

Attendance Policy

We intend to establish a school for the Lord's service

Rule of St. Benedict, Prologue 45

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I. Statement of intent

We want your child to thrive in Downside School, every day. We build strong and enduring relationships because we believe this is the foundation pupils need to fully engage in our community, to feel a sense of belonging and succeed.

Every child has a right to access education, and **everyone** is responsible for supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and punctuality. Downside School is committed to providing the highest quality of education to our pupils and we recognise the clear link between attendance and the attainment of our pupils.

The aim of this Attendance Policy is to enable Downside School to provide a consistent practice that actively encourages and supports the highest possible levels of attendance for all our pupils. We take a whole-school approach to maintaining regular attendance and to achieve this, all members of our school community have an important contribution to make. It is vital that we work in partnership to ensure that any in-school or out-of-school barriers are removed at the earliest opportunity, this is achieved through early and meaningful support.

We support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend school regularly and in addition, promote and support punctuality when attending lessons.

We are committed to taking positive action in the line with the Equality Act (2010) regarding the needs of people with protected characteristics. We make reasonable adjustments to avoid anyone with a protected characteristic being placed at a disadvantage. Our relentless approach to ensuring our pupils attend school and receive the education that they deserve, and are entitled to, is central to our school purpose.

This policy is supported by policies relating to child protection and safeguarding, anti-bullying, behaviour, equality, special educational needs and teaching and learning.

It is our duty to strive for a goal of 100% attendance for all pupils so that they can take full advantage of the opportunities offered. It is vital that your child is at school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for absence is unavoidable. Therefore, this policy has been created to help support the school in effectively managing absences so that our pupils (your children) can make the most of the educational and life opportunities available to them.

In summary, Downside School aims to meet its obligations relating to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence by effectively removing the barriers to attendance
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Minimising the disruption caused by late arrivals or non-attendance to the quality of the education and provisions for all pupils

2. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all school leaders, staff, parents, and pupils.

- 2.1 For the purposes of this policy, references to ‘teachers’ include all paid staff responsible for the supervision of pupils.
- 2.2 For the purposes of this policy, references to ‘pupils’ include all learners in our school.
- 2.3 For the purpose of this policy and the procedures, we refer to Section 576 of the Education Act which defines the ‘parent’ of a pupil or young person as:
 - Both of their natural parents, whether they are married or not.
 - Any person who, although they are not the natural parent, has parental responsibility for the pupil or young person, as defined in the Children Act (1989).
 - Any person who, although not the natural parent, has the care of the pupil or young person i.e., a person with whom the pupil lives, irrespective of their relationship to the pupil.

3. Legal Framework

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:

- The Education Act (1996)
- The Education Act (2002)
- Independent School Standards (2025)
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations (2024)

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

4. Responsibilities

- 4.1 All children aged 5 - 16 years must receive suitable education. (Section 7, *Education Act (1996)*). A pupil of compulsory school age who is registered at a school must, by law, attend regularly.

- 4.2 By law, parents have the prime responsibility for ensuring that pupils of compulsory school age attend regularly. (Section 576, Education Act (1996)).
- 4.3 By law, all schools are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register from the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed or has been notified that the pupil will attend the school.
- 4.4 Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.
- 4.5 By law, all schools must keep an admissions' register, the contents of which includes all pupils, their personal details, (including at least two telephone numbers for different safe adults, to ensure that we can always contact someone in the event of an emergency), the date of admission (or re-admission), information regarding parents and details of the school last attended.
- 4.6 Pupils will be removed from roll only when they complete their education stage, transfer to another school, move out of the area or emigrate or following a parental request for elective home education. We follow statutory guidance for removing pupils from roll and notifying the local authority.
- 4.7 There is a clear link between attainment and attendance. Under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996 (EA 1996), a parent commits an offence if they fail to ensure their child's regular attendance at a school where the child is registered.
- 4.8 Prolonged unexplained absence or concerns around the wellbeing of a pupil due to absence will be reported to Somerset Council Education Engagement Service (EES)
- 4.9 We have a roles and responsibilities framework outlined in Appendix 10 to complement this policy. This defines agreed roles and responsibilities for parents, pupils, and staff. This includes the responsibility for our School Attendance Champion who is Mr Ben Edge bedge@downside.co.uk

5. Definitions

- 5.1 A pupil is classed as absent if they arrive after the register has closed or if they do not attend for any reason.
- 5.2 An authorised absence is when approval has been given in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be absent for a specific (legal) purpose, or we have accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence from a parent. This may include:
- An absence for illness for which we have granted leave
 - Medical or dental appointments may be granted leave where every attempt has been made to arrange outside of school hours, has been unsuccessful and so cannot be avoided, or where the appointment is a genuine emergency
 - Religious or cultural observances for which we have granted leave.

