



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 has published statutory guidance entitled 'Working together to improve school attendance' (July 2026). The school, its Governing Body and the local authority must have regard to this guidance when carrying out their functions relating to school attendance. This policy reflects the expectations and statutory requirements contained within 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, the school follows the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, which comes into force on 1 September 2026.

This policy should be read alongside:

- *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026*
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026*

- *Children Missing Education*
- *Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions*
- *Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs*
- *Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England*
- *Alternative provision*
- *Providing remote education*
- the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, SEND Policy, Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy, Behaviour Policy and Children Missing Education procedures.

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.

The policy will be applied fairly and consistently. In doing so, the school will consider the individual needs of pupils and families, its duties under the Equality Act 2010, including the Public Sector Equality Duty and the need to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils.

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 school's Senior Attendance Champion (the senior leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in our school) is Mr P Jones. He can be contacted via telephone 0151 677 7696 or email attendance@uptonhall.org

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:

- Share attendance data with the Department for Education through the school's management information system in accordance with the current statutory data-sharing requirements.
- 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. Any recognition of attendance will be used sensitively, without discrimination and will include recognition of improvement. Pupils will not be disadvantaged for absence related to disability, medical needs, religious observance or other circumstances protected by law.
- 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.

National evidence consistently demonstrates an association between regular attendance and stronger educational outcomes. When communicating attendance information, the school will explain the actual amount of education missed and its likely impact rather than relying solely on headline percentages.

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.

The policy will be published on the school website, shared with families when pupils join the school and brought to parents' attention at the beginning of each academic year and whenever it is materially updated. The school will seek the views of pupils and parents when reviewing its attendance arrangements.

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.

For attendance support or legal intervention, the school and local authority will consider which parent or parents it is appropriate to involve. Legal intervention will usually relate to the parent or parents who allowed the absence.

4. Links with Safeguarding/Education Neglect

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

- providing help and support to meet children's needs as soon as problems emerge
- protecting children from maltreatment, whether within or outside the home, including online
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- ensuring children grow up in circumstances consistent with safe and effective care
- 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.

Repeated or prolonged absence, whether authorised or unauthorised, can be a vital warning sign of safeguarding concerns. These may include neglect, child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation, county lines, mental health difficulties, substance misuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, female genital mutilation, honour or faith-based abuse and forced marriage. The school's response to persistently absent pupils will support the early identification of abuse and help prevent pupils becoming children missing education.

If required, the school would look to instigate Early Help/Family Help, in accordance with current Wirral arrangements. Where a referral has been made and the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the school will follow local escalation procedures.

5. Attendance and the Law

This policy has been prepared with regard to:

- the Education Act 1996
- the Education Act 2002
- the Equality Act 2010
- the Children Act 1989
- the Children and Families Act 2014
- the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003
- the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007, as amended
- *Working together to improve school attendance* (July 2026)

- *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026*
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026*

This policy meets the requirements of the most recent [school attendance guidance](#) (2026) 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.

The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 set the statutory requirements for school admission and attendance registers and the national attendance and absence codes. 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.

Depending on the circumstances, support and legal interventions may include:

- voluntary support or a whole-family plan
- an attendance contract
- an Education Supervision Order
- a Notice to Improve
- a penalty notice
- prosecution under section 444(1) or section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996
- a parenting order following conviction
- statutory children's social care intervention where safeguarding concerns exist.

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

The national threshold is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling period of 10 school weeks. A school week is any week in which there is at least one school session. The threshold can be met through any combination of codes G, O and U. Sessions may be consecutive or non-consecutive and the rolling period may span terms, school years or different schools.

Reaching the threshold does not mean that a penalty notice will be issued automatically. The school must consider each case individually, including whether support is appropriate, whether sufficient support has been offered, whether a penalty notice is likely to change parental behaviour and whether there are Equality Act considerations.

Where support is appropriate but has not been successful or has not been engaged with, a Notice to Improve will usually be considered before a penalty notice. A Notice to Improve provides a final opportunity to engage with support and will normally set an improvement period of between three and six weeks. It is not normally necessary where support is inappropriate, such as in the case of an unauthorised term-time holiday.

Sanctions may include:

- first notice: £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days, with a 28-day final payment period
- second notice: £160, payable within 28 days, with no reduction
- a maximum of two notices to the same parent for the same child in three years.

If the threshold is met for a third or subsequent time during that period, another intervention must be considered.

This will often be prosecution but may be another formal legal intervention. An offence under section 444(1) may result in a fine of up to £1,000. The more serious offence under section 444(1A), where a parent knows that the child is failing to attend regularly and fails to ensure that they do so, may result in a fine of up to £2,500, a community order and/or imprisonment for up to three months.

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.

Schools and local authorities have the discretion to request or issue penalty notices even when the usual absence threshold has not been met. The accepted threshold is typically 10 sessions (5 school days). However, schools across Wirral are increasingly seeing parents take shorter term-time holidays during weeks that include a bank holiday or an INSET day in an attempt to avoid reaching the threshold for a fine. The school may apply for an Education Penalty Notice (EPN) if a term-time holiday is taken during a week that includes a bank holiday or INSET day and the Headmistress believe this has been done to avoid a fine. Please ensure that all holidays are planned outside of term time to avoid the risk of a penalty notice.

Penalty-notice income must be ringfenced for the administration of the penalty-notice system and prosecution. Any surplus must be used for attendance support, with any remaining year-end surplus paid to the Secretary of State.

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.

The admission register is governed by the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. A pupil’s name may be removed only when one of the grounds in regulation 9 applies. The pupil must be removed from the admission and attendance registers at the same time. The school will notify the local authority of additions to and deletions from the admission register in accordance with the statutory timescales, including pupils added or removed outside standard transition points. Information required under children missing education (CME) arrangements will also be supplied at standard transition points where applicable.

Where a pupil’s location or circumstances are unknown, the school and local authority will make joint reasonable enquiries before any deletion ground dependent on such enquiries is used.

Where a pupil has been entered on the admission register in error, the school will follow the specific correction procedure in the 2024 Regulations and will not treat the entry as an ordinary deletion from roll.

7. Elective Home Education

Where a parent notifies the school in writing that their child will cease attending in order to receive education otherwise than at school, the school will follow regulation 9 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and notify the local authority. A pupil's name will not be removed if a School Attendance Order naming the school remains in force.

Where a pupil of compulsory school age is registered at a special school under arrangements made by a local authority, the pupil's name cannot normally be deleted without the local authority's consent.

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.

Where a parent expresses an intention to withdraw a pupil for elective home education, the school will, where possible, work with the local authority and other relevant professionals to offer a meeting before the final decision is made. This is particularly important where the pupil has SEND, has a social worker, is persistently or severely absent or is otherwise vulnerable.

This section will be reviewed when the relevant children not in school provisions of the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026 are commenced and further statutory guidance is issued.

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.

