be kept open until 1.55pm.

8.2 Types of Absence

Any absence affects the routine of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning journey and ability to progress. Any pupil's absence or late arrival disrupts teaching routines and so may affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parental responsibility and allowing absence from school, without a good reason, creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

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

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.30am or as soon as practically possible.

Parents/carers who are reporting that their daughter is absent should either call the absence line 0151 641 8133 or email the attendance email address: attendance@uptonhall.org, or for Sixth Form absences email sixthform@uptonhall.org. Parents/carers should always include their daughter's first and last name and form group when reporting an absence. Parents/carers should not report the same absence in multiple ways.

Parents/carers should not use the UHS email address, the year group email address (except for Sixth Form) or email the Heads of Year, Form or Class Teachers to report absence.

Authorised absences are morning or afternoon sessions away from school for a genuine reason such as illness (although you may be asked to provide medical evidence for your child before this can be authorised), medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been granted. This type of absence can lead to the school referring to the Local Authority for penalty notices and/or legal proceedings.

Unauthorised absence includes, (however this list is not exhaustive):

- parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily e.g. because they had a late night or for non-infectious illness or injury that would not affect their ability to learn.
- absences which have never been properly explained.
- children who arrive at school after the close of registration are marked using a 'U'. This indicates that they are in school for safeguarding purposes, however is counted as an absence for the session.
- shopping trips.
- looking after other children or children accompanying siblings or parents to medical appointments.
- their own or family birthdays.
- holidays taken during term time, not deemed 'for exceptional purposes' by the Headmistress, including any arranged by other family members or friends.
- day trips.
- other leave of absence in term time which has not been agreed.

When a pupil is unwell, the exact nature of the illness needs to be given to school. A report of a pupil being "unwell" will result in the absence being unauthorised. If a pupil is unwell, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carers to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. A medical certificate is required for absence of 5 days or more, as stipulated by the DfE.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

8.3 Medical Evidence

The most common reason for children being persistently absent from school is illness. When pupils are having repeat absences due to reported illness, schools may need more evidence and advice to help decide whether the absence should be authorised, and to see whether any additional support is required. Children can be reluctant to attend school from time to time, or there may be other issues affecting attendance. It is never advisable for parents to 'cover' for their absence or to give-in to pressure to excuse them from attending. Covering up gives the impression that attendance does not matter, and usually makes things worse. It is always better to get in touch with school, to share concerns, and to plan a way forward.

Schools can accept the following as medical evidence:

- GP certificate
- Letter from health professional
- Appointment card / letter (dated)
- Prescription / Medication in the name of the child
- Text message from GP or NHS confirming an appointment
- Care of the chemist – date stamped slip to show medical advice has been sought

Please remember that parents and carers are encouraged to contact school at an early point should they have any concerns that are impacting on their child's school attendance.

We acknowledge that children are at a higher risk of missing school if they have issues around their emotional wellbeing and mental health. This can then lead to further problems in terms of children falling behind with work, and of feelings of social isolation. It is particularly important in these circumstances that parents / carers work

together with school to ensure that appropriate help and support is offered to respond to concerns as they arise. Early Help means taking action to support a child, young person, or/and their family as soon as a problem emerges. School may also seek advice about sources of help and support from the Authority's Vulnerable Children's Panel in cases where concerns about a child's unauthorised absence are ongoing. Parents may also wish to use Family Toolbox <https://familytoolbox.co.uk/> to identify possible sources of support or encourage their child to access Zillo <https://www.zillowirral.co.uk/>.

8.4 Planned Absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be authorised if the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment, however this does affect the pupil's attendance percentage.

Parents/carers should send planned absences for medical appointments or requests for leave of absence to attendance@uptonhall.org or sixthform@uptonhall.org. Please attach the appointment letter or text where possible. Alternatively, appointment letters or notes from home for Year 7-11 should be brought to Mrs MacMaster for authorisation, or Miss Baguley, Miss Butterworth or Miss Griffiths for Sixth Form.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Please see Section 12 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

8.5 Pupils on Part-Time Timetables

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. There may, however, be exceptional circumstances where a part-time timetable is needed as a time-limited intervention to respond to a child's individual needs. This must always be in agreement with the child's parent(s)/carer(s). Schools are required to submit information about such arrangements to Wirral Attendance Service.

