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PRENTON HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

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1 OUR AIMS

We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance through our whole school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance and punctuality, including punctuality to lessons.
- Promoting children's welfare and safeguarding
- Ensuring that students succeed whilst at school
- Ensuring every child has access to the full time education to which they are entitled
- Ensuring that students have access to the widest possible range of opportunities at school, and when they leave school
- Reducing absence, including persistent absence and severe absence.
- Acting early to address patterns of absence.
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure students have the support in place to attend school.

1.1 Legislation and guidance

Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parent's legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution. This policy applies to all children registered at Prenton High School and this policy is made available to all parents/carers of students who are registered at the school on the school's website.

For the purposes of this policy and other school attendance 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 what their relationship is with the child, is considered to be a parent in education law.

Parents who do not ordinarily reside with the child may also be subject to Education Penalty Notices depending on the circumstances.

Although parents and carers have the legal responsibility for ensuring their child's good attendance, the Headteacher, Staff and Governors at our school work together with other professionals and agencies to ensure that all students are encouraged and supported to develop good attendance habits. Procedures in this policy are followed to ensure this happens.

Children who are persistently late or absent soon fall behind with their learning. Children who are absent from school frequently develop large gaps in their learning which will impact on their progress and their ability to meet age related learning expectations. A child whose attendance drops to 90% each year will, over their time at school, have missed two whole terms of learning.

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

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Student Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)

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- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

In addition, Prenton High School follows the DfE's statutory safeguarding guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education, which emphasises the importance of understanding the potential vulnerabilities of children who are missing or absent from education.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

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

2 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 Prenton High School will:

- Meet the legal requirements set out by Government;
- Give a high priority to punctuality and attendance;
- Develop procedures that enable the school to identify, follow up and record unauthorised absence and patterns of absence;
- Consistently record authorised and unauthorised absences on the register using the correct attendance code (see table Appendix 1);
- Develop a range of effective strategies to follow up intermittent and long-term absenteeism and promote good attendance;
- Encourage open communication channels between home and school to improve attendance and punctuality;
- Develop procedures for the reintegration of long-term absentees;
- Seek advice from the Locality Attendance Officer (LAO) any child whose attendance causes concern and where parents/carers have not responded to school initiatives to improve.
- Develop procedures leading to a formal referral to the Local Authority;
- Adequately provide for students with difficulties, within the bounds of resources available.
- Regularly update governors about school attendance and attendance concerns;
- Report regularly to parents (for example, at Progress Evening) on how their child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainment;
- Celebrate good attendance by displaying individual and class achievements;
- Reward good or improving attendance and punctuality.
- demonstrate a strong and inclusive whole school attendance ethos that helps pupils feel that they 'belong'.
- have sensitive support systems in place for vulnerable pupils which recognise the complexity of children's lives and family circumstances.
- To inform the local authority of any part-time or flexible education arrangements in place for individual pupils, together with plans for tracking and review
- refer children into the Authority's Vulnerable Children's Panel for advice and support in situations where parents are reluctant to engage voluntarily with early help, and concerns about unauthorised absence are ongoing. Parents should be made aware that this will be the case.
- refer children who are, or who are at risk of becoming, Children Missing from Education (CME) to the Local Authority in accordance with Wirral Policy.

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- notify the Local Authority of any child whose name is deleted from roll at parental request in order to pursue elective home education.

2.2 HEAD OF STUDENT SERVICES

The Head of Student Services is responsible for:

- Leading Attendance across the school.
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement.
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes.
- Having an oversight of data analysis.
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data.
- Reporting on attendance to Governors and Senior Leadership Team.

2.3 ATTENDANCE Improvement Worker

The Attendance Improvement Worker is responsible for:

- Overall monitoring of school attendance
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the Head of Student Services and the Senior Leadership Team
- Advising the Headteacher and Head of Student Services when to issue fixed penalty notices
- Contacting families where concerns are raised about absence, including arranging meetings to discuss attendance issues
- Meeting with a student following an absence from school where appropriate
- Monitoring individual attendance where concerns have been raised
- Working with the Local Authority Attendance Service to tackle persistent absence
- Writing Attendance Action Plans and leading half termly Panel meetings to review progress and make referrals for additional support where appropriate.

2.4 Year Leaders

Year Leaders are responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the year group/s
- Giving attendance a high profile at assemblies and school events
- Monitoring year group attendance targets and record keeping
- Implementing systems of rewards and intervention
- Contacting parents to discuss attendance concerns as soon as they are identified
- Meeting regularly with the Attendance Improvement Worker and Head of Student Services to review the attendance of their year group, creating individual support plans, leading Panel Meetings and making referrals for additional support where appropriate.
- Working with identified students, implementing strategies to improve attendance

2.5 FORM TUTORS

Form Tutors are responsible for:

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- Keeping an accurate register and ensure registers are saved on Arbor at the end of every registration.
- Emphasising with their class the importance of good attendance and punctuality
- Praising and rewarding students with good attendance and punctuality.

2.6 Roles of the Attendance Team in School

Other members of the schools' team who are responsible for attendance are:

- Headteacher and SLT
- The School Governors, **who are responsible for overseeing school attendance and agreeing policies and procedures;**

2.7 What is expected of the Local Authority and Wirral Attendance Service

The Local Authority is expected:

- To promote regular school attendance of children in schools across the Authority, and to work towards breaking the cycle of poor attendance, reduced attainment, and social disadvantage.
- To meet, at least termly, with attendance staff within school.
- To help schools in their work to reduce overall, persistent and severe pupil absence. This involves working with school staff, parents / carers, children, and various partner agencies to develop and implement practices which can help raise and sustain individual pupils' attendance levels.
- To carry out statutory duties in relation to the enforcement of school attendance.
- To carry out statutory duties in respect of the identification and tracking of children known to be, or at risk of becoming, missing from education (CME).

Tables of responsibilities for school attendance can be found at:

[Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\) \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

Locality Attendance Officers, employed by the Local Authority, work strategically by offering support to schools, to reduce persistent absence and improve overall attendance.

Parents are expected to work with the school and local authority to address any attendance concerns. Parents should proactively engage with the support offered, aiming to resolve any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be resolved in this way, the school may consider more formal support and/or refer the child to the Local Authority. If attendance does not improve, legal action may be taken in the form of a Penalty Notice or prosecution in the Magistrates Court

2.8 Link with Safeguarding / Education Neglect

- Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility.
- Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as: protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.
- Schools have a key role in ensuring children and young people are kept safe. School staff are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, and prevent concerns from escalating.
- Every school has a designated safeguarding lead who will provide support to staff members to carry out their safeguarding duties and can liaise closely with other services such as children's social care and early help services.

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- Schools should be alert to unauthorised absence as being a potential indicator of educational or wider neglect. Neglect is the most common reason for a child to be the subject of a Child Protection Plan in the UK.
- **Working Together 2020** identifies neglect as:
- 'The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.'

2.9 Parents/Carers:

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.

Parents/Carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends school every day on time. Students should be in their form room at 8.35am, ready for registration at 8.40am
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 8am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return.
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school
- provide evidence and advice from a health professional when needed to enable school to gain a greater understanding of their child's health issues
- To work closely with the school to resolve any problems that may impede a child's attendance;
- To take family holidays during school holiday periods and be aware that requests for holidays during term time will only be approved in exceptional circumstances;
- To be aware of curriculum requirements and be especially vigilant with regards to attendance during important academic times such public examinations.
- To provide evidence, if requested, if there are repeat absences for medical reasons.
- Making requests for authorised leave of absence in term time, only if absolutely necessary as these are not automatically authorised.
- Talking to the school as soon as possible about any child's reluctance to come to school so that problems can be quickly identified and dealt with.
- The Education Act [1996] Section 444 requires parents to ensure that their children receive full-time education which suits their needs. Parents who fail in this duty may be prosecuted via the courts and fined up to £2 500 or, in some cases, imprisoned. The Anti-Social Behaviour Act [2003] Section 23 also indicates parents may be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice if their child's absence from school is unauthorised. Fixed Penalty Notices are for £60 if paid within 21 days and £120 if paid within 28 days.

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2.10 What is expected of the students:

Students have a responsibility to themselves and others to play a positive role in the life of the school and to make the most of the educational opportunities available.

Students must arrive in school by 8.30 each day.

AM registration will be taken at 8.40am and ends at 9am.

PM registration will be taken at 1.00 and will be kept open until 1.10pm.

Students are expected:

- To attend school regularly and punctually;
- To attend every timetabled session on time
- To inform a trusted adult if there is a reason they are not happy to attend school;
- To attend Attendance and Punctuality interventions if requested.
- To be aware of their attendance targets, and to work towards achieving them.

3 RECORDING ATTENDANCE

3.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all students onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every student is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is recorded or not
- The nature of the activity if a student is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a student is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

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

3.2 Unplanned absence

The student's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8:30am or as soon as practically possible by telephoning the school absence line: 0151 644 8114, sending a text to: 07500209752; Or emailing attendance@prentonhighschool.co.uk. Parents can also report an absence through the parent mail app.