The school will take the statutory attendance register at the beginning of each morning session and once during each afternoon session. Each statutory register will be taken at the same time for all registered pupils. Lesson registers may also be taken for safeguarding and internal monitoring purposes.

The school will preserve every entry in the admission and attendance registers for six years from the date on which the entry was made.

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

The morning register will be taken at 8.40am and close at 9.10am. The afternoon register will be taken at 1.50pm and close at 2.20pm.

Because the register records the pupil's status at the time it was taken, it will be amended only where this is necessary, for example when the reason for absence was not known at the time and is subsequently established.

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

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/carers must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.30am or as soon as

practically possible. Where the reason has not been established by the time the register closes, code N will be used temporarily. The correct code must be entered as soon as the reason is established and no later than five school days after the session. If no reason is established within five school days, code O must be entered.

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.

Parents should provide sufficient information about the reason for absence to allow the school to record it accurately. Where the information is unclear, the school will contact the parent for clarification. An absence will not be treated as unauthorised solely because a particular form of words has been used.

A pupil receiving remote education while absent from school must still be recorded as absent using the appropriate attendance code. Remote education will be used only as a last resort, after reasonable adjustments have been considered and as part of a wider plan supporting reintegration.

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.

Parents should contact the school at the earliest opportunity where emotional, medical or other barriers are affecting attendance. The school will listen to the pupil and family, seek to understand the underlying barriers and agree proportionate support. Parents will be expected to work with the school to support regular attendance, but the response will remain individual, supportive and sensitive to the pupil's needs.

In most cases, a parent's notification that their child is too ill to attend will be accepted without medical evidence.

The school may request reasonable evidence where it has genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness or where evidence would help the school understand and support a prolonged or recurring health need. 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.

Where evidence is reasonably required, the school will not be rigid about its form. Evidence may include, but is not limited to, an appointment letter or message, prescription or named medication, hospital correspondence, evidence of contact with a healthcare service, a care plan, confirmation of involvement from a relevant service or other information that reasonably explains the pupil's illness and its effect on attendance. A conversation with the parent and, where appropriate, the pupil may itself provide sufficient information. The school will not routinely require a GP letter or operate a blanket rule requiring medical evidence after a specified number of days.

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. Family Help means taking action to support a child, young person, or/and their family as soon as a problem emerges. 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/carers 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 Mrs Roberts or Miss Griffiths for Sixth Form.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Code M will be used where the school is satisfied that the pupil is attending a genuine medical or dental appointment. The pupil should attend school for as much of the session as reasonably possible.

The pupil's parent/carers 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. For pupils over compulsory school age, including Sixth Form students, leave may be requested or agreed by the pupil or by a parent with whom the pupil normally lives.

8.5 Pupils on Part-Time Timetables

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. A temporary part-time timetable may be used only in very exceptional circumstances, where it is in the pupil's best interests and is necessary to meet their individual needs. It must not be used to manage behaviour or as an informal exclusion.

Examples may include a time-limited phased return following significant physical or mental ill health, where full-time attendance is not presently possible and the arrangement forms part of a plan to restore full-time education.

A part-time timetable must:

- be agreed by the school and the parent with whom the pupil normally lives
- have a clear rationale and form part of a wider support, healthcare or reintegration plan
- specify the sessions the pupil is expected to attend
- have an agreed start date, proposed end date and frequent review dates
- involve the pupil and parents in reviews
- be in place for the shortest time necessary
- identify the education and support available during the arrangement
- be recorded using the correct statutory attendance codes
- be reported to the local authority in accordance with Wirral procedures.

Where the pupil has a social worker or youth offending team worker, they will be kept informed and involved. Where the pupil has an EHC plan, the school will discuss the arrangement with the local authority so that the plan and support package can be reviewed promptly.

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.
- Where a pupil arrives after the register has closed but before the end of the session, code U will be used only where no reason is established or where the reason would not qualify for an authorised absence code. Where another absence code accurately describes the reason, that code will be used.

When a pupil is late twice in one week without a satisfactory reason, they will automatically be placed on Punctuality Detention the following week, however the school will consider disability, SEND, medical needs, transport difficulties and other individual circumstances before imposing a sanction.

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

Where a pupil expected to attend school does not attend, the school will follow up the absence promptly to establish the reason, ensure that the correct attendance code is recorded and identify whether support or safeguarding action is required.

Parents and carers are expected to report absence on each day that their child is unable to attend, unless a longer period has already been agreed with the school. Where no reason has been provided, an unexplained absence text will be sent each day to the InTouch contact(s) held on the school Information Management System.

Day 1 of absence

The Attendance Officer will:

- review unexplained and unexpected absence following morning registration
- contact the pupil's parent or carer where no reason has been provided
- send an unexplained absence notification where appropriate
- establish the reason for absence and the pupil's expected date of return
- flag the absence of any pupil known to be vulnerable to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and other relevant staff
- notify the pupil's social worker promptly where the pupil has a social worker and the absence is unexplained
- notify the Virtual School where required for a child looked after or a pupil subject to a Child Protection Plan
- consider whether a same-day welfare visit or other safeguarding action is necessary.

A home visit may be undertaken on Day 1 where:

- the school cannot establish the pupil's whereabouts
- the pupil is known to be vulnerable
- the absence is unexpected or out of character
- information available to the school indicates a safeguarding concern
- there are concerns that the reported reason for absence may not be accurate
- the school suspects an unauthorised term-time holiday.

The decision to conduct a home visit will be based on the individual circumstances and the school's assessment of risk.

Day 2 and each subsequent day

Where the pupil remains absent, the school will continue to monitor the absence. An unexplained absence notification will be sent each day where the parent or carer has not provided a reason.

Further contact, welfare enquiries or a home visit may take place at any stage where concerns emerge or increase.

Day 3 of absence

Where the pupil remains absent, the Attendance Officer will contact the parent or carer again.

The school will:

- confirm the reason for the continuing absence
- seek an anticipated date of return
- consider whether support or reasonable adjustments are required
- send an email explaining that reasonable evidence may be requested where the school has genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness or where evidence would help the school understand and support a prolonged or recurring health need
- remind the parent of the forms of evidence that may reasonably be provided
- review whether further safeguarding action, professional contact or a home visit is required.

The school will not routinely require a GP letter or apply a blanket requirement for medical evidence solely because the absence has reached three days.

Day 5 of absence

Where the pupil remains absent, the Attendance Officer will contact the parent or carer again and review all information received.

The school will:

- seek further clarification about the reason for absence and the likely date of return
- send a further email where reasonable evidence has previously been requested but has not been provided
- inform the parent where the school is not satisfied that the absence can be authorised and explain the reason for that decision
- consider an Attendance Support Plan, reintegration arrangements or reasonable adjustments
- review whether a sickness return or referral for additional educational provision (Access to Education Referral) may become necessary
- consider further safeguarding action, including a home visit
- liaise with the social worker, Virtual School, local authority or other relevant professionals where appropriate.