Examples of when a part-time timetable may be considered are:

- Medical issue
- Emotional/Mental Health
- Family issue
- Re-integration programme following absence
- SEND – identified/awaiting specialist placement
- SEND – unidentified/undiagnosed needs

8.6 Punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using code L. This does not contribute towards a pupil's attendance percentage.
- After the register has closed will be marked using code U. A pupil marked as U is classed as an absence for the entire session and affects a pupil's attendance percentage.

When a pupil is late twice in one week without a satisfactory reason, they will automatically be placed on Punctuality Detention the following week. Persistent lateness will be referred to the LA Attendance Team. If a pupil persistently arrives after registration has closed, the LA Attendance Team may take action against parents/carers and a fixed penalty notice may be issued.

If a pupil arrives to school late, then she **must** sign in using the InVentry touch screen in main reception.

8.7 Following Up Absence

Each morning, the Attendance Officer will email a summary of all absence to Heads of Year. Heads of Year will take appropriate action, such as asking the pupil's Form Tutor to call home.

Each week on Friday, the Attendance Officer will email attendance data for the week to all school staff. On Monday each week during Lesson 1, it is responsibility of the Form Tutor to resolve any discrepancies and follow up any missing absence notes in their form.

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

- Follow up on their absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason, by phone call or email.
- Ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary (such as conducting a welfare visit).
- Identify whether the absence is authorised.
- Identify the correct attendance code to use, as per statutory guidance from the DfE.
- Work with the LA Attendance Team who may take legal action.

The school will analyse attendance data on a weekly, monthly, termly and annual basis, comparing to other schools in the Local Authority and Nationally. Attendance data is shared with the Department for Education twice per day as per [Section 537A of Education Act 1996 \(as amended\)](#) and [Education \(Information About Individual Pupils\) \(England\) Regulations 2013](#) (as amended, including by the Education (Information About Individual Pupils) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024).

8.8 Reporting to Parents

Parents/carers will be notified of their daughter's attendance percentage at the end of each term by email, and when they receive progress sheets and an annual report. They may also track their daughter's attendance using the SIMS Parent App which displays a pupil's termly attendance figure. Parents/carers will be notified if their daughter is absent from school and no reason has been given, in a timely manner.

9. Roles and Responsibilities

9.1 Board of Governors

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the Headmistress to account for the implementation of this policy and ensures that staff receive attendance training.

9.2 Headmistress

The Headmistress is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school.
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.
- Reviewing pupil leave of absence requests and deciding whether there are exceptional circumstances.
- Making decisions about fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

9.3 Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral Care and Safeguarding)

The Assistant Headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school.
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to the Headmistress and governors.
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils.
- Works with the Local Authority (LA) Attendance Team to tackle persistent absence through Targeted Support Meetings (TSMs).

9.4 Attendance Officer

- Monitors attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level.
- Reports concerns about attendance to the Assistant Headteacher.
- Reviews the absence line each morning and codes absence appropriately.
- Sends truancy alerts and unexplained absence notifications out via text and email in a timely manner each

morning and afternoon as part of the school's safeguarding procedures.

- Notifies the Designated Safeguarding Lead of any vulnerable pupils who are absent.

9.5 Head of Year

- Monitors attendance data across a year group and at an individual pupil level.
- Reports concerns about attendance to the Assistant Headteacher.
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues.

9.6 Form Tutor

- Monitors attendance data across a form group and at an individual pupil level.
- Reports concerns about attendance to the relevant Head of Year.
- Discusses attendance with pupils in their form, and actively seeks ways to improve attendance and punctuality.
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues.
- Create attendance support plans that support pupils in getting to school in a prompt and timely manner.