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We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the student's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

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

If your child's poor attendance record continues you will be asked to meet with the Attendance Team to resolve the problem, but you can approach the school at anytime if you are having problems getting your child to school.

Parents/carers should contact the school by 8.30am on the first day of their child's absence. When parents/carers notify school of their child's absence it is important that they provide school with details of the reason for their absence, along with the expected return to school date.

This information is used to determine whether the absence is recorded as authorised or unauthorised. The Headteacher in each school has the authority to determine whether absences are authorised or unauthorised.

If staff have not received reasons for a child's absence they will contact parents/carers requesting these details. If they cannot make contact to confirm the reason, then the absence will be recorded as an unauthorised absence (Attendance Code O). Unauthorised absences can result in an Education Penalty Notice being issued by the Local Authority.

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 or not the absence should be authorised, and to see whether any additional support is required. Children can be reluctant to attend school from time to time, or there may be other issues affecting attendance. It is never advisable for parents to 'cover' for their absence or to give-in to pressure to excuse them from attending. Covering up gives the impression that attendance does not matter, and usually makes things worse. It is always better to get in touch with school, to share concerns, and to plan a way forward.

Schools can accept the following as medical evidence:

- GP certificate
- Letter from health professional
- Appointment card / letter (dated)
- Prescription / Medication in the name of the child
- Text message from GP or NHS confirming an appointment
- Care of the chemist – date stamped slip to show medical advice has been sought
- This is not an exhaustive list

See Appendix 3 for advice in relation to required absence periods for identified health issues.

In situations where a child's attendance record is of concern, usual practice would be for parents / carers to be invited into school to meet with an appropriate member of staff. This provides an opportunity for concerns from both home and school to be shared, and for an agreed plan of action to be put in place to address any identified difficulties.

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

We acknowledge that children are at a higher risk of missing school if they have issues around their emotional wellbeing and mental health. This can then lead to further problems in terms of children falling behind with work, and of feelings of social isolation. It is particularly important in these circumstances that parents / carers work together with school to ensure that appropriate help and support is offered to respond to concerns as they arise. Early Help means taking action to support a child, young person, or/and their family as soon as a problem

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emerges. School may also seek advice about sources of help and support from the Authority's Vulnerable Children's Panel in cases where concerns about a child's unauthorised absence are ongoing. Parents may also wish to use Family Toolbox <https://familytoolbox.co.uk/> to identify possible sources of support or encourage their child to access Zillo <https://www.zillowirral.co.uk/>

3.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the student's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

All applications for leave of absence must be made in advance on the leave of absence request form which can be obtained from the school office or found in the appendices of this policy.

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

The student's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4 APPROVAL FOR TERM-TIME ABSENCE

In line with Government guidance, leave of absence in term time will only be considered in the most exceptional of circumstances. The principles for defining exceptional are: rare, significant, unavoidable and short, with unavoidable meaning an event that could not reasonably be scheduled at another time.

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's education and parents are discouraged from withdrawing their child from school during term time and we ask all parents to consider that **that any savings you may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to your child's education.**

There is no automatic entitlement in law to a leave of absence in school time to go on holiday.

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and may attract sanctions such as an Education Penalty Notice.

4.1 Absence and Punctuality Procedures:

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

- Follow up on their absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason
- Ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use

4.2 First Day Contact

Where a child is absent from school and school have not received any verbal or written communication from the parent, then a first day contact process will be initiated.

If a child is absent:

- School will telephone parents/carers to advise that their child is not in school and no reason for absence has been given. This will be done through the Arbor call system and/or follow up calls from a member of staff.
- School will telephone any other persons on the student's contact list if they are unable to make contact with the parent.

Parents may receive a home welfare visit from either school staff or Merseyside Police in order to ensure the safety of you and your child.

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If because of medical and/or mental health needs, the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, a referral may be made to The Home Education Service which is a local authority service based at 1 Pilgrim Street, Birkenhead, Wirral, CH41 5EH

It provides temporary, continuing education for children who cannot attend their mainstream school, LA funded special school or alternative provision because of their medical and/or mental health needs.

Admissions: There is a dual referral process to access support from the Home Education Service; a medical referral which is supported by a school referral.

Medical referrals must come from a paediatrician, NHS specialist consultant, CAMHS psychiatrist or senior CAMHS therapist/psychologist. The medical referral is the trigger for students to be eligible for home education, school referrals alone cannot usually be considered.

4.3 Lateness and punctuality

A student who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

Poor punctuality is **not acceptable**. If your child misses the start of the day they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving students also disrupt lessons and this can be embarrassing and upsetting for the child.

Lateness can also encourage absence as some students would rather not attend school at all than arrive late.

If lateness becomes a regular occurrence, it will be treated in the same way as unauthorised absence, with parents/carers being contacted and invited into school to discuss the situation.

How we manage lateness:

- Each child is expected to be in school at the start of the school day
- AM registers are marked at 8:40am and your child will receive a late mark if they are not in by that time. At 9:00am the registers will be closed. PM registers are marked at the start of lesson 4 at 1pm.
- If your child arrives in school between 8:40am and 9.30am, they will receive a LATE mark.
- In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after 9.30am they will receive a mark that shows them to be present on site, but this will not count as a present mark in law and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. This means that you may face the possibility of an Education Penalty Notice if the problem persists.
- Any late students should enter school through the main entrance.
- If a child arrives unaccompanied by a parent/carer the staff will ask the student to offer a reason for lateness and this will be followed up by a phone call.
- If lateness becomes a regular occurrence parents/carers will receive a phone call to enquire about reasons and offer support as necessary. Parents/carers may also be requested to attend Punctuality Panel Meetings.

4.4 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels via Progress Updates, Arbor and through Class Charts (further detail to be added here.)

5 AUTHORISED AND UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

5.1 Types of absence

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school, as either **AUTHORISED**

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or **UNAUTHORISED**. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for reasons such as illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Acceptable reasons for an authorised absence:

- Leave of absence authorised by the school but not a holiday (Code C)
- Excluded from school but no alternative provision made (Code E)
- Holiday authorised by the school (Code H)
- Illness (Code I)
- Medical or dental appointments (Code M)
- Religious Observance (Code R):

where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the student's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart

- Study Leave (Code S)
- Traveller students travelling for occupational purposes (Code T):

this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the student is attending educational provision

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. It is this type of absence which can lead to the Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings and includes:

- Holiday not authorised by the school (Code G)
- Reason for absence not yet provided (Code N)
- Absent from school without authorisation (Code O) This may include shopping and birthdays.
- Arrival in school after registration closed (Code U)

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. It is important that you inform the school if your child is experiencing any issues which impact on attendance.

In the case of unauthorised absences, an Education Penalty Notice may be issued. Head Teachers may submit a written request to the Attendance Service using the appropriate proforma asking for a Warning Letter and subsequently an Education Penalty Notice to be issued to parents/carers.

Persistent Absenteeism (PA) is when a student misses 10% or more (19 days) of their schooling across the full school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing great harm and parents' and students' complete support is needed to address this.

Schools will give priority to any student either at the PA level or at danger of reaching it and parents/carers will be informed of this immediately so that together a plan can be agreed and put in place to get that child back into school.

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ATTENDANCE RATES AND SUBSEQUENT ACTION:

Attendance Rate	Absence Rate	PHS Action
100%-95%	0%-5%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rewards issued An automated message from school to confirm any absence. When absent, School will request a reason from home. Form Tutors will speak to students about an absence and offer support if appropriate.
95%-92%	5%-8%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year Teams will meet with students to discuss absence and initiate intervention, if appropriate An attendance "concern" letter may be sent home offering support An Attendance Support Plan may be implemented and issued to parents/carers if appropriate
92%-90%	8%-10%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Panel Meeting will be arranged for the student and parents / carers, The Attendance Support Plan will be implemented or reviewed, and issued to parents/carers. Referral to Learning Support / Student Services support as appropriate. Fixed penalty notice and prosecution will be discussed. A 4 weekly review meeting will be arranged. Head of Learning Support will be consulted regarding any SEND student.
90%-80%	10-20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Panel Meeting will be arranged. An Attendance Support plan will be implemented reviewed, and issued to parents/carers. No improvement may trigger a Fixed Penalty Notice and the preparation of court documents. Head of Learning Support will be consulted regarding any SEND student.
80-70%	20-30%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Panel Meeting will be arranged. An Attendance Support plan will be implemented / reviewed and issued to parents/carers. If there is no further improvement a legal letter will be issued and a legal attendance meeting with SLT and Governors will take place. No improvement will trigger a Fixed Penalty notice and the preparation of court papers. Head of Learning Support will be consulted regarding any SEND student.
Below 70%	30%+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safeguarding referral to be made to the Early Help Team Community Matters citing Educational Neglect or IFD (Integrated Front Door) if appropriate. Missing in Education form to be completed if appropriate Attendance Locality Officer will advise if school should proceed to prosecution Multi-agency meeting to be arranged if appropriate. Head of Student Services and Head of Learning Support will work together to engage families and initiate appropriate support and intervention.

The electronic registration system provides many reports and information that assist the school to monitor attendance. These reports will be accessed when relevant and provide information to assist the school to strategically manage attendance issues. The LA will also have access to this information and will use the reports to support their role.