An absence will not automatically become unauthorised simply because it has lasted five days. Where the school has genuine and reasonable doubt about the explanation given and reasonable evidence requested has not been provided, the absence may be recorded as unauthorised. The parent or carer will be informed of this decision.

Continuing or prolonged absence

Where absence continues beyond five days, contact and risk assessment will continue at a frequency determined by the pupil's circumstances. The school will not wait for a particular day before taking safeguarding action.

Where a pupil recorded as absent because of illness is expected to miss 15 school days consecutively or cumulatively during the school year, the school will submit a sickness return to the local authority and work with relevant professionals to consider how the pupil's education and return to school will be supported.

Weekly review by Form Tutors

Form Tutors will use the Attendance Dashboard each week to:

- review attendance and punctuality
- explore individual absences and emerging patterns with pupils
- listen to the pupil's views and identify barriers to attendance
- produce Attendance Support Plans where additional support is required
- consult parents or carers and provide them with a copy of the plan
- review plans regularly and update actions
- escalate concerns to the Head of Year, Attendance Officer or Senior Attendance Champion where attendance does not improve.

Any concern identified through absence monitoring will be managed in accordance with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and children missing education procedures.

Monitoring and Actions

The school will:

- monitor weekly patterns at pupil, cohort, year group and whole school level
- identify early indicators before absence becomes persistent
- analyse half-termly, termly and annual data
- examine patterns in particular codes, days and, where relevant, subjects or lessons
- benchmark attendance against local, regional and national data and similar schools
- evaluate the effect of interventions
- report findings to relevant leaders, including the SENDCo, DSL and pupil premium lead
- provide regular reports to the Governing Body.

Statutory Local Authority Returns

The school will make:

- new pupil and deletion returns
- sickness returns where a pupil recorded with code I is expected to miss 15 school days consecutively or cumulatively in the school year.
- Child Missing Education returns
- Part-time timetable returns

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 Body will:

- promote attendance across the school's ethos and policies
- ensure leaders fulfil statutory duties
- review attendance data regularly, including trends for vulnerable cohorts
- challenge leaders on the effectiveness and equality of attendance strategies
- ensure attendance work is appropriately resourced
- ensure staff receive appropriate training
- monitor engagement with the local authority and other partners
- have regard to the attendance of pupils with SEND, long-term health needs, social workers and caring responsibilities.

9.2 Headmistress

The Headmistress is responsible for:

- Ensuring registers are maintained lawfully
- Ensuring the attendance policy is published and updated
- Ensuring attendance resources and staff training are sufficient
- Ensuring no blanket leave or medical-evidence rules are applied.
- 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.
- Deciding whether the school should request a penalty notice, having regard to the individual case, the National Framework and Wirral's Local Code of Conduct.

9.3 Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral Care and Safeguarding) and Senior Attendance Champion

The Assistant Headteacher is responsible for:

- Setting a clear strategic vision for improving and maintaining attendance
- Establishing systems for tackling absence and ensuring they are followed

- Maintaining a strong understanding of attendance data
- Evaluating the efficacy and equality of attendance strategies
- Coordinating work with pupils, families, the local authority and other agencies
- Ensuring attendance is integrated with safeguarding, SEND, disadvantage, mental health and wider inclusion work
- Leading formal attendance meetings where engagement becomes difficult.
- 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 Attendance Team to tackle persistent absence through Targeting Support Meetings (TSMs).
- Leading on staff training in relation to attendance

9.4 Attendance Officer

The Attendance Officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level.
- Reporting concerns about attendance to the Assistant Headteacher.
- Reviewing the absence line each morning and codes absence appropriately.
- Sending 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.
- Notifying the Designated Safeguarding Lead of any vulnerable pupils who are absent.
- Updating code N within five school days
- Completing or supporting statutory returns
- Maintaining evidence of first-day response
- Monitoring pupils in alternative provision and off-site activities
- Checking that providers report absence promptly
- Supporting cross-school penalty notice history checks where required.

9.5 Head of Year

Head of Year is responsible for:

- Monitoring attendance data across a year group and at an individual pupil level.
- Reporting concerns about attendance to the Assistant Headteacher..
- Meeting pupils and parents at risk of persistent or severe absence
- Reviewing interventions regularly
- Escalating safeguarding concerns
- Ensuring pupil voice informs support.

9.6 Form Tutor

Form Tutor is responsible for:

- Monitoring attendance data across a form group and at an individual pupil level.
- Reporting concerns about attendance to the relevant Head of Year.
- Discussing attendance with pupils in their form, and actively seeks ways to improve attendance and punctuality.
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues.
- Contributing to and, where allocated, coordinating Attendance Support Plans in accordance with the school's Attendance Review Framework.

9.7 Subject Teacher

Subject Teacher is responsible for:

- Completing lesson registers promptly and accurately, using only the attendance marks or internal processes they are authorised to use.
- 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

Support Staff are responsible for:

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

10. Understanding Barriers to Attendance

When absence is emerging or becoming problematic, the school will meet the pupil and parents to understand the barriers to attendance. The school will consider the sensitivity of the reasons given and recognise that school should be a place of safety and support. Actions and interventions will be agreed, recorded and reviewed with the pupil and family. 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 0-19 team, 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 engage in Team Around the Family, Early Help or Family Help arrangements, as applicable under current Wirral procedures to consider what is working well and what needs to improve. An individual support plan will be agreed and subsequently reviewed.

Where support from an external service is delayed, the school and its partners will consider interim or alternative support rather than waiting without an active plan.

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

The school will determine which cohorts require particular monitoring based on its population and data. This may include pupils with SEND, pupils with a social worker, looked-after pupils, young carers, pupils eligible for free school meals and groups identified through the Public Sector Equality Duty, including groups defined by ethnicity, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation where applicable.

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.
- communication with the local authority when attendance falls for an EHCP pupil
- review or amendment of the EHC plan where necessary
- adjustments agreed with the pupil and parent and reviewed regularly
- lunchtime arrangements and access to support as possible adjustments.
- Implement reasonable adjustments, including:
 - 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 same attendance ambition applies, but additional support and reasonable adjustments may be required. 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 medical professions, mental health support teams (CYPMHS), 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)

Pupils with a social worker and/or youth offending team worker, children looked after and previously looked-after children, including those subject to Child Protection Plans and Child in Need Plans, 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.
- The social worker and/or youth offending team worker will be informed of unexplained absences. They will also be informed if deletion from the admission register is being considered.

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.
- Assess the impact of pupil premium funding on attendance interventions

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.
- Maintain high aspirations whilst recognising the pupil's circumstances and providing proportionate support and reasonable flexibility where appropriate.

Young carer status will be recorded in the school census. Where it appears that a young carer may need support, or the pupil or parent requests it, the school will support access to a local authority young carer's needs assessment under section 17ZA of the Children Act 1989.

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 using [this form](#) at least two weeks in advance. 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. 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, however each application will be considered individually, taking account of the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background. The school will not operate a blanket policy under which leave is automatically granted for a particular circumstance or event.