9.7 Subject Teacher

- Recording attendance daily, using the correct codes.
- Notifying the Assistant Headteacher and Attendance Officer of any unexplained absences in a timely manner via the school email system.
- Challenge pupils who are late to lessons.

9.8 Support Staff

- Take calls from parents about absence and records this appropriately on the school system.
- Assist in the initial school site search conducted when a pupil's absence is unexplained. Challenge pupils who are late to lessons.
- Ensure that each pupil who is late on two occasions in any given week is placed on Punctuality Detention.

10. Understanding Barriers to Attendance

Whilst any child may occasionally have time off school because they are too unwell to attend, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any barriers preventing regular attendance are best resolved between the school, the parents and the child. If a parent thinks their child is reluctant to attend school, then we will work with that family to understand the root problem and provide any necessary support. We can use outside agencies to help with this, such as the School Nurse, Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing support services, a Child and Family Support Worker or the relevant Local Authority team/s.

Where outside agencies are supporting the family, you may be invited to attend a Team Around the Family meeting (TAF) to consider what is working well and what needs to improve. An individual support plan will be agreed and subsequently reviewed.

Under the DfE's statutory guidance, schools are required to submit a sickness return to the Local Authority for all pupils who have missed/are likely to miss 15 or more school days (consecutive or cumulative) due to medical reasons/illness.

11. Support for Vulnerable Groups

We recognise that some pupils may face additional barriers to regular attendance due to their personal circumstances. Our attendance policy is designed to be inclusive, ensuring that all pupils, particularly those who are vulnerable, receive the support they need to attend school regularly and engage with their education.

11.1 Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Pupils with SEND may require additional adjustments to enable them to maintain high levels of attendance. The school will:

- Work in partnership with parents and carers to develop individualised attendance support plans, ensuring that SEND needs are met.

- Ensure the provision outlined in a pupil's Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) is fully accessed and reviewed in relation to attendance.
- Implement reasonable adjustments, including:
 - Part-time timetabling or phased returns if necessary.
 - Additional pastoral or specialist support.
 - Adjustments to uniform, transport, or routines to remove attendance barriers.
 - Liaise with external agencies, such as Educational Psychologists, the Local Authority SEND team, and health professionals, to ensure coordinated support.

11.2 Pupils with Long-Term Medical or Mental Health Needs

Pupils with chronic illnesses or mental health conditions may struggle with attendance due to health-related barriers. The school will:

- Monitor attendance patterns and intervene early if a medical issue is affecting regular attendance.
- Work with parents, healthcare professionals, and local authority services to ensure appropriate educational support is in place.
- Consider phased returns or part time timetables where needed, ensuring pupils continue to engage with learning.
- Submit Sickness Returns to the Local Authority if a pupil is expected to miss 15+ days (consecutive or cumulative) due to medical reasons, in line with statutory requirements.
- Refer to school nurses, mental health support teams (CAMHS), or other relevant services where attendance is affected by anxiety, trauma, or other mental health issues.

11.3 Pupils with a Social Worker or Children Looked After (CLA)

Children with a social worker, including those on Child Protection Plans (CPP), Child in Need Plans (CIN), or Looked After Children (CLA), require additional monitoring to ensure safeguarding and engagement with education. The school will:

- Notify a pupil's social worker immediately if there are any unexplained absences.
- Work with the Virtual School Head (VSH) to monitor and improve attendance for Looked After Children.
- Ensure these pupils have a key adult in school to provide pastoral support and promote school engagement.
- In cases of persistent or severe absence, work closely with social care professionals to identify and remove barriers to attendance.

11.4 Pupils from Disadvantaged Backgrounds

We acknowledge that pupils from low-income families may face additional challenges in maintaining attendance. The school will:

- Use Pupil Premium funding to support attendance initiatives, such as:
 - Breakfast clubs, uniform support, or travel assistance where needed.
 - Additional mentoring or tutoring for pupils at risk of disengagement.
- Regularly track attendance trends among disadvantaged pupils and intervene where necessary.
 - Work with parents and carers to understand any financial or social barriers to attendance and provide early help where possible.