6 UNDERSTANDING BARRIERS TO ATTENDANCE

Whilst any child may occasionally have time off school because they are too unwell to attend, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any barriers preventing regular attendance are best resolved between the school, the parents and the child. If a parent thinks their child is reluctant to attend school, then we will work with that family to understand the root problem and provide any necessary support. We can use outside agencies to help with this, such as the School Nurse, Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing support services, a Child and Family Support Worker or the relevant Local Authority team/s. Where outside agencies are supporting the family, you may be invited to attend a Team Around the Family meeting (TAF) to consider what is working well and what needs to improve. An individual support plan will be agreed and subsequently reviewed.

Some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include pupils who suffer from long-term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities, or other vulnerabilities. High expectations of attendance remain in place for these pupils, however we will work with families and pupils to support improved attendance whilst being mindful of the additional barriers faced. We can discuss reasonable adjustments and additional support from external partners, where appropriate.

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

7 STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING ATTENDANCE

Prenton High School recognises and celebrates good and improved attendance. A range of strategies are used and some examples are listed below:

- Attendance has a high profile in whole school assemblies each week;
- Prenton Hero (Here, Everyday, Ready, Ontime) form competition
- There are whole school Attendance displays which are updated regularly;
- 'Sweets and Tweets' presentation for forms with 100% attendance;
- Weekly email via Class Charts to celebrate students with 100% attendance for the previous week
- Termly certificates to recognise students who have reached the school target attendance
- Letters are sent home to recognise and celebrate improved attendance (especially where a student has been in the category of "persistently absent", but has now achieved above 90% attendance);
- Year Leader Rewards
- End of Term Reward Trips
- End of Term 'In to Win' competition draw
- Positive behaviour records
- Positive Attendance telephone calls, letters, emails and postcards

8 ATTENDANCE MONITORING

Prenton High School will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data through Arbor and Fischer Family Trust (FFT).
- Monitor attendance and absence data half termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual student level.
- Collate weekly attendance and absence data to identify trends within specific cohorts of students and organise intervention where absences may be a cause for concern.

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- Monitor Individual student attendance data, year group data and the attendance data of vulnerable groups through our internal tracking systems and intervention organised as appropriate.
- Monitor the use of specific attendance codes and how they impact data, as well as individual year group data, which includes home visit and meeting information.
- Monitor attendance through student and family meetings and home visits.

The Head of Student Services, Head of Learning Support, Attendance Improvement Worker and Year Leads will meet regularly to monitor attendance and identify appropriate intervention.

School also work with the Attendance Locality Officer to monitor school attendance, agree intervention and refer to external agencies to meet the needs of individual students and specific cohorts of students.

Student-level absence data will be collated each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share with the governing board.

8.1 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify students or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these students and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

8.2 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to Year Leads, and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with students and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

8.3 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a student misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a student misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents/carers of students who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance

9 SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND THE LAW

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

Parents may be recognised differently under education law, than under family law. Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 states that a 'parent', in relation to a child or young person, includes any person who is

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not a parent (from which can be inferred 'biological parent') but who has parental responsibility, or who has care of the child.

A person typically has care of a child or young person if they are the person with whom the child lives, either full or part time and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their biological or legal relationship is with the child.

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

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

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

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

9.1 National Framework for Penalty Notices

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

The 10 school week period can span different terms, school years or education settings.

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

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 authorise up to ten days of absence each academic year.

It is a rule of this school that a leave of absence shall not be granted in term time unless there are reasons considered to be exceptional by the headteacher, irrespective of the child's overall attendance. Only the headteacher or his/her designate (**not the local authority**) may authorise such a request and all

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applications for a leave of absence must be made in writing, in advance, on the prescribed form provided by the school. Where a parent removes a child after their application for leave was refused or where no application was made to the school, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. It is likely that penalty notices will be requested, in line with the National Framework in respect of each parent believed to be involved in the absence.

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

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

10 REMOVAL FROM ROLL

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

School can only remove a child from their school roll under certain circumstances and when they do so they are required to inform the Local Authority of the details of the child and their new school and any change of address. In order for them to be able to do this parents must provide these details to school preferably before leaving the school.

If a child stops attending a school and their whereabouts are unknown despite any enquiries made by the school, then the school will be required to refer the child to the Local Authority as a **Child Missing in Education**.

11 ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION

One of the grounds under which a child can be removed from a school roll is if the parent notifies the Headteacher in writing that they are withdrawing their child from the school and taking full responsibility for the child's education. Again, the school must notify the Local Authority of this and they will make arrangements for the parent and child to be visited.

The Local Authority, as the Authority will then have responsibility for assessing the suitability of education that is being provided for the child. The Authority must first consent to elective home education when a child has special educational needs and is placed in specialist provision.

Parents should be aware that this 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. If after a period of Elective Home Education a parent decides that their child's needs are best met back in a school then the first steps should be to try and return to their previous school.

Whilst it is a parent's right to choose this option for their child, if the child is placed in a special school the local authority must agree to the child being Electively Home Educated.

12 PART-TIME TIMETABLES AND RE-INTEGRATION PLANS

Sometimes some students are not able to manage being in school full-time especially after a period of absence or when they are moving to a special school or base from a mainstream school or vice versa. In these situations a part-time timetable may be agreed however this should only be a short term measure as the time that the child is not in school still counts as an absence and is recorded using the Code C2

Schools are required to submit information about such arrangements to Wirral Attendance Service using the template included as Appendix 12. Examples of when a part-time timetable may be considered are:

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

12.1 Children with Medical Needs

School's Governing Body must ensure that arrangements are in place to support pupils with medical conditions in school. Individual healthcare plans should be in place, and these should provide clarity about what needs to be done, when, and by whom in order to ensure that children with medical needs may access and enjoy the same opportunities at school as any other child (see DfE statutory guidance issued in April 2014: 'Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions').

The primary aim of educating children and young people who have medical needs is to minimise, as far as possible, the disruption to their normal schooling by allowing them to continue their education and to progress as much as their medical needs allow. 'Medical needs' encompass both physical health and mental / emotional health issues.

In circumstances where a child has complex health needs and is medically unfit to attend school, referral may be made to The Home & Continuing Education Service which is a local authority service currently based at Pilgrim Street Arts Centre. Medical referrals to the Home & Continuing Education Service must come jointly from both school and an appropriate health professional.

13 CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER

The attendance of children in the care of the Local Authority is monitored by the Headteacher and Governors of the Virtual School. The use of the B and C codes for these children must be agreed with the Headteacher of the Virtual School. The use of an N in the register for these children should be very rare as reasons for their absence should be obtained within the same day either directly or via the child's social worker.

It is essential that contact is made with a child's social worker and the Authority's LACES team as soon as attendance concerns emerge. Attendance staff should routinely inform school's designated teacher for looked after children of their looked after children's attendance rates.

14 MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed regularly by the Local Authority and updated in accordance with any new legislation or guidance or changes to any other relevant procedures or documents.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

Education Penalty Notices Procedure for Unauthorised Absences and Exclusions

Enforcement Procedure

Children Missing in Education Procedure

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy: The way we do things here.

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APPENDIX 1 - ATTENDANCE CODES

A set of standard codes are used consistently within the register. These codes are input into the electronic register as required and are used to give depth of meaning to the register and provide statistical meaning to the absences.

Nationally prescribed registration codes should be used consistently by all schools. These codes are used to give depth of meaning to the register and to provide statistical meaning to absences. Codes are all collected by DfE via download to the School Census System.

CODE	MEANING	CRITERIA	STATISTICAL VALUE
B	Attending any other approved Educational Activity	<p>B code can only be used if the pupil is present at the activity under arrangements by school or LA in the session for which it is recorded</p> <p>The place is somewhere other than the school, another school where the pupil is registered, or a place where educational provision has been arranged for the pupil by a local authority</p> <p>The activity is of an educational nature</p> <p>The school has approved the pupil's attendance at the place of the activity</p> <p>The activity is supervised by a person considered by the school to have the appropriate skills, training, experience and knowledge to ensure that the activity takes place safely and fulfils the educational purpose for which the pupil's attendance has been approved</p>	Attending an approved educational activity (present)
C	Leave of absence exceptional circumstances	<p>Exceptional circumstances</p> <p>No blanket approach</p> <p>School discretion</p> <p>Generally a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance</p>	Authorised absence
C1	Leave of absence – performance or regulated employment abroad	<p>Performance license issued by LA or Body of Persons Approval issued by LA or Justice of Peace has given license for pupil to go abroad for performance or regulated purpose</p>	Authorised absence
C2	Leave of absence – compulsory school age pupil subject to part time timetable	<p>Exceptional circumstances</p> <p>If the school and a parent who the pupil normally lives with have agreed that, exceptionally, the pupil should temporarily be educated only part time temporary</p>	Authorised absence