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.

The following examples are illustrative only. Their inclusion does not mean that leave will automatically be granted and their absence from the list does not mean that a request will automatically be refused:

- 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.
- 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 taken 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 as a diagram in Appendix C:

Level	Action
Level 1	Level 1 may be initiated when attendance falls below the school's target, where there is a concerning pattern or where early indicators suggest that absence may become persistent. Intervention will not rely solely on a fixed percentage. 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.
Level 2	The Form Tutor meets with the pupil to explore the reasons for absence, listen to her views and identify any barriers affecting regular attendance. The Head of Year may contribute where appropriate. Using information from the Attendance Dashboard, the Form Tutor works with the pupil to produce an Attendance Support Plan. The plan records the identified barriers, agreed support, actions to be taken and the intended outcomes. Parents or carers are consulted and provided with a copy of the plan. The Form Tutor monitors attendance and reviews the plan with the pupil after four weeks, or sooner where concerns increase. The plan is updated, continued or escalated according to the pupil's needs and the impact of the support provided. Where absence is associated with a medical condition, disability, SEND or mental health need, the school will consider appropriate support and reasonable adjustments. The level of intervention will be determined by the pupil's individual needs and the effectiveness of the plan, rather than the recorded reason for absence alone.
Level 3	Where attendance does not improve following Level 2, concerns increase or the pupil requires more coordinated support, the Head of Year will arrange an Attendance Support Meeting with the pupil, parents or carers and relevant members of staff. The meeting will review the pupil's attendance, explore the barriers in greater depth and evaluate the support already provided. The existing Attendance Support Plan will be updated to include further actions, named responsibilities, intended outcomes and an agreed review date. Depending on the pupil's needs, additional support may include reasonable adjustments, SEND or medical review, mentoring, pastoral or mental health intervention, Early Help/Family Help or referral to an external service. The school may also seek advice from the Local Authority Attendance Team through a Targeting Support Meeting. The plan will normally be reviewed after four weeks, or sooner where concerns increase. Where sufficient improvement is not secured, support is not engaged with or absence becomes persistent or severe, the case may progress to Level 4.
Level 4	Where attendance has not improved despite the support provided, engagement has been limited or concerns have become more serious, a Formal Attendance Review will be led by the Senior Attendance Champion. The pupil, parents or carers, relevant school staff and, where appropriate, the Local Authority Attendance Officer or other professionals will be invited. The review will: - consider the pupil's views and current barriers to attendance - evaluate the support, adjustments and interventions provided

- review the family's engagement with the Attendance Support Plan
- consider any SEND, disability, medical, mental health, equality or safeguarding factors
- agree any further intensive or multi-agency support
- explain the consequences of continued irregular attendance
- determine the appropriate next steps and review arrangements.

The **Attendance Support Plan** will be updated with clear actions, responsibilities, expected improvement and timescales. Where appropriate, formal support may include an attendance contract, Early Help/Family Help or a referral to the local authority for an Education Supervision Order.

Where support has not been successful or has not been engaged with, the school and local authority may consider a Notice to Improve, penalty notice or prosecution. Legal intervention will be considered individually, in accordance with the National Framework and Wirral's Local Code of Conduct. It will not replace appropriate support and will be pursued only where it is considered proportionate and likely to improve attendance.

Where absence indicates a safeguarding concern, the school will consider referral to children's social care at any stage. Safeguarding action will not be delayed until Level 4.

Each stage of the Attendance Review Framework will be supported by ongoing monitoring of attendance data, with interventions reviewed and escalated as needed. The duration of each stage will depend on the pupil's individual context, the nature of the barriers and the response to support. Where improvement is not evident, the framework will progress to the next level in a timely and proportionate manner.

13. Promoting Attendance and Responding to Persistent and Severe Absence

13.1 Promoting Regular Attendance

The school will develop and maintain a whole-school culture in which regular and punctual attendance is understood to support pupils' education, safeguarding, wellbeing and wider development.

To promote regular attendance, the school will:

- provide a safe, welcoming and supportive environment in which pupils feel that they belong
- communicate high expectations for attendance and punctuality to pupils, parents and staff
- explain the benefits of regular attendance and the impact of missed education
- ensure that attendance remains a shared responsibility across teaching, pastoral, safeguarding and inclusion teams
- use assemblies, form time, transition activities, newsletters and other communications to reinforce attendance expectations
- recognise improvements in attendance sensitively and without discriminating against pupils whose absence is related to disability, medical needs or other individual circumstances
- provide regular attendance information to pupils and parents, including the amount of education missed rather than relying solely on percentages
- train staff to understand their attendance responsibilities and respond consistently
- use the Attendance Dashboard to identify emerging concerns and provide support before absence becomes persistent
- consult pupils and parents when reviewing attendance practice
- work with families to understand and remove in-school and external barriers
- provide appropriate pastoral support, reasonable adjustments and reintegration arrangements
- work with the local authority, health services, community organisations and other partners where additional support is required
- monitor the effect of attendance strategies and adjust them where they are not securing improvement.

Any rewards or recognition relating to attendance will focus on positive engagement and improvement. They will be used sensitively and will not disadvantage pupils because of disability, illness, SEND, religious observance or another protected or unavoidable circumstance.

13.2 Responding to Persistent and Severe Absence

The school will monitor attendance regularly to identify pupils whose absence is increasing, becoming persistent or becoming severe. A pupil is persistently absent where they miss 10% or more of possible school sessions and severely absent where they miss 50% or more.

The school will not wait for either threshold to be reached before providing support. Emerging patterns, changes in punctuality, individual absences and the pupil's circumstances will be considered through the Attendance Review Framework.

Where a pupil is persistently or severely absent, or at risk of becoming so, the school will:

- meet with the pupil and parents or carers to understand the barriers to attendance
- listen to and record the pupil's views
- consider both authorised and unauthorised absence
- agree and regularly review an Attendance Support Plan
- identify a consistent member of staff to coordinate support where appropriate
- consider in-school support, reasonable adjustments and reintegration arrangements
- review relevant SEND provision, individual healthcare plans or EHC plans
- work with health services, the local authority and other relevant partners
- consider Early Help or Family Help where a coordinated whole-family response is required
- monitor the impact of interventions and adjust the approach where improvement is not secured
- support the pupil to rebuild confidence, relationships and missed learning following prolonged absence.

Where a pupil is severely absent, the school will adopt a more intensive and coordinated approach. The Senior Attendance Champion and Designated Safeguarding Lead will review the case with relevant school staff and external professionals. This will include considering:

- the pupil's safety, welfare and educational progress
- whether existing support is sufficiently intensive
- whether further multi-agency involvement is required
- whether absence increases known risks within the family or community
- whether statutory children's social care involvement should be considered

The school will work closely with the pupil's social worker, Virtual School, youth offending team worker, health professionals and Local Authority Attendance Team where applicable. Safeguarding action will be taken whenever the threshold for referral is met and will not be delayed while attendance support or legal processes are pursued.