11.5 Young Carers

Young carers may have responsibilities at home that impact their attendance. The school will:

- Identify pupils with caring responsibilities and provide early pastoral support.
- Liaise with local Young Carer support services (Barnado's) to ensure additional help is available.
- Offer flexibility in attendance monitoring, recognising the impact of caring duties on punctuality and engagement.

12. Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

12.1 Approval for Term-Time Absence

The Headmistress will only grant leave of absence under exceptional circumstances. Applications must be submitted in advance, and the Headmistress will assess whether the circumstances are truly exceptional based on the details and context of each case. If leave is approved, the Headmistress will decide how many days the pupil may be absent from school. Approval is solely at the Headmistress's discretion, with a maximum of 10 days of authorised absence

allowed per school year. Each request for term-time absence is considered individually, considering the specific details and context of the request, as well as the potential impact on the pupil’s academic progress, especially during formal examination periods. Leave will only be authorised if it is rare, brief, unavoidable, and of significant importance.

Only the school is empowered to authorise absence and where permission is not granted the absence will be regarded as unauthorised and a record of this will be kept on the pupil's school record. Where a pupil is absent without permission having been requested from the Headmistress in writing, the absence must be recorded as unauthorised.

Examples of exceptional circumstances where leave may be granted during term time include:

- Funeral of parent, grandparent or sibling – the Headmistress will use her discretion having heard from parents about travel and funeral arrangements and considering the distance to be travelled.
- Sudden loss of housing through eviction or domestic violence - up to a maximum of 3 days.
- Serious illness of a close relative – only if the Headmistress is satisfied that the circumstances are truly exceptional.
- Religious observance – The Education Act 1996 S444(3) (c), states “on any day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which his/her parent belongs”.
- Weddings of parents and siblings – weddings can be arranged at weekends or during school holidays; however, we acknowledge that there are times when the dates are dependent on other factors, such as the needs of the couple getting married. Leave will only be authorised for this purpose when the Headmistress is satisfied that there is a valid reason for holding the wedding during term time. In difficult family situations the Headmistress may use her discretion in granting leave, for example where natural parents are separated, and in new relationships and it may cause a child further difficulties if she is excluded from a wedding.

Examples of circumstances NOT considered as exceptional:

- Holidays abroad for the purpose of visiting a sick relative, except where that person is terminally ill. Medical evidence may be requested.
- Pilgrimages by parents. These are rare but can result in children being away from school for significant periods of time.
- Holidays take in term time due to lower cost/parental work commitment.

12.2 Attendance Review Framework

A structured and proactive approach to attendance monitoring is essential to ensuring all pupils receive the full-time education to which they are entitled. The Attendance Review Framework provides a clear process for regularly evaluating attendance data, identifying trends and implementing targeted interventions. This framework enables senior leaders, form tutors, pastoral teams and external partners to work collaboratively in reducing persistent and severe absence, supporting vulnerable pupils and fostering a school-wide culture of high attendance.

There are four levels, which are summarised in a diagram in Appendix C:

Level	Action	Follow-up
Level 1	Attendance falls below 95%.	
	A Level 1 letter explains that a pupil’s attendance is a cause for concern. The letter may outline that the pupil is at risk of becoming a Persistent Absentee (PA) or has already become PA.	Monitored for four weeks and if there is not a satisfactory improvement, move to Level 2.
Level 2	A discussion is held between the pupil and Form Tutor and/or Head of Year. Form Tutor works with the pupil to construct an Attendance Support Plan. Parents are consulted on this plan and a copy provided by email.	Monitored for another four weeks and if there is not a satisfactory improvement, move to Level 3.