D	Dual registered at another school	<p>The school at which the pupil is scheduled to attend must record the pupil's attendance and absence with the relevant code</p> <p>Code d may only be used by either school for a session where the pupil is scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered</p> <p>Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby all unexpected and unexplained absences are followed up promptly</p>	Not a possible attendance (neither present nor absent)
E	Suspended or Permanently excluded with no alternative provision made	The pupil is suspended from school or permanently excluded from school, but their name is still entered in the admission register and no alternative provision has been made for the pupil to continue their education.	Authorised absence
G	Holiday not granted by school	<p>The school has not granted a leave of absence and the pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday.</p> <p>A school cannot grant leave of absence retrospectively.</p> <p>If the parent did not apply in advance, leave of absence should not be granted.</p>	Unauthorised absence
I	Illness (not medical appointment)	The pupil is unable to attend due to illness (Both physical and mental health related). Schools should advise parents to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness.	Authorised absence
J1	Leave of absence for interview	<p>Agreement in advance</p> <p>Application by parent child normally lives with</p> <p>In session absence recorded</p>	Authorised absence
K	Attending Education Provision arranged by LA	<p>The nature of provision must be recorded.</p> <p>Code K can only be used if the child is present at the provision</p>	Attending an approved educational activity (present)
L	Late arrival before register is closed	The pupil was absent when the register started being taken but arrives before the register is closed	Attending (present)
M	Leave of absence for Medical or Dental Appointment	<p>Agreement in advance</p> <p>Application by parent child normally lives with</p> <p>Minimum time necessary</p> <p>Where pupil is absent at registration</p>	Authorised absence
N	Reason for absence not yet established	<p>Where absence is recorded as code N in the attendance register, the correct code should be entered as soon as the reason is ascertained, but no more than 5 school days after the session.</p> <p>Code N must not therefore be left on the pupil's attendance record indefinitely; if a reason for absence cannot be established within 5 school</p>	Unauthorised absence

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		days, school must amend the pupil's record to Code O	
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	Where no reason for absence is established or the school is not satisfied that the reason given is one that would be recorded using one of the codes statistically classified as authorised	Unauthorised absence
P	Participating in a Sporting Activity. P code can only be used if the pupil is present at the activity.	<p>P code can only be used if the pupil is present at the activity. The sporting activity must take place during the session for which it is recorded</p> <p>The place is somewhere other than the school, another school where the pupil is registered, or a place where educational provision has been arranged for the pupil by a local authority</p> <p>The activity is of an educational nature</p> <p>The school has approved the pupil's attendance at the place of the activity</p> <p>The activity is supervised by a person considered by the school to have the appropriate skills, training, experience and knowledge to ensure that the activity takes place safely and fulfils the educational purpose for which the pupil's attendance has been approved</p>	Attending an approved educational activity (present)
Q	Unable to attend school because of lack of access arrangements	There is a lack of access arrangements for a pupil whose home is in England if (a) a local authority have a duty to make travel arrangements in relation to the pupil for the purpose of facilitating the pupil's attendance at the school and have failed to discharge that duty (b) a local authority have a duty to make travel arrangements in relation to the pupil and have failed to discharge that duty or (c) the school is an independent school that is not a qualifying school and (i) the school is not within walking distance of the pupil's home (ii) no suitable arrangements have been made by a local authority for boarding accommodation for the pupil at or near the school and (iii) no suitable arrangements have been made by a local authority for enabling the pupil to become a registered pupil at a qualifying school nearer to their home.	Not possible attendance
R	Religious Observance	The pupil is absent on a day that is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body the parent(s) belong to (not the parents themselves)	Authorised absence
S	Leave of absence for studying for public examination		Authorised absence
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	The pupil is a mobile child and their parent(s) is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with them. A mobile child is a child of compulsory school age who has no fixed abode and whose parent(s) is engaged in a	Authorised absence

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		<p>trade or business of such nature as to require them to travel from place to place</p> <p>To help ensure continuity of education for pupils, when their parent(s) is travelling for occupational purposes in England, it is expected that the pupil should attend a school where their parent(s) is travelling and be dual registered at that school and their main school</p>	
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	<p>Where a pupil has arrived late after the register has closed but before the end of session</p> <p>Schools should actively discourage late arrival, be alert to patterns of late arrival and seek an explanation from the parent. All schools are expected to set out in their attendance policy the length of time the register will be open, after which a pupil will be marked absent. This should be the same for every session and not longer than 30 minutes.</p>	Unauthorised absence
V	Attending an Educational Visit or trip	<p>The pupil is attending a place, other than the school or any other school at which they are a registered pupil, for an educational visit or trip</p> <p>Arranged by or on behalf of the school and supervised by a member of school staff</p>	Attending an approved educational activity (present)
W	Attending work experience	<p>W code can only be used if the pupil is present at the activity under arrangements by school or LA in the session for which it is recorded</p> <p>The place is somewhere other than the school, another school where the pupil is registered, or a place where educational provision has been arranged for the pupil by a local authority</p> <p>The activity is of an educational nature</p> <p>The school has approved the pupil's attendance at the place for the activity</p> <p>The activity is supervised by a person considered by the school to have the appropriate skills, training, experience and knowledge to ensure that the activity takes place safely and fulfils the educational purpose for which the pupil's attendance has been approved</p>	Attending an approved educational activity (present)
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school	<p>For part time attendance</p> <p>Absence for timetabled sessions to use appropriate code and not X</p>	Not a possible attendance(neither present or absent)
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not been available	<p>The pupil is not able to attend because the school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport to and from school that is normally provided for the pupil by the school or Local Authority is not available</p>	Not a possible attendance

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Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread travel disruption	The pupil is unable to attend the school because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local national or international emergency	Not a possible attendance
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed	Part of the school premises is unavoidably out of use and the pupil is one of those that the school considers cannot practicably be accommodated in those parts of the premises that remain in use	Not a possible attendance
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed	Where a school was planned to be open for a session but the school is closed unexpectedly (eg due to adverse weather) the attendance register is not taken as usual because there is no school session. Instead every pupil listed in the admission register at the time must be marked with code Y4 to record the fact that the school is closed	Not a possible attendance
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention	The pupil is unable to attend the school because they are : In police detention Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing or Detained under a sentence of detention A pupil's absence should be recorded under code Y7 if they are unable to attend because they are serving a community based part of a sentence of detention, referral order or youth rehabilitation order that requires them to be absent during the school day	Not a possible attendance
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law	The pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be: Contrary to any guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of infection or disease published by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care or Prohibited by any legislation relating to the incidence or transmission of infection or disease	Not a possible attendance
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause	This code should be used only where something in the nature of an emergency has prevented the pupil from attending the session in question. The unavoidable cause must be something that affects the pupil not the parent. The fact that a parent has done all they can to secure the attendance of the pupil at the school does not, in itself mean the pupil has been prevented by unavoidable cause. Schools must also record the nature of the unavoidable cause.	Not a possible attendance

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APPENDIX 2. – APPLICATION FOR LEAVE DURING TERM TIME

Parents/Carers must ask permission for their child to be absent during term time, and it is at the Headteacher's discretion to decide whether or not the absence will be authorised. The Headteacher may authorise leave during term time for *exceptional circumstances only*. If leave is taken without permission, or no application is made, parents/carers risk being issued with an Education Penalty Notice.

Parents/Carers wishing to apply for their child to have leave of absence from school should complete this form and return it to school for authorisation at least two weeks before the proposed leave.

PARENT'S/CARER'S SECTION			
Surname of child			First name
Date of birth		Year	Class
Full name of parent (1)			
Address of parent (1)			
Postcode			Telephone No.
Full name of parent (2)			Telephone No.
Address of parent (2)			
Do you consider this request to be due to exceptional circumstances? If so, please outline the reasons why			
Departure and return date			
Would your child miss any national tests or examinations?			Yes / No
Has she/he had leave during term-time in the last 12 months? (If so, please give dates, reasons, and number of school days leave)			Yes / No
Are there any other siblings? If yes please state their name and the school they attend			Yes / No
Parent/Carer signature			Date
SCHOOL SECTION			
Holiday in Term Time	(i) approved _____ school days		(ii) not approved _____ school days
Reasons			
Date discussed with parent/ carer and/or date informed of approval/ non-approval			
Headteacher's signature		Date	

APPENDIX 3 – CHILDREN MISSING IN EDUCATION REFERRAL FORM



CME 01
Sept2020

CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION (CME01 REFERRAL FORM)

TO BE COMPLETED FOR CHILDREN WHO:

- have relocated and a forwarding school or new home address remains unknown following reasonable enquiries undertaken by the school;
- have been absent for 10 consecutive school days and school have been unable to establish their whereabouts following all reasonable enquiries;
- are not believed to be registered at any school nor receiving a suitable education otherwise than at school.

Where there is concern for a child's welfare or safety, appropriate Safeguarding Procedures must also be followed.

REMOVING A STUDENT FROM SCHOOL ROLL

Students without a forwarding school destination should **not** automatically be removed from school roll unless school have confirmed that another local authority or school establishment has taken or will take responsibility for the student's education. This should always be confirmed in writing. Further advice can be obtained from Wirral Attendance Service on **0151 666 3433**.

(This Referral Form may also be used by any other council department/external agencies or Local Authorities to refer a potential child or children you are concerned are missing from education. Please complete the form to the best of your knowledge/ability).