Where voluntary support has not been successful or has not been engaged with, the school will work with the local authority to consider formal support or legal intervention. This may include an attendance contract, Education Supervision Order, Notice to Improve, penalty notice or prosecution. Any decision will be made individually and proportionately, taking account of safeguarding, equality considerations and the support already provided.

14. Monitoring arrangements

The Senior Attendance Champion will review the implementation and effectiveness of this policy at least annually and whenever legislation, statutory guidance or local procedures change. Attendance information will be reported regularly to the Governing Board, which will hold school leaders to account for the school's attendance strategy and outcomes.

15. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection policy
- Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) policy
- Behaviour for Learning policy

Appendix A: Statutory Attendance and Absence Codes

The school will use the national attendance and absence codes prescribed by regulation 10 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and explained in the Department for Education's statutory guidance, Working together to improve school attendance.

The appropriate code must be entered for every pupil listed in the admission register each time the morning or afternoon attendance register is taken. This appendix provides a summary. Where there is uncertainty, the school will refer to the current statutory guidance and the 2024 Regulations.

Pupils attending the school

Code	Meaning	When the code should be used
/	Present at the school: morning session	The pupil is physically present when the morning register is taken.
\	Present at the school: afternoon session	The pupil is physically present when the afternoon register is taken.
L	Late arrival before the register closes	The pupil was absent when the register started being taken but arrived before it closed. This code is classified as attendance.

Attending somewhere other than the school

These codes are classified as attendance. Before using them, the school must be satisfied that the activity meets the statutory conditions and that appropriate safeguarding and attendance-reporting arrangements are in place.

Code	Meaning	When the code should be used
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	The pupil is attending educational provision arranged by a local authority under section 19 of the Education Act 1996 or sections 42 or 61 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Provision arranged by the school is normally recorded using code B or P.
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	The pupil is attending an educational visit or trip arranged by, or on behalf of, the school and supervised by a member of school staff.
P	Participating in a sporting activity	The pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school. The activity must be educational and supervised by a person considered appropriate by the school.
W	Attending work experience	The pupil is attending work experience arranged or approved by the school as part of their education. Appropriate supervision and arrangements for reporting absence must be in place.
B	Attending another approved educational activity	The pupil is attending an approved, supervised educational activity arranged by the school which is not covered by codes K, V, P or W. This may include unregistered alternative provision arranged by the school.
D	Dual registered at another school	The pupil is registered at two schools and is scheduled to attend the other school for the session. The school at which the pupil is scheduled to attend must record their actual attendance or absence. Code D must not be used merely because a pupil attends another provider or setting.

Where a pupil does not attend the approved off-site activity, the school must record the absence using the appropriate absence code. The off-site provider must notify the school promptly of any unexpected or unexplained absence.

Authorised absence: leave of absence

Code	Meaning	When the code should be used
C1	Leave for a regulated performance or regulated employment abroad	The pupil has been granted leave to take part in a regulated performance or regulated employment abroad under the applicable licence or approval arrangements.
M	Leave for a medical or dental appointment	The pupil has been granted leave to attend a medical or dental appointment. Parents should request leave in advance where possible and the pupil should attend school for as much of the session as reasonably possible.
J1	Leave for an interview	The pupil has been granted leave to attend an interview for entry to another educational institution or for future employment.
S	Study leave	The pupil has been granted study leave for a public examination. It must not be used for internal examinations or mock examinations. Study leave should be used sparingly and only for pupils approaching the end of compulsory education.
X	Non-compulsory-school-age pupil not required to attend	A pupil who is not of compulsory school age is not required to attend the session because it falls outside the sessions they are timetabled or expected to attend.
C2	Leave for a compulsory-school-age pupil subject to a part-time timetable	The pupil is absent for a session under an agreed temporary, time-limited part-time timetable. The timetable must be in the pupil's best interests and form part of a wider support, healthcare or reintegration plan. Code C2 must not be used for flexi-schooling, dual registration or part-time alternative provision.
C	Leave of absence in exceptional circumstances	The pupil has been granted leave because the school considers the individual circumstances to be exceptional. This code may also be used for sessions of authorised flexi-schooling that the pupil does not attend. It must not be used where another leave code applies.

Authorised absence: other circumstances

Code	Meaning	When the code should be used
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	The pupil is a mobile child with no fixed abode who is travelling with a parent engaged in a trade or business requiring travel from place to place. It must not be used for ordinary family travel, holidays or other temporary changes of address.
R	Religious observance	The pupil is absent on a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs. Additional days requested for cultural or family purposes are not automatically authorised under this code.
I	Illness	The pupil is unable to attend because of physical or mental ill health. Medical evidence will not be requested routinely or through a blanket rule. Reasonable evidence may be requested where the school has genuine and reasonable doubt or where it would help the school support a prolonged or recurring health need.
E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made	The pupil has been suspended or permanently excluded on disciplinary grounds, remains on the admission register and no alternative provision has been arranged for the session. Once alternative provision begins, the appropriate attendance code must be used instead.

Unable to attend because of an unavoidable cause

These codes are used only when the specific statutory conditions are satisfied. They are classified as circumstances in which attendance was not possible.

Code Meaning		When the code should be used
Q	Unable to attend because of a lack of access arrangements	This code is restricted to the specific circumstances set out in regulation 10. It includes cases where the local authority has a legal duty to arrange home-to-school travel and has not done so. It must not be used for ordinary transport difficulties or where a parent has chosen a school and the statutory conditions are not met.
Y1	Unable to attend because transport normally provided is unavailable	The pupil cannot attend because the school is beyond walking distance, the transport normally provided by the school or local authority is unavailable and the pupil's home is within the area for which the transport is provided.
Y2	Unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel	Widespread disruption caused by a local, national or international emergency prevents the pupil from attending. It does not cover individual transport problems.
Y3	Unable to attend because part of the school premises is closed	Part of the school premises is closed and the pupil cannot practicably be accommodated in the part that remains open.
Y4	Unable to attend because the whole school is unexpectedly closed	The school was planned to be open but is unexpectedly closed, for example because of severe weather, loss of utilities or another emergency. It must not be used for planned closures.
Y5	Unable to attend because the pupil is in criminal justice detention	The pupil is in police detention, has been remanded to youth detention or is detained under a sentence of detention.
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public-health guidance or law	The pupil is well enough to attend, but applicable government public-health guidance or law prevents attendance. If the pupil is unwell, code I should be used instead.
Y7	Unable to attend because of another unavoidable cause	An unavoidable cause not covered by another code prevents the pupil from attending. The school must record the nature of the unavoidable cause. This code must not be used because no other code appears convenient or while the reason remains unknown.