Level 3	<p>Parent and pupil panel meeting with relevant staff members.</p> <p>The Attendance Support Plan constructed at Level 2 will be reviewed, updated and agreed during the meeting.</p>	<p>Monitored for another four weeks and if there is not a satisfactory improvement, then a Notice to Improve will be applied for. The LA Attendance Team will monitor attendance for 15 days from the notice and issue an Education Penalty Notice (EPN) for any unauthorised absences within this timeframe.</p> <p>If there continues to be issues, then a Level 4 panel will be organised.</p>
Level 4	<p>A further parent and pupil meeting with the Assistant Headteacher and LA Attendance Officer and/or LA Prosecution Officer to explain the legal action that is being taken.</p> <p>Attendance Support Plan will be reviewed.</p>	<p>Monitor for another four weeks and if there is not a significant improvement, then legal action will be taken.</p>

13.Strategies for Promoting Regular Attendance

At Upton Hall School we ensure a whole school approach to promoting regular attendance by:

- seeking to develop and maintain an atmosphere of welcome, mutual respect and order to encourage maximum attendance.
- delivering clear messages about expectations, routines and consequences to new pupils and families through prospectus and transition events.
- using physical presence to reinforce routines and expectations on arrival and departure.
- regularly communicating expectations for attendance and punctuality and school performance through regular channels of communication with staff, pupils and parents.
- establishing and monitoring implementation of rewards for attendance and punctuality and sanctions for absence and lateness.
- monitor implementation of policy and practice, for example through:
 - form time drop in
 - shadow late gate
- monitor whole school data regularly to identify reasons for absence, patterns, attendance of specific groups and the impact of interventions.
- establish, implement and monitor robust arrangements to identify, report and support children missing education (CME).
- develop robust support for pupils with medical conditions (including the use of individual healthcare plans), mental health problems and special educational needs (SEND).
- engage pupils in consultation on attendance policy, practice, rewards and sanctions.
- ensure that parents fully understand the demands and responsibilities of elective home education.

13.1 Pupils at Risk of Persistent Absence

When pupils are at risk of being classed as persistently absent, we will:

- establish robust escalation procedures which are initiated before absence becomes a problem, for example by:
 - sending letters to parents/carers
 - having a weekly Form Tutor review
 - creating formal attendance support plans
 - engaging with LA Attendance Team
 - using fixed penalty notices
 - engaging with children's social care staff, including virtual school heads and social workers where appropriate
- establish a range of evidence-based interventions to address barriers to attendance.
- monitor the implementation and quality of escalation procedures and intervention strategies.

- evaluate the impact of escalation procedures and seek robust evidence of the escalation procedures that work and that reflect the school context best.
- attend or lead on attendance reviews in line with our school attendance panel.
- engage governors in attendance panels to reinforce messages and outline relevance in terms of training and employment.

13.2 Pupils Who are Persistently Absent

When pupils are persistently absent, we will:

- establish clear and effective service level agreements with external partners to support pupils with persistent absence, including:
 - Local Authority education welfare and attendance services
 - alternative providers
 - youth services
 - school nursing and mental health professionals
 - children's social care staff where appropriate
- establish good relationships with a network of external agencies to support vulnerable pupils including those with persistent absence, for example:
 - mental health charities
 - mentoring organisations
 - young carers support through Barnado's
- engage in or lead on attendance reviews and clinics in line with escalation procedures.

14. Attendance Monitoring

The Attendance Officer at our school monitors pupil absence daily.

A pupil's parent/carer is expected to call the school in the morning by 8.30am if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see Section 8).

If a pupil's absence spans several days, parents/carers should contact the school absence line at the start of each day.

If a pupil's absence continues to rise without a valid reason, we will consider involving the LA Attendance Team at the earliest opportunity.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee. A pupil who has missed 50% or more schooling (95 days) is defined by the Government as 'severely absent'. Pupils within this cohort may find it more difficult to be in school or face bigger barriers to their regular attendance and, as such, are likely to need more intensive support.

Absence data is collected daily by the DfE and Local Authority, allowing for comparison and scrutiny. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national and local average and share this with the Board of Governors.

14.1 Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the Local Authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum on an annual basis by Mr P Jones (Assistant Headteacher). At every review, the policy will be approved by the Board of Governors.

15. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) policy
- Behaviour for learning policy

Appendix A: Attendance Codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's [guidance on school attendance](#).