Name of student				DOB	
School (or last known school)				Gender	
UPN				Ethnicity	
Date last attended school				Year Group	
Please indicate status	EHCP	CLA	CIN	CP	
Child's last known/ current home address & postcode					
Child's new home address & postcode (if applicable)					

Names of sibling/s or other children at the address	DOB	M/F	School (if applicable)
Name of parents or carers	Relationship	Home address (if different to child)	Telephone/Email details
Other emergency contacts (extended family, etc.)			



ENQUIRIES MADE BY SCHOOL TO LOCATE MISSING STUDENT

Has the school tried to contact the student, parents, extended family on emergency contact numbers or in writing by email/text? Please include date/s & outcome/s	
Has the child been discussed with the Locality Attendance Officer? Has school made a home visit? Please summarise and include date/s & outcome/s	
Have school staff, the student's friends or any siblings' schools been contacted to establish if they have any information which might help to locate the missing student? Please include date/s & outcome/s	
Is the student known to Social Care? If so, has school liaised with the named Social Worker?	
Are there any other agencies involved with the student or family? If so, please include name/agency & telephone number/s	

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	Yes/No
Are there any concerns for the safety and welfare of the child or family members?	
Has a referral been made to the Integrated Front Door (Wirral Children's Social Care)?	
Are you aware of any risks to officers visiting the home? <i>E.g. History of domestic abuse, aggressive dogs</i>	
Are you aware if the child is known to the Compass Team?	
What <u>date/location</u> was the child last sighted by school or another professional?	

Please share any background information you feel is useful and indicate if you have attached additional information and/or correspondence to this referral ie. Register, letter/email to/from parent etc	
NAME	POSITION
SCHOOL or AGENCY	
TELEPHONE / MOBILE	DATE OF REFERRAL
EMAIL	

Please send this referral to Wirral Attendance Service by secure email to cme@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDIX 4 - STUDENT "BACK TO SCHOOL" MEETING FOLLOWING AN ABSENCE:

Attendance Percentage	Action
90-100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Back to school meeting with Form Tutor: • Is student fully recovered? • Is subject support needed? • Do they have everything they need to catch up on work missed? • Is any other support needed?
75-90%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Back to school meeting with Year Team: • Is student fully recovered? • Is there anything impacting upon attendance which they need support with? • What intervention is already in place? • Is additional subject / wellbeing support needed? • Do they have everything they need to catch up on work missed?
50-75%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Back to school meeting with Attendance Team: • What was the reason for the absence? • Is student fully recovered? • Is there a particular trend / pattern that needs further exploration? • Is subject/wellbeing support needed? • Is there anything impacting upon attendance which they need support with? • What further intervention is needed?
Below 50%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Back to school meeting with Head of Student Services or SENco: • What was the reason for the absence? • Is student fully recovered? • Is there a particular trend / pattern that needs further exploration? • Is subject/wellbeing support needed? • Is there anything impacting upon attendance which they need support with? • What further intervention is needed?

APPENDIX 5 - HEALTH ADVICE

Infection	Absence Period	Comments
Athlete's Foot	None	Athlete's foot is not a serious condition. Treatment is recommended.
Chicken Pox	Five days from onset of rash and all the lesions have crusted over.	
Cold Sores (Herpes simplex)	None.	Avoid kissing and contact with the sores are generally mild and heal without treatment.
Conjunctivitis	None.	If an out/break occurs, consult your local HPT.
Diarrhoea and vomiting	Whilst symptomatic and 48 hours after the last symptoms.	See section in chapter 9.
Diphtheria *	Exclusion is essential. Always consult with your local HPT.	Preventable by vaccination. Family contacts must be excluded until cleared to return by your local HPT.
Flu (influenza)	Until recovered	Report breakouts to your local HPT.
Glandular Fever	None	
Hand, Foot and Mouth	None	Contact your local HPT if many children are affected. Exclusion may be considered in some circumstances.
Headlice	None	Treatment recommended.
Hepatitis A*	Exclude until 7 days after onset of jaundice (or 7 days after symptom onset if no jaundice).	In an outbreak of Hepatitis, A, your local HPT will advise on control measures.
Hepatitis B*, C*, HIV	None	Hepatitis B and C and HIV are blood borne viruses that are not infectious through casual contact. Contact your local HPT for more advice.
Impetigo	Until lesions are crusted/healed or 48 hours after treatment.	Antibiotics treatment speeds healing and reduces the infectious period.
Measles*	Four days from onset of rash and recovered.	Preventable by vaccination (2 doses of MMR). Promote MMR for all pupils and staff. Pregnant staff contacts should seek prompt advice from their GP or midwife.
Meningococcal Meningitis/ septicaemia	Until recovered	Meningitis ACWY and B are preventable by vaccination (see national schedule @ www.nhs.uk) Your local HPT will advise on any action needed.
Meningitis* due to other bacteria	Until recovered	Hib and Pneumococcal meningitis are preventable by vaccination (see national schedule @ www.nhs.uk) Your local HPT will advise on any action needed.

Infection	Absence Period	Comments
Meningitis* Viral	None	Milder Illness than bacterial meningitis. Siblings or other close contacts of a case need to be excluded.
MRSA	None	Good hygiene, in particular handwashing and environmental cleaning, are important to minimise spread. Contact your local HPT for more information.
Mumps*	Five days after onset of swelling	Preventable by vaccination with 2 doses of MMR (see national schedule @ www.nhs.uk). Promote MMR for all pupils and staff.
Ringworm	Not usually required	Treatment is needed.
Rubella (German Measles)	Four days from onset	Preventable by vaccination with 2 doses of MMR (see national schedule @ www.nhs.uk). Promote MMR for all pupils and staff. Pregnant staff contacts should seek prompt advice from their GP or Midwife.
Scarlet Fever	Excluded until 24 hours of appropriate antibiotics	A person is infectious for 2-3 weeks if antibiotics are not administered. In the event of 2 or more cases please contact your local HPT.
Scabies	Can return after first treatment	Household and close contacts require treatment at the same time.
Slapped cheek/fifth disease/ parvo virus B19	None (once rash has developed	Pregnant contacts of case should consult with their GP or Midwife.
Threadworms	None	Treatment recommended for child & household
Tonsillitis	None	There are many causes but most cases are due to viruses and do not need an antibiotic treatment.
Tuberculosis (TB)	Always consult with your local HPT BEFORE disseminating information to staff/ parents/ carers	Only pulmonary (lung) TB is infectious to others. Needs close, prolonged contact spread.
Warts and Verrucae	None	Verrucae should be covered in swimming pools, gyms and changing rooms.
Whooping Cough (Pertussis)*	Two days from starting antibiotics treatment, or 21 days from onset of symptoms if no antibiotics	Preventable by vaccination. After treatment, Non-infectious coughing may continue for any weeks. Your local HPT will organise any contact tracing.

*Denotes a notification disease. It is a statutory requirement that doctors report a notifiable disease to the proper officer of the local authority (usually a consultant in communicable disease control).

Health protection Agency (2010) Guidance on infection control in schools and other childcare settings. HPA: London

APPENDIX 6 - GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOLS ON THE USE OF REDUCED TIMETABLES**1. Purpose**

This guidance is intended to safeguard both pupil and school, should a reduced timetable be required. It is intended to establish agreed approaches for all maintained Wirral Schools; Academy Schools; Free Schools, Independent Special Schools and alternative provision settings, in the appropriate use of reduced timetables (sometimes referred to as 'part-time' timetables).

2. Introduction

The Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to identify and track any pupil missing education. Any pupil on a reduced timetable is potentially at risk of missing education and therefore falls within this remit.

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Local authorities have a duty to establish, as far as it is possible to do so, the identity of children of compulsory school age who are missing education in their area.

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. School and college staff should follow the school's or college's procedures for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

Schools should put in place appropriate safeguarding policies, procedures and responses for children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions. It is essential that all staff are alert to signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.

The new Local Authority inspection framework now includes the need for each authority to report robustly on school age children who are not in full-time education. This establishes the need for Wirral Council to have guidance in place for all pupils on reduced timetables.

It is important to highlight that there is no statutory basis upon which to establish a reduced timetable, however, in exceptional circumstances, schools may need to implement one in order to support a pupil who cannot attend school full-time for a short, agreed period. The Statutory Guidance Working Together to Improve School Attendance (applicable from August 2024) states:

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs.

Schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority can grant a leave of absence, under regulation 11(6) to temporarily reduce the timetable of a pupil of compulsory school age to part-time, if the school and a parent who the pupil normally lives with have agreed that, exceptionally, the pupil should temporarily be educated only part-time and have agreed the times and dates when the pupil will, during the period of temporary part-time education, be expected to attend the school.

Schools that are not required to follow regulation 11, must still use this code to record when a pupil is absent with leave because they are subject to a part-time timetable in line with an agreement between the school and a parent the pupil normally lives with that the pupil should temporarily be educated part-time.

Where a pupil is receiving a full-time education, but only part-time at the school in question (e.g. dual registration, part-time unregistered alternative provision or flexischooling) this code must not be used and the appropriate code for why the pupil is not in school for that session should be used.