Unauthorised absence

Code Meaning	When the code should be used
G Holiday not granted by the school	The pupil is absent for a holiday or other leisure or recreational purpose and the school has not granted leave.
N Reason for absence not yet established	No reason for the pupil's absence has been established before the register closes. This is a temporary code. It must be replaced as soon as the reason is established and no later than five school days after the session. If no reason is established within five school days, code O must be entered.
O Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established within five school days or the school is not satisfied that the reason given meets the requirements for an authorised absence code.
U Arrived after the register closed	The pupil arrived after the register closed but before the end of the session and no reason was established that would qualify for an authorised absence code. If an authorised absence code accurately describes the reason for the late arrival, that code should be used instead.

Administrative codes

Code	Meaning	When the code should be used
Z	Prospective pupil not yet on the admission register	The school is preparing its register in advance for a prospective pupil whose agreed starting date has not yet arrived. An offer of a place alone is not sufficient; the place and starting date must have been accepted or agreed.
#	Planned whole-school closure	The school is closed to all pupils for a planned reason, including school holidays, weekends, bank holidays, planned INSET days or use as a polling station.

Important coding principles

- 1. The statutory register must be taken at the same time for all pupils.**
It must be taken at the beginning of the morning session and once during the afternoon session.
- 2. The register closing period must be consistent.**
The period for which the register remains open must be the same for each session and must not exceed 30 minutes.
- 3. Code N is temporary.**
It must be corrected within five school days. If the reason cannot be established, it becomes code O.
- 4. Remote education does not count as attendance.**
A pupil receiving remote education while absent must still be recorded using the appropriate absence code. Remote education should be used only as a last resort, after reasonable adjustments have been considered and as part of a reintegration plan.
- 5. Part-time timetables do not make absence disappear.**
Sessions a compulsory-school-age pupil does not attend under an agreed temporary part-time timetable are normally recorded as C2. Where the pupil is attending education elsewhere, the appropriate attending code must be used.
- 6. Off-site attendance must be verified.**
Codes K, V, P, W and B may be used only where the statutory conditions are satisfied. The provider must inform the school whether the pupil attended. If the pupil did not attend, the school must enter the appropriate absence code.
- 7. Dual registration must reflect the pupil's schedule.**
Code D is used by the school the pupil was not due to attend. The school they were due to attend records their actual attendance or absence.
- 8. Medical evidence is not routinely required.**
Code I should normally be based on the information provided by the parent. Evidence may be requested only where there is genuine and reasonable doubt or where it will help the school understand and support prolonged or recurring illness.
- 9. The most accurate applicable code must be used.**
If more than one code appears relevant, the school will apply the hierarchy in regulation 10 and consult the statutory guidance where necessary.
- 10. Register amendments must remain auditable.**
Any amendment must preserve the original entry and record the amended entry, reason, date and the name of the person making the amendment. Register entries must be retained for six years.

Appendix B: Guidelines for Parents

Our approach to attendance

At Upton Hall School, we believe that regular and punctual attendance is essential to pupils' education, safeguarding, wellbeing and wider development. Attending school consistently helps pupils to maintain learning, build positive relationships and benefit fully from the opportunities available to them.

The school's attendance target is at least 97%. However, attendance will not be considered through percentages alone. We will consider the amount and pattern of education missed, the pupil's individual circumstances and any barriers affecting attendance.

We are committed to working respectfully and constructively with pupils and families. Where attendance becomes a concern, our first priority is to understand the reasons for absence and identify the support, intervention or reasonable adjustments that may help.

Parents and carers have a legal responsibility to ensure that a child of compulsory school age receives a suitable full-time education. Where a child is registered at a school, parents must ensure that she attends regularly and punctually unless there is a lawful reason for her absence.

The school day and punctuality

Pupils must arrive at school by **8.30am** so that they are ready for the school day.

The morning register is taken at **8.40am**. The afternoon register is taken at **1.50pm**. The closing times for both registers are published in Section 8.1 of this policy.

A pupil arriving after the register has been taken but before it closes will be recorded using code L. This records that the pupil arrived late but is classified as attending the session.

Where a pupil arrives after the register has closed, code U will normally be used unless the reason for the late arrival meets the requirements for another authorised absence code. Code U is classified as unauthorised absence for the session.

Pupils arriving late must sign in using the InVentry system in the main reception area.

Where a pupil is late on two occasions within one week without a satisfactory reason, she will normally be placed in the school's punctuality detention. Persistent lateness will be discussed with the pupil and parents or carers so that any barriers can be understood and addressed. The school will consider SEND, disability, medical needs, transport difficulties and other relevant circumstances before imposing a sanction.

Persistent arrival after the register has closed may contribute towards the national threshold for considering a penalty notice.

Reporting an unplanned absence

Parents and carers must notify the school by **8.30am on each day of absence**, unless a longer period of absence has already been discussed and agreed with the school.

For pupils in Years 7–11, absence should be reported by:

- calling the absence line on **0151 641 8133**, or
- emailing **attendance@uptonhall.org**

Sixth Form absence should be reported by emailing:

- **sixthform@uptonhall.org**

Parents should provide:

- the pupil's full name
- form group
- specific reason for absence
- anticipated date of return, where known

Parents should use one reporting method and should not report the same absence through several different email addresses or members of staff.

If the reason provided is unclear, the school will contact the parent or carer for further information. An absence

will not be treated as unauthorised solely because a particular form of words has been used.

How the school follows up absence

The school follows a staged process when a pupil is absent. However, safeguarding action may be taken at any point and will not be delayed until a particular day is reached.

Day 1

The Attendance Officer will review unexplained and unexpected absence following morning registration.

Where no reason has been provided, the school will:

- send an unexplained-absence text or other notification
- contact the parent or carer
- establish the reason for absence
- seek an anticipated date of return
- consider whether further support, welfare enquiries or safeguarding action is required.

The absence of a pupil known to be vulnerable will be flagged promptly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and other relevant staff. This includes pupils with a social worker, pupils subject to a Child in Need or Child Protection Plan and children looked after.

Where appropriate, the school will notify the pupil's social worker, the Virtual School or other relevant professional.

A home visit may be undertaken on Day 1 where:

- the school cannot establish the pupil's whereabouts
- the pupil is known to be vulnerable
- the absence is unexpected or out of character
- there is an identified safeguarding concern
- the reported reason for absence requires further clarification
- the school suspects an unauthorised term-time holiday

The decision to undertake a home visit will be based on the pupil's individual circumstances and the school's assessment of risk.

Day 2 and each subsequent day

Where no reason has been provided, the school will continue to send an unexplained-absence notification each day.

Further contact, welfare enquiries or a home visit may take place at any stage where concerns emerge or increase.

Day 3

Where the pupil remains absent, the Attendance Officer will contact the parent or carer again.

The school will:

- confirm the reason for the continuing absence
- seek an anticipated date of return
- consider whether support or reasonable adjustments are required
- send an email explaining that reasonable evidence may be requested where appropriate
- review whether further safeguarding action, professional contact or a home visit is required

The school will not automatically require a GP letter or medical evidence simply because an absence has reached three days.

Day 5

Where the pupil remains absent, the Attendance Officer will contact the parent or carer again and review the information received.