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at

		school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency

Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: In police detention Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes

Absent – unauthorised absence

G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session

Administrative codes

Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
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#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays
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Appendix B: Guidelines for Parents

At Upton Hall, we believe that regular school attendance is crucial for your daughter's success and overall development. We are committed to helping every pupil and Sixth Form student achieve their full potential, and we know that being present at school plays a significant role in this. With 175 non-school days available each year for family time, holidays, shopping, and appointments, we encourage parents to prioritise education and ensure attendance every school day, except in extreme circumstances.

High attendance helps lay a strong foundation for lifelong learning and achievement. For example, missing just one session per week (each school day consists of two sessions) results in 90% attendance. While this might seem reasonable, it equates to 19 days of lost learning in a year and could impact your daughter's performance, possibly lowering her GCSE grades (according to Department for Education research).

We take attendance seriously and work collaboratively with families to support pupils in meeting our attendance target of 97% or higher. Through our SIMS InTouch system, we promptly communicate with parents or carers to seek explanations for absences. It is important to keep the school updated with your current contact details so that you receive these messages, which are also essential for safeguarding purposes. If we do not receive a response, the absence will be marked as unauthorised, and appropriate safeguarding measures will be put in place.

Exceptional Circumstances

Since September 2013, schools are permitted to authorise leave during term time only in exceptional circumstances. Therefore, our Headmistress cannot approve holidays or extended leave during school sessions. These regulations reflect our commitment to your daughter's education, as even brief periods of absence can disrupt her learning journey. Any leave of absence is granted at the Headmistress's discretion, and requests will be considered based on their specific merits and impact on your daughter's education.

Fixed-Penalty Notices and Safeguarding

Upton Hall may issue fixed-penalty notices to parents/carers if a pupil's attendance is deemed unsatisfactory, in accordance with DfE statutory guidance. Additionally, if a pupil's absence is not authorised and reaches 20 days, she may be removed from the school roll. In this situation, re-enrolment would be necessary.

Punctuality

Punctuality is equally important. Arriving on time each day ensures your daughter can fully engage with her learning and set positive habits for the future. Being just 5 minutes late daily can add up to three days of lost education in a year, and arriving half an hour late each day equates to 18 days of missed lessons. We aim to instill in our pupils the importance of punctuality, emphasising that arriving by 8:30am each morning will set the tone for a productive day.

Reporting Unplanned Absences

If your daughter is unwell and unable to attend school, please notify us by 8:30 am on the first day of her absence. You can report absences by calling 0151 641 8133 or emailing attendance@uptonhall.org. For Sixth Form absences, please email sixthform@uptonhall.org. Be sure to include your daughter's full name, form group, and the nature of her illness. Vague reports, such as simply stating she is "unwell," may result in the absence being marked as unauthorised. In cases where your daughter is unwell for five or more days, we will require medical evidence, such as a doctor's note.