Wirral Council remains committed to supporting all children's entitlement to a full-time education, and makes clear the requirement that a reduced timetable cannot be implemented without written agreement from parent / carer and agreement from the EHCP Coordinator at Wirral Council where appropriate. Where a part-time timetable is in place, this should always be in the best interests of the child.

Schools have a safeguarding responsibility for all pupils on their roll and therefore must be aware that even with parental agreement to any arrangement they make, they are responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils attending any off-site provision during school hours.

3. Full-time Education

- All education should be suitable to a child's age, ability and aptitude, taking into account any special educational need.
- There is an assumption that pupils should receive full-time education consistent with their Key Stage. Schools have a statutory duty to provide full time education for all pupils. It is illegal for schools to discriminate against pupils on the basis of their special educational needs and/or disability
- A timetable is considered reduced when it consists of something less than that which is provided to the majority of the pupil's peers in that setting.
- Guidance issued suggests the following periods as full time:

Age	Hours
5–7	21
8–11	23.5
12–14	24
14–16	25

4. When might a reduced timetable be used?

As part of an in-school support package: The school, parent/carer and other professionals agree that a short-term (no longer than 6 weeks) reduced timetable would support a pupil who has become disaffected, to regain success. This would be a closely monitored intervention to address and manage the impact of significantly challenging behaviour or emotional or social needs.

- **Medical reasons:** A pupil has a serious medical condition where recovery is the priority outcome. These arrangements would be part of a "medical plan" agreed between the school and health professionals. Please see Supporting Pupils at School with medical conditions before offering a reduced timetable for this reason. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions--3>
- **Reintegration:** As part of a planned reintegration into school following an extended period out of school following exclusion, non-attendance, school refusal, etc. (no longer than 6 weeks).

5. Good Practice

In circumstances where the school consider that it may be necessary to establish a reduced timetable for a pupil, the school should:

- Notify the Attendance Service of its intention to implement a reduced timetable for a pupil. The appropriate form needs to be completed and submitted via schoolattendance@wirral.gov.uk or via Anycomms.
- Convene a meeting to discuss the proposals for a reduced timetable. This must include parent / carer. This will also include Wirral Council where the pupil is a looked after child (a member of Virtual School), has an allocated social worker, or has a statement of SEN / Education Health and Care Plan (the EHCP Coordinator) and may include Early Help professionals who form part of any Team around the Family.
- Review the schedule of supportive interventions that will accompany this reduction in time at school
- Develop outcome and exit strategies that will identify to all stakeholders when the intervention has been successful

- Confirm and communicate the named person responsible for the plan within the school
- Consider safeguarding measures for the duration of the reduced timetable. The school must carry out a risk assessment before implementation and the details recorded.
- Ensure that the parent / carer agrees the plan and teaching hours. A reduction in hours cannot be implemented without parental / carer agreement.
- Consider completing an Early Help Assessment Tool to establish if there are wider needs and support is required from other partner agencies.
- Monitor the overall use of this strategy within the school and report this to governors each term
- Ensure effective communication with parents / carer and Wirral Council with regard to progress towards full-time reintegration to school.

6. Monitoring and Review

The school must:

- Send a signed copy of the form to the Attendance Service as soon as it becomes operational.
- Send a copy of subsequent reviews and any extension plans (up to a maximum of 6 weeks)
- Record the child's attendance accurately on the attendance register
- Use the C2 code when a pupil has a reduced timetable including sessions which have been mutually agreed not to involve attendance at school or an alternative provision. The school must be satisfied that appropriate arrangements are in place for the care and welfare of the pupil during the time when they would otherwise be at school.
- Use the B code if the pupil is receiving off-site provision, approved, and monitored on a daily basis by the school. This code should not be used for any unsupervised educational activity or where the pupil is at home doing school work.
- Monitor the overall use of this strategy within the school and report this to governors termly.
- Ensure effective communication with parents / carer and Wirral Council with regard to progress towards full-time reintegration to school.
- **For Census purposes record these pupils as Full-time pupils.**

7. Wirral Council Responsibilities

- Request copies of the agreed plans in relation to part time education.
- Ensure that reduced timetables are appropriately recorded.
- Ensure that copies of part time education plans are shared with Children's Social Care where pupils are subject to Child Protection or Child in Need plans.
- Ensure a copy of the plan is provided to the Virtual School when a pupil is Looked After.
- Discuss any cases with schools when a pupil has been on a reduced timetable for longer than 6 weeks or longer than the specified period in the original plan
- Regularly monitor data in relation to the use of part time timetables and if concerns arise report back to the school
- Challenge any inappropriate use of part time timetables

8. For advice and support please contact:

- The Locality Attendance officer for your school
- Damian Stormont, Attendance Service Manager, 0151 666 4964 – damianstormont@wirral.gov.uk

PART-TIME TIMETABLE AGREEMENT FORM
ALL BOXES MUST BE COMPLETED OTHERWISE THE FORM WILL BE RETURNED
PLEASE READ GUIDANCE BEFORE COMPLETING THE FORM

Pupil Forename:	Pupil Surname:		
Address:	Post Code:		
Date of Birth:	Ethnic Origin:		
Current attendance:	Year group:		
School:			
Is the pupil attending any other provision? If so, where?			
Person completing and agreeing the Part-Time Timetable:			
Who is the member of SLT overseeing Part Time Timetables?			

Is the child currently known to social care?	YES		NO
Child's social care status	CLA	CP	CiN
If yes , who is the named social worker:			
Is the social worker in agreement with this plan?	YES		NO
Is the child currently in the TAF process?	YES		NO
Is the Lead Professional aware of this plan?	YES		NO
Child's SEN status	No identified SEN	K	EHCP
Who is the EHCP Coordinator:			
Has this plan been agreed with EHCP coordinator?	YES		NO
Has the child previously had any relevant suspensions?	YES		NO
If yes, the number of sessions missed due to FTE			
What other support is the child accessing whilst on the part time timetable?			

Reason for part time timetable: please tick one option

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

Timetable (please insert the hours that the child is expected to be in school):

Week A	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
School (start and finish times)					
AP etc must state where					
Total number of hours					

Week B	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
School (start and finish times)					
AP etc must state where					
Total number of hours					

Parent 1

Title		Forename		Surname	
Address				Post Code	
Tel No.					
email					
Relationship to Pupil					

Parent 2

Title		Forename		Surname	
Address				Post Code	
Tel No.					
email					
Relationship to Pupil					

Any other comments relating to this part-time timetable including the pupil's voice, the parent's voice, the school voice and any other professional's voice:

Date of meeting agreeing the part-time timetable:	
Who attended meeting?	
Start date of part-time timetable:	
Review date of part-time timetable:	
End date of part-time timetable: This should be no later than 6 weeks after the start date and if no end date is stated we will automatically end the part time timetable on our records at the end of the half term	

I understand my child has been placed on a part-time timetable for a limited period and will be marked absent (C2) for any sessions when not in school

I have discussed the matter fully with the school and agree, during the period of the part-time timetable to:

- take full responsibility for my child when they are not in school
- ensure there is a regular flow of communication between school and home
- take full responsibility for the health and safety of my child when they are not in school

Signature (Parent/Carer):	Date:
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I give permission for my child to make their own way to and from school at the agreed times, for the duration of this part-time timetable (secondary school only).

Signature

(Parent/Carer):

Date:

During the period of the part-time timetable the school will:

- monitor the effectiveness of the part-time timetable
- hold a review on the agreed date and inform Wirral Attendance Service of the outcome
- mark the school register with a C2 for any session missed due to the agreed plan.

Signature

(School):

Date:

As the pupil on the part time timetable, I am aware that this is a time limited intervention and that if it is not working can be ended before the agreed end date. I am also aware that where other support is being offered, I must access this.

Signature

(Pupil):

Date:

APPENDIX 7 - GROUNDS FOR DELETING A PUPIL FROM THE SCHOOL ADMISSION REGISTER

	Grounds for deleting a pupil of compulsory school age from the school admission register set out in the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
1	9(1)(a) the pupil has been registered at another school, unless— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) a school attendance order naming the school is in force in relation to the pupil; (ii) the pupil is a mobile child, and the school is their main school; or (iii) the proprietor has agreed with a person with control of the pupil's attendance at the other school, or is such a person and has decided, that the pupil should be registered at more than one school
2	9(1)(b) the pupil was admitted to the school for nursery education and— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) they have completed such education and would, if they continued attending the school, be transferred to a reception, or more senior, class at the school; but (ii) the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will attend the school again;
3	9(1)(c) the pupil is also registered as a pupil at one or more other schools and— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will attend the school again; (ii) the proprietor of each other school where the pupil is registered has consented to the deletion; (iii) there is no school attendance order naming the school in force in relation to the pupil; and (iv) the pupil is not a mobile child or, if they are, the school is not their main school;
4	9(1)(d) a school attendance order relating to the pupil and formerly naming the school has been amended by the relevant local authority to substitute the name of the school with that of another school;
5	9(1)(e) a school attendance order relating to the pupil and naming the school has been revoked by the relevant local authority on the ground that arrangements have been made for the pupil to receive suitable education otherwise than at school;
6	9(1)(f) a parent of the pupil has told the proprietor in writing that the pupil will no longer attend the school after a certain day and will receive education otherwise than at school and— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) that day has passed; and (ii) there is no school attendance order naming the school in force in relation to the pupil;
7	9(1)(g) the pupil no longer normally lives a reasonable distance from the school and— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will attend the school again; and (ii) the pupil is not a boarder;