The school will:

- seek further clarification about the absence and anticipated return
- send a further email where reasonable evidence has previously been requested but has not been provided
- consider whether the absence can continue to be authorised
- consider an Attendance Support Plan, reasonable adjustments or reintegration arrangements
- review whether further safeguarding action or a home visit is required

- liaise with relevant professionals where appropriate

An absence will not automatically become unauthorised because it has lasted five days. Where the school has genuine and reasonable doubt about the explanation and reasonable evidence has been requested but not provided, the school may record the absence as unauthorised. Parents or carers will be informed of the decision and the reason for it.

Illness and medical evidence

In most cases, a parent's notification that their child is too ill to attend school will be accepted without medical evidence.

The school may request reasonable evidence where:

- there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness
- absence is prolonged or repeatedly attributed to illness
- evidence would help the school understand the pupil's needs
- evidence would help identify appropriate support or reasonable adjustments
- the school needs further information to determine the correct attendance code

The school will not apply a blanket rule requiring medical evidence after a specified number of days and will not be rigid about the form of evidence provided.

Reasonable evidence may include:

- an appointment letter, card, email or text message
- a prescription or repeat-prescription record
- medication labelled with the pupil's name
- hospital correspondence or a discharge letter
- evidence of contact with NHS 111, a GP practice, pharmacy or walk-in centre
- a care plan or individual healthcare plan
- confirmation of involvement from CYPMHS or another relevant service
- correspondence from a healthcare professional
- other information that reasonably explains the illness and its effect on attendance

A conversation with the parent and, where appropriate, the pupil may itself provide sufficient information.

Where illness is prolonged or recurring, the school will work with the pupil, family and relevant professionals to identify appropriate support and facilitate as much attendance as the pupil's health reasonably allows.

Where the school has reasonable grounds to believe that a pupil recorded as absent because of illness will miss 15 school days consecutively or cumulatively during the school year, it will submit a sickness return to the local authority. The school and local authority will consider whether additional educational provision is required.

Medical and dental appointments

Parents should arrange routine medical and dental appointments outside school hours whenever reasonably possible.

Where an appointment during the school day is unavoidable, parents should notify the school in advance and provide confirmation of the appointment where available. The pupil should attend school before and after the appointment wherever reasonably possible so that the amount of education missed is minimised.

A medical or dental appointment will be recorded using code M where the school is satisfied that the pupil is attending a genuine appointment.

Planned medical absences should be reported to:

attendance@uptonhall.org for Years 7-11, or sixthform@uptonhall.org for Sixth Form.

Mental health, SEND and other barriers to attendance

The school recognises that some pupils experience additional barriers to attendance because of mental or physical ill health, SEND, disability, caring responsibilities, family circumstances or other needs.

The same ambition for regular attendance applies to all pupils, but some pupils may require additional support or reasonable adjustments.

Where a pupil is struggling to attend, parents should contact the school at the earliest opportunity. The school will listen to the pupil and family, seek to understand the barriers and consider appropriate support. This may include:

- an Attendance Support Plan
- a consistent named adult
- pastoral or mentoring support
- reasonable adjustments to school routines or practices
- SEND support or review
- an individual healthcare plan
- mental health support
- a phased return following prolonged absence
- Early Help or Family Help
- support from health, local-authority or community services

A temporary part-time timetable will be considered only in very exceptional circumstances, where it is in the pupil's best interests and forms part of a wider support, healthcare or reintegration plan. It will not be used to manage behaviour or as an informal exclusion.

Attendance Support Plans

Form Tutors use the school's Attendance Dashboard each week to review the attendance and punctuality of pupils in their form.

Where additional support is required, the Form Tutor will meet with the pupil to understand the reasons for absence and listen to her views. An **Attendance Support Plan** may be produced to record:

- barriers affecting attendance
- support and reasonable adjustments
- actions to be taken
- who is responsible for each action
- the intended outcomes
- the review date

Parents or carers will be consulted and provided with a copy. The plan will normally be reviewed after four weeks, or sooner where concerns increase.

Where attendance does not improve or more coordinated support is required, the matter may progress through the school's Attendance Review Framework.

Leave of absence during term time

Parents do not have a legal entitlement to take their child out of school for a holiday or other leisure or recreational activity during term time.

The Headmistress may grant leave of absence only where the circumstances are considered exceptional. Applications must be submitted in advance using the school's leave of absence form, normally at least two weeks before the proposed absence.

Each application will be considered individually, taking account of:

- the specific facts and circumstances
- the reason for the request
- the pupil's individual circumstances
- the length and timing of the proposed absence
- any relevant background information

The school will not operate a blanket policy under which leave is automatically granted for a particular event or circumstance. If leave is granted, the Headmistress will decide the number of sessions for which the pupil may be absent.

A family holiday, lower travel cost, parental work commitments or a general desire for leisure or recreation will not

normally constitute exceptional circumstances.

Where leave is not granted and the pupil is absent, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. A penalty notice may be requested where the legal criteria are met.

Where the school has reason to believe that an absence is an undeclared term-time holiday, it may seek further information and may undertake a home visit.

Religious observance

Absence will be authorised using code R for a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs.

Additional absence connected with travel, family celebrations or cultural activities is not automatically authorised and must be requested in advance. Any additional request will be considered individually.

Persistent and severe absence

A pupil is considered **persistently absent** where she misses 10% or more of possible school sessions.

A pupil is considered **severely absent** where she misses 50% or more of possible school sessions.

The school will not wait for either threshold to be reached before offering support. Emerging patterns, changes in punctuality and the pupil's circumstances may result in earlier intervention.

Where a pupil is persistently or severely absent, the school will work with the pupil, parents and relevant professionals to understand the barriers and provide increasingly intensive support.

Severe absence can indicate unmet need or a safeguarding concern. The Senior Attendance Champion and Designated Safeguarding Lead will review severely absent pupils and consider whether multi-agency or statutory children's social care involvement is required.

National Framework for Penalty Notices

The national threshold for considering a penalty notice is **10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling period of 10 school weeks**.

The threshold may be met through any combination of:

- unauthorised holiday absence
- other unauthorised absence
- absence where no reason has been established
- arrival after the register has closed

The sessions do not have to be consecutive. The rolling period may span different terms, school years or schools.

Reaching the threshold does not mean that a penalty notice will be issued automatically. Each case will be considered individually. The school and local authority will consider:

- whether support is appropriate
- what support has been provided
- whether that support has been successful or engaged with
- whether a penalty notice is likely to change parental behaviour
- whether another intervention would be more appropriate
- any safeguarding or Equality Act considerations

Where support is appropriate but has not been successful or engaged with, a **Notice to Improve** will usually be considered before a penalty notice. A Notice to Improve normally provides an improvement period of between three and six weeks.

A Notice to Improve is not normally required where support would not be appropriate, such as in the case of an unauthorised term-time holiday.