Planned Absences

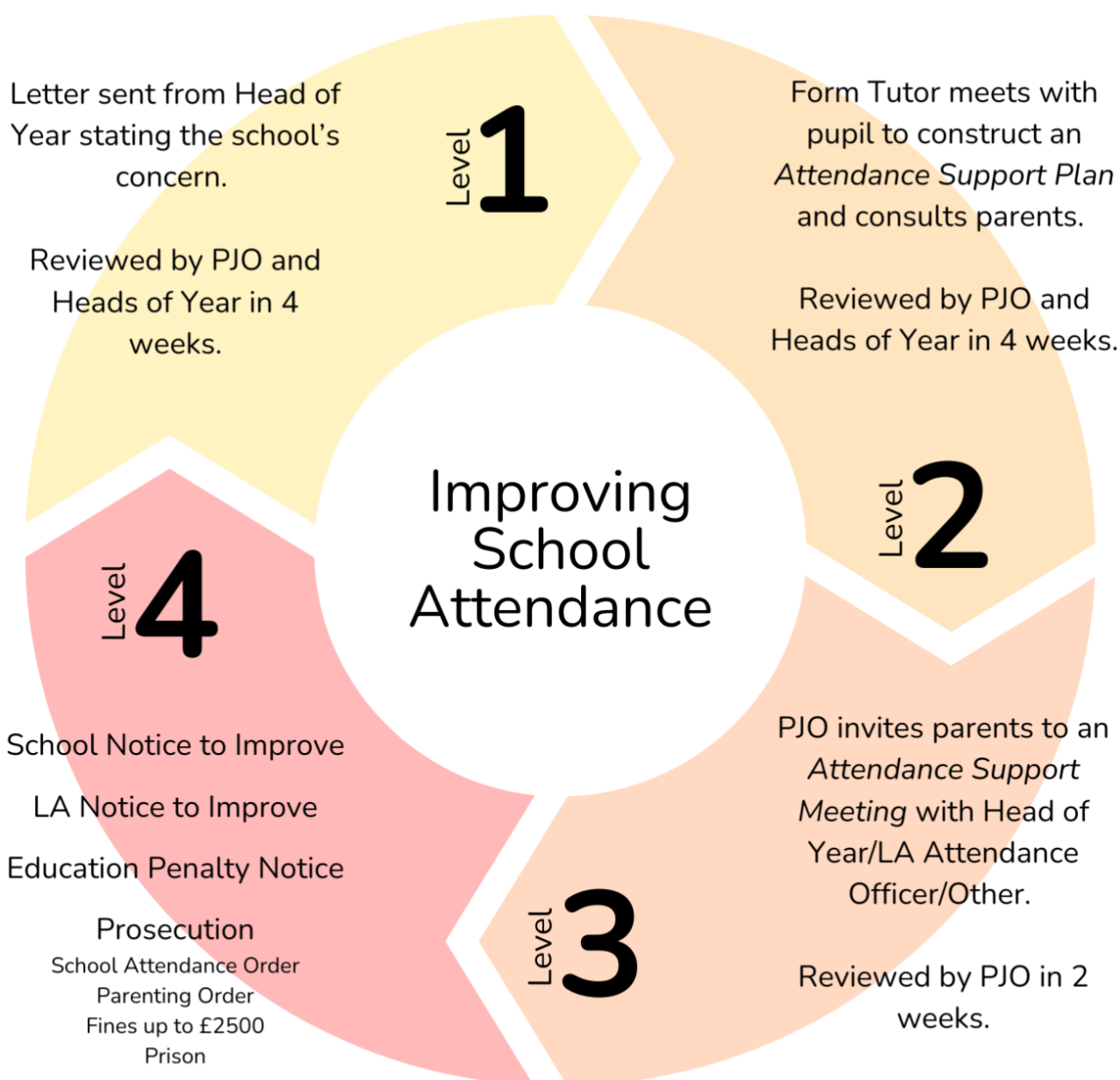
Medical or dental appointments during school hours should be kept to a minimum. Where possible, please schedule these appointments outside of school time. If this is unavoidable, notify us in advance and provide evidence, such as an appointment letter or text confirmation. Planned absences for medical reasons can be submitted to attendance@uptonhall.org, or in person to the relevant staff member. We appreciate your cooperation in helping to minimise disruptions to your daughter's education.

By working together, we can ensure that every pupil at Upton Hall has the best possible chance to thrive academically and personally, supported by the strong values of our Catholic community.



Attendance Review Framework

Support First Strategy



Attendance is managed on a case-by-case basis. Illness with medical evidence plays a significant part in determining whether a case goes beyond Level 2.

The majority of pupils will not go beyond Level 1, however some will progress to Level 2 and beyond. If a pupil goes on holiday for five days or more during a ten-week period, they will automatically be fined £80 per parent per pupil, or £160 if not paid within 21 days. If they go on more than one holiday per year, then it is automatically £160 up to three times before court action. If a pupil is late after 09:10am or have any other unauthorised absences ten times in a ten-week period, then they will also be fined following a Level 2 Attendance Support Plan and Level 3 Attendance Support Meeting.

If you are unsure about how to support a pupil's attendance, please ask your Head of Year or PJO.