8	<p>9(1)(h) the pupil has been given leave of absence and—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the pupil has not attended the school within the ten school days immediately after the end of the period of leave; (ii) the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or an unavoidable cause; and (iii) the proprietor and the local authority have jointly made reasonable efforts to find out the pupil's location and circumstances but— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (aa) they have not succeeded; or (bb) they have succeeded, and they agree that there are no reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will attend the school again, taking into account any reasonable steps they could take (either jointly or separately) to secure the pupil's attendance;
9	<p>9(1)(i) the pupil has been continuously absent from the school for at least twenty school days and—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) none of the circumstances mentioned in Table 2 in regulation 10(3) or in any row of Table 3 in regulation 10(4) other than the final three rows applied to the pupil at any point during that period; (ii) the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or an unavoidable cause; and (iii) the proprietor and the local authority have jointly made reasonable efforts to find out the pupil's location and circumstances but— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (aa) they have not succeeded; or (bb) they have succeeded, and they agree that there are no reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will attend the school again, taking into account any reasonable steps they could take (either jointly or separately) to secure the pupil's attendance;
10	<p>9(1)(j) the pupil is detained under a sentence of detention and the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will attend the school after they cease to be detained under that sentence;</p>
11	<p>9(1)(k) the pupil has died;</p>
12	<p>9(1)(l) the pupil will be over compulsory school age by the next time the school meets and—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will attend the school again; or (ii) the pupil does not meet the academic entry requirements to be transferred to the school's sixth form
13	<p>9(1)(m) the pupil is a boarder at the school and—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the school is a school maintained by a local authority or is an Academy; (ii) charges for the pupil's board and lodging are payable by a parent of the pupil; and (iii) those charges remain unpaid by the parent at the end of the school term to which they relate
14	<p>9(1)(n) the pupil has ceased to be a pupil at the school and the school is not—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) a school maintained by a local authority; or

	(ii) an Academy; or
15	9(1)(o) the pupil has been permanently excluded from the school.

APPENDIX 8 – EMOTIONALLY BASED SCHOOL AVOIDANCE (EBSA)

The Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) strategy has been created in response to a number of children and young people who experience emotionally based barriers to attendance and/or education engagement. Led by Wirral Educational Psychology Team, in collaboration with Wirral Parent/Carer Participation Wirral, the strategy aims “to educate and empower parents / carers and professionals around emotionally based school avoidance (EBSA) to improve the emotional well-being of children, young people and their families.” The strategy has recently completed its first year of operation, which has included:

- The development and purchasing of resources for all Wirral schools
- Free training to Wirral schools and local authority staff
- Designated webpages with signposting to parent and professional support.
- The purchasing of telepresence robots, which will be rolled out to schools as an offer to support pupil re-integration.

A working group, that oversees the EBSA strategy, includes representatives from Wirral Attendance Team, further promoting multi-agency working and collaboration. By empowering professionals and families to support children and young people with emotionally based barriers to education, it is anticipated that this in turn will increase the overall attendance and education engagement of pupils by better identifying at risk pupils and implementing support at the earliest opportunity before attendance significantly declines.

[SENDLO Wirral. Wirral's Local Offer of SEND Services](#)

APPENDIX 9 – EDUCATION PENALTY NOTICES PROCEDURE**FOR UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE AND EXCLUSIONS****Introduction**

Parents are responsible for ensuring full time, regular and punctual attendance of their child, who is of compulsory school age, suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special needs they may have, at school or otherwise.

Regular and full-time attendance of pupils at school is both a legal requirement and essential for pupils to maximise their educational opportunities.

Regular attendance has been defined by the Supreme Court (6th April 2017) to mean "in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school".

Full time is the whole of the time education is being offered – ie the timetable of the school

A child reaches compulsory school age on or after their fifth birthday. If they turn 5 between 1 January and 31 March they are of compulsory school age on 31 March; if they turn 5 between 1 April and 31 August they are of compulsory school age on 31 August. If they turn 5 between 1 September and 31 December, then they are of compulsory school age on 31st December.

A child continues to be of compulsory school age until the last Friday of June in the school year that they reach sixteen.

Wirral Council seeks to ensure that every child and young person receives the maximum benefit from the education opportunities provided by the Local Authority.

Wirral Council expects that all schools have a whole school approach to attendance which ensures early intervention and support for students with attendance difficulties.

All schools must include respective reference to the possible use of legal action for unauthorised absence within their school attendance and behaviour policy.

The Local Authority has the prime responsibility for the introduction of this unauthorised absence procedure with schools and Merseyside Police being partners.

The purpose of this local code of conduct is to ensure that penalty notices for school absence are issued in a manner that is fair and consistent across Wirral. The code sets out the arrangements for administering penalty notices in Wirral and must be adhered to by anyone issuing a penalty notice for school absence in this area. The code complies with relevant regulations and the Department for Education's national framework for penalty notices as set out in the 'Working together to improve school attendance' guidance.

This local code of conduct for Wirral is in line with the National Code of Conduct issued by the Department for Education.

The national framework for penalty notices is based on the principles that penalty notices should only be used in cases where: • support is not appropriate (e.g. a term time holiday) or where support has been provided and not engaged with or not worked, and • they are the most appropriate tool to change parental behaviour and improve attendance for that particular family.

Where difficulties arise with school attendance, professionals should take a 'support first' approach in line with the DfE's 'Working together to improve school attendance' guidance, only resorting to legal enforcement when necessary. The aim is that the need for legal enforcement is reduced by taking a supportive approach to tackle the barriers to attendance and intervening early before absence becomes entrenched.

For the most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and often the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided.

1 Legislation

1.1 Penalty notices may be issued to a parent as an alternative to prosecution for irregular school attendance under s444 of the Education Act 1996. They can only be issued in relation to pupils of compulsory

school age in maintained schools, pupil referral units, academy schools, AP academies, and certain offsite places as set out in section 444A(1)(b).

1.2 The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 (and subsequent amendments) set out how penalty notices for school absence must be used.

1.3 A penalty notice can only be issued by an authorised officer: that is, a headteacher or a deputy or assistant head authorised by them, an authorised local authority officer or a police constable.

1.4 The national framework for penalty notices is published in statutory guidance 'Working together to improve school attendance'. It provides further national guidance on the operation of penalty notice schemes for school absence in England.

2 Who is a parent?

2.1 For the purposes of this protocol and other school attendance 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 what their relationship is with the child, is considered to be a parent in education law.
- Parents who do not ordinarily reside with the child may also be subject to Education Penalty Notices depending on the circumstances.

2.2 The Local Authority, with the help of the school, will decide who comes within the definition of a parent in respect of a particular pupil.

2.3 Throughout this document, references to 'parent' mean each and every parent coming within the definition, whether acting jointly or separately, and should not be taken to mean that provisions only apply to 'parent' in the singular.

2.4 Penalty notices will usually be issued to the parent or parents with day to day responsibility for the pupil's attendance or the parent or parents who have allowed the absence (regardless of which parent has applied for a leave of absence).

3 Circumstances When Penalty Notices Will Be Issued

3.1 Penalty Notices will be issued by Wirral Council where any of the following occur:

(A) The child has had 10 or more sessions, where a session is a half day, of unauthorised absence in a period of 10 school weeks with the absences being recorded with one of, or a combination of the following codes:

- (i) code G (the pupil is absent without leave for the purpose of a holiday),
- (ii) code N (the circumstances of the pupil's absence have not yet been established),
- (iii) code O (none of the other rows of Table 3 in regulation 10(3) of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 applies), and
- (iv) code U (the pupil attended after the taking of the register ended but before the end of the session, where no other code applies)

(B) If, in an individual case the local authority (or other authorised officer) believes a penalty notice would be appropriate, they retain the discretion to issue one before the threshold is met.

(C) An exclusion has taken place and the parent has allowed the child to be present in a public place during school hours, without reasonable justification, during the first five days of a fixed or permanent exclusion. In this case there would not be the expectation for support to have

been offered or a notice to improve attendance to have been issued before a penalty notice is issued.

If repeated penalty notices are being issued and they are not working to change behaviour they are unlikely to be most appropriate tool. The national framework for penalty notices sets out that a maximum of 2 penalty notices per child, per parent can be issued within a rolling 3-year period. If the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within 3 years, another tool should be used. In this case a prosecution via the Magistrates' Court will be sought. This will also be the case where a penalty notice has been issued but not paid resulting in a prosecution if the parent then commits any further offence.

Where a child has moved into the area within the rolling three year period, checks will be made with any previous authority to see if any penalty notices have been issued. The same will apply for any child leaving the Wirral in that any new Local Authority will be able to check via email to crossborder.penaltynotice@wirral.gov.uk

3.2 Penalty Notices will be issued to each parent for each child. The exception to this would be where a parent has taken a child on unauthorised leave of absence without the consent of the other parent.