The penalty amounts are:

- **First penalty notice:** £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. The final payment period is 28 days.
- Second penalty notice for the same parent and child within three years: £160, payable within 28 days, with

no reduced rate.

- **Third or subsequent offence within three years:** a further penalty notice cannot be issued. Another intervention must be considered, which will often include prosecution

A penalty notice may also be considered before the national threshold is reached where an offence has been committed and the individual circumstances justify it, including where there is evidence of repeated short absences intended to avoid the threshold. Any such decision will be made in accordance with Wirral's Local Code of Conduct.

There is no right of appeal against a penalty notice. If the notice is not paid within 28 days, the local authority must decide whether to prosecute for the original attendance offence or withdraw the notice.

Other formal or legal interventions

Where voluntary support has not been successful, has not been engaged with or is not appropriate, the school and local authority may consider:

- an attendance contract
- an Education Supervision Order
- a Notice to Improve
- a penalty notice
- prosecution
- statutory children's social care involvement where safeguarding concerns exist

An offence under section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996 may result in a fine of up to £1,000.

The more serious offence under section 444(1A), where a parent knows that their child is failing to attend regularly and fails to ensure that they do so, may result in a fine of up to £2,500, a community order and/or imprisonment for up to three months.

Legal intervention will be considered individually and proportionately. It will not replace appropriate support.

Removal from the school roll

A pupil will not be removed from the school roll because she has accumulated 20 days of unauthorised absence.

A pupil's name may be removed only where one of the statutory grounds in regulation 9 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 is fully satisfied.

Where a pupil has been continuously absent for 20 school days, removal may be considered only where:

- the relevant statutory absence conditions are met
- the school has no reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of illness or another unavoidable cause
- the school and local authority have jointly made reasonable enquiries into the pupil's location and circumstances
- those enquiries have been unsuccessful, or the school and local authority agree that there are no reasonable grounds to believe the pupil will return

This ground cannot be used where the pupil could reasonably be supported or required to return, where attendance legal action could reasonably secure a return or where the absence is caused by ill health or another unavoidable reason.

Elective home education

Parents have a right to choose elective home education, subject to the requirements of education law.

Where a parent is considering withdrawing a pupil to educate her at home, the school encourages the parent to discuss the proposal with the school before making a final decision. Where possible, the school will work with the local authority and other relevant professionals to offer a meeting.

This is particularly important where the pupil:

- has SEND or an EHC plan
- has a social worker

- is persistently or severely absent
- is otherwise vulnerable

The school must notify the local authority when a pupil is removed from the admission register for elective home education. Additional legal requirements apply where a pupil of compulsory school age is registered at a special school under arrangements made by a local authority.

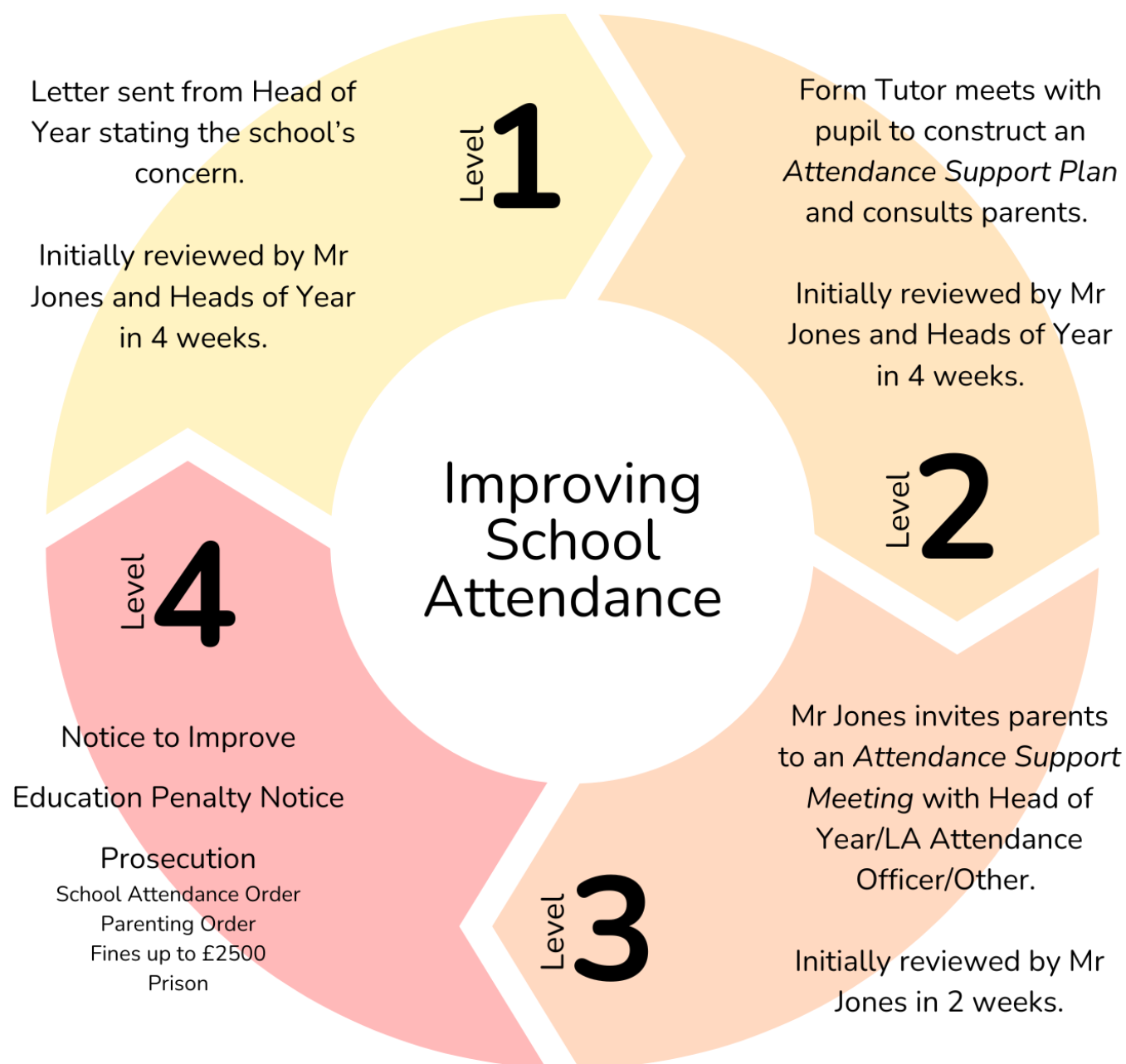
Working together

Parents should contact the school as early as possible if their daughter is experiencing difficulty attending. Early discussion gives the school and family the best opportunity to understand the barriers and put effective support in place.

Our aim is to work in partnership with pupils and families so that every pupil is safe, supported and able to benefit from regular education within the values of the Upton Hall School 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.

Improving attendance is a joint responsibility between families and school. We are here to listen, support and work with you. Together, we can ensure that every pupil at Upton Hall receives the full-time education they deserve.