3.3 Where children in one family attend more than one school and request leave of absence the schools should, as much as possible, agree the decision with each other.

3.4 The deadline for Education Penalty Notice requests for any academic year will be 31st August after the summer term. The only exception to this will be holidays taken in the last week of term in July with the deadline for these being the end of the first full week back in school in September.

3.5 Head Teachers or member of the SLT or the Attendance Lead may submit a request electronically via email (educationpenaltynotices@wirral.gov.uk) or Anycomms to the Wirral Attendance Service using the appropriate proforma.(Please see Appendix A) It is vital that all details are double checked and are accurate in relation to the form as inaccuracies will result in the Education Penalty Notices either not being issued or withdrawn. All Full names of parents/ carers / guardians need to be included.

3.6 Wirral Council will issue Notice to Improve Attendance letters on behalf of all schools and academies. Schools must ensure that before they request a warning letter that they have:

- Advised parents, in writing, at the start of the academic year (or when their child commences school mid-term) of the need for regular attendance and the possible consequences of failing to do so.
- Can evidence the steps taken to support an improvement in attendance. This should include invitations to formal meetings which parents may have failed to attend. We recommend that a parent is given 7 days' notice of any meeting and that at least 2 opportunities to attend are given. These opportunities can be as close together as practically possible but giving the parents the 7 days' notice.
- Maintain accurate registration records and a chronology of interventions and parental responses.
- Demonstrated consideration of the child's circumstances (including whether this is a child in need or whether a referral to Early Help is appropriate).

3.7 In the first instance the response from Wirral Attendance Service may be a Notice to Improve Attendance letter to the parents emphasising that attendance must improve within 15 school days. Further unauthorised absence within this 15 day period may lead to the issuing of an Education Penalty Notice. As in paragraph 3.1 (B) there may be times when a penalty notice is issued without a Notice to Improve Attendance letter having been sent.

4 Leave of absence

4.1 In the case of leave of absence in term time schools must ensure that they have advised parents, in writing, at the beginning of each academic year of the school policy on leave of absence. This should include the fact that leave of absence cannot be authorised retrospectively.

4.2 School will also need to provide a copy of the written leave of absence request submitted by parent and a copy of any response sent to the parent along with an attendance certificate. Please see Appendix B for a sample Leave of Absence Application Form.

4.3 Any requests for an Education Penalty Notice should be submitted as soon as possible after the pupil's return to school following unauthorised leave of absence, and should not be submitted before the leave of absence or saved until the end of term.

4.4 Headteachers are responsible for determining whether leave of absence is authorised or not and whether an Education Penalty Notice should be issued. Schools should work together to achieve consistency within and across Locality Partnerships and other mechanisms in relation to leave of absence.

4.5 Education Penalty notices will be issued to each parent for each child. The exception to this would be where a parent has taken a child on unauthorised leave of absence without the consent of the other parent.

4.6 Where children in one family attend more than one school and request leave of absence the schools should agree the decision with each other as much as possible.

4.7 Notice to Improve Attendance letters will not be issued for leave of absence.

5 Excluded pupils

5.1 An Education Penalty Notice for excluded students may only be issued where it can be wholly established that:

- The student has been excluded (either fixed-term or permanently) from a school, Academy or alternative provision in the LA area and that the school or alternative provider has followed all agreed processes in notifying parents and the LA.
- The student has been permanently excluded from a school outside the LA area but is a resident of the LA.
- The parent/carer received notice of their responsibility for the first five days of the exclusion, those five 'specified days of exclusion' were clearly identified and the possible consequences of failing to adhere to this were explained.
- The student was present in a public place within the first five days of a fixed or permanent exclusion.
- The parent cannot prove that the student was present in a public place with reasonable justification.

5.2 Referrals for notices relating to exclusions will only be accepted from Police and Police Community Support Officers. This provision is in addition to the independent powers of Merseyside Police and does not fetter their discretion. In some circumstances consideration may also be given to the use of an Acceptable Behaviour Contract in consultation with the Anti-Social Behaviour Team.

5.3 For the purposes of this protocol:

- school hours means a school session or a break between sessions on the same school day
- a public place means any highways or other place to which the public have access but does not include a school
- the days of an exclusions are known as the specified days

6 Withdrawal of Education Penalty Notices

Once issued an Education Penalty Notice may only be withdrawn in the following circumstances:

- it ought not to have been issued
- It ought not to have been issued to the person named as the recipient
- It contains a material error
- It has not been paid in full, and the LA has not, and does not intend to, instigate proceedings

7 Payment Of Education Penalty Notices

7.1 Arrangements for payment will be detailed on the Education Penalty Notice.

7.2 Payment of the Education Penalty Notice discharges the parent's liability for the period in question and they cannot subsequently be prosecuted under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 for the period covered by the Education Penalty Notice.

7.3 Payment of an Education Penalty Notice is £80 if paid within 21 days and £160 if paid after this time but within 28 days for the first offence. For any second offence by the same parent relating to the same child the fixed penalty amount will be £160

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

8 Non-payment of Education Penalty Notices

Non-payment of an Education Penalty Notice will result in the withdrawal of the notice and will normally trigger a prosecution of parents by Wirral Attendance Service under Section 444 Education Act 1996.

9 Right of appeal

In accordance with Department for Education Guidance there is no right of appeal but where a parent wishes to contest the issuing of an Education Penalty Notice they should contact Wirral Attendance Service (as outlined on the Education Penalty Notice) and/or opt to face proceedings in the Magistrates' Court, where all of the issues relating to their Education Penalty Notice can be fully debated.

10 Policy and Publicity

All School Attendance Policies should include information on the use of Education Penalty Notices and this will be brought to the attention of all parents. The LA will include information on the use of Education Penalty Notices in promotional/public information material.

11 Reporting and Review

Wirral Attendance Service will report to partners on the deployment and outcomes of Education Penalty Notices and will review this protocol at regular intervals.

This document was agreed with the following:

- Wirral Primary Headteachers,
- Wirral Secondary Headteachers,
- Wirral Special School Headteachers,
- Attendance staff from Wirral schools

All present at Working together to Improve School Attendance Conference on 1st July 2024

And is effective from 1st September 2024 until such time as it is reviewed which will be at least every two years.

APPENDIX 9 – WIRRAL ATTENDANCE SERVICE: LEAVER NOTIFICATION

School			Date form submitted	
Full name of pupil			UPN	
DOB			Year Group	
Gender	Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/>		Ethnicity	
Current (or former) home address				
Full name(s) of parent(s) / carer(s) and relationship to child				
Parent / carer contact 'phone number(s)		Contact email address		
New school (if known)			Date of Admission	
New local authority (if known)				
New home address (if known / applicable)				
Has the pupil been removed from the school roll?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	What grounds* have been used / are proposed to be used?		
Date of removal?		Has this child been formally referred to CME?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	

** In accordance with regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016 which specify the grounds under which schools can lawfully remove a pupil's name from their admissions register.*

The effective sharing of information between schools and local authorities is crucial to ensuring that all children & young people of statutory school age are safeguarded and receiving a suitable education. Under the amended 2016 Regulations, all schools (including Academies, Free and Independent Schools) are required to inform the LA as soon as possible when they are about to delete a pupil's name from the admission register.

Please send to: schoolattendance@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDIX 10 – WIRRAL ATTENDANCE SERVICE: ADDITION TO ROLL NOTIFICATION

School			Date of Admission	
Full name of pupil			UPN	
DOB			Year Group	
Gender	Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/>		Ethnicity	
Current home address				
Full name(s) of parent(s) / carer(s) and relationship to child and who child lives with				
Parent / carer contact 'phone number(s)		Contact email address		
Previous school including address			Date of Leaving	
Previous local authority				
Previous home address				
Did the pupil have poor attendance at previous school?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Have there been any penalty notices issued within the last three years at the previous school?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Date form submitted?		Was this child previously CME or EHE?	CME <input type="checkbox"/> EHE <input type="checkbox"/> Neither <input type="checkbox"/>	

* *In accordance with regulation 13 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 which specify that by the end of the fifth day after the day when the name of a registered pupil is entered in the admission register a return must be made to the local authority giving all the information about the pupil that is entered in the admission register..*

The effective sharing of information between schools and local authorities is crucial to ensuring that all children & young people of statutory school age are safeguarded and receiving a suitable education. Under the amended 2016 Regulations, all schools (including Academies, Free and Independent Schools) are required to inform the LA as soon as possible when they are about to add or delete a pupil's name from the admission register.

Please send to: schoolattendance@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDIX 11 – STATUTORY GUIDANCE

- [Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\) \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\) \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Is my child too ill for school? - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)
 - [Children missing education](#)
- [Keeping children safe in education](#)
- [Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school](#)
- [School exclusion](#)

Wirral Attendance Service Contacts:

- School Attendance: schoolattendance@wirral.gov.uk
- Enforcement Action: educationpenaltynotices@wirral.gov.uk
- Children Missing from Education: cme@wirral.gov.uk
- Elective Home Education: ehe@wirral.gov.uk
- Children in Entertainment / Child Employment Licensing: childlicensing@wirral.gov.uk