- An absence due to exceptional circumstances
- 5.3 An unauthorised absence is defined as one where we are not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence. Reasons may include:
- Parents keeping children from attending unnecessarily or without reason
 - Missing sessions before or during the school day
 - Absences which have never been properly explained
 - Arrival after the register has closed and have not been explained
 - Day trips and holidays in term time that have not been agreed
 - Leaving the school without authorisation during the day
- 5.4 Persistent Absence is defined as: 10% or more of sessions missed (based on each pupil's possible sessions). Absences may be authorised or unauthorised.
- 5.5 Severe Absence is defined as: 50% or more of sessions missed (based on each pupil's possible sessions). Absences may be authorised or unauthorised.
- 5.6 Persistent lateness is defined as pupils who have five or more unexplained late marks to the morning or afternoon register, recorded in a single half-term.

6 Monitoring and Reviewing Attendance

- 6.1 We recognise that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. We monitor attendance and punctuality throughout the year. We recognise that certain groups of pupils may be more at risk of poor attendance and will provide support and assistance wherever possible.
- 6.2 We set challenging attendance targets for the whole school.
- 6.3 Pupil-level absence data is collected regularly and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. We compare our attendance data to the national average.
- 6.4 Specific measures are taken to monitor attendance. These processes are embedded and regularly checked to ensure the effective safeguarding of all pupils through specific tailored interventions. Data on attendance is collected and analysed regularly. Key analysis is made of:
- Patterns of absence
 - Patterns of lateness
 - Patterns of medical appointments
 - Correct and consistent use of absence codes
 - Trends in reasons for absence, for example, use of the C code, leave of absence and exclusions

- 6.5 Attendance data informs action planning and supports the identification of key priorities in our school development plan and future revisions of this policy. The attendance data will be reported to the Senior Leadership Team, Safeguarding Committee and House Masters and Mistresses and all other relevant staff, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families. Data will also be used by the school to monitor the impact of any interventions put in place to modify them and inform future strategies.

7 Creating a Positive Attendance Culture

The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents and the child, therefore, Downside School expects everyone to uphold their responsibilities for promoting attendance at School. To do this everyone must understand their role in promoting a positive culture of attendance and be clear about what is required of them individually as well as how they need to work together in partnership with others.

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

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

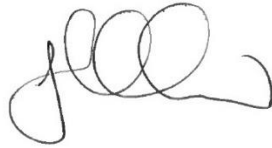
For a positive attendance culture to be fully embedded across our school, it needs to be a holistic approach and not seen in isolation.

- Ensuring staff are well trained and they are given the skills to confidently challenge parents when doing check-up calls.
- Ensuring that weekly Safeguarding Committee meetings always consider attendance and includes coordinating safeguarding and attendance responses together
- Setting a high profile with staff so that they are professionally curious as part of a wider culture of safeguarding.
- Using focussed 'TAC' or 'TAF meetings' including partner agencies GP, Social Care etc for discussions about improving attendance.
- Working with the Education Support Services for Education (family front door) proactively to support vulnerable pupils with concerns around attendance.

8. Review and Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed annually or in the following circumstances:

- Changes in legislation and/or government guidance
- As a result of any other significant change or event

Downside School Policy Approval Record**Reviewed by** Senior Deputy Head (Pastoral)**Date** April 2026**Authorised by** Chair of the Board of Governing Body

John Ludlow

Date April 2026**Next Review** April 2027**Circulation** Governors / all staff / [volunteers] automatically
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Appendices

Appendix I- Roles

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Appendix 2- Maintaining an Attendance Register

2.1 The attendance register will be taken in each boarding house at the start of the first session of each school day during the 8.20 assembly and once, by tutors (or house staff in lieu of a tutor) during the pm session. It will mark whether each pupil is:

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

2.2 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

2.3 The school day starts at 8.20. All pupils should be in their boarding house at this time for the first (morning) registration. The register closes at 8.39am

2.4 Pupils arriving late should report to house staff or the school reception.

2.6 The second (afternoon) registration session runs from 1.55 pm- 2.09 pm. In terms of attendance recording and data collection it is the **last afternoon register** that is taken for the day other than lesson registers, activities registers and house registers for boarders.

- 2.7 If a pupil needs to leave school during the day, they must sign out of their boarding house once authorisation has been given by the House Master or Mistress or their assistant.
- 2.8 Pupils educated off-site are monitored daily for their attendance at the off-site/alternative provision. Staff work closely with the staff at the off-site provision, the pupil, and their parents to support the pupil to maintain good attendance.
- 2.9 The national absence and attendance codes enable schools to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with the regulations. They are also used for collecting statistics through the Census. The data helps schools, local authorities, and the Government to gain a greater understanding of the level of, and the reasons for absence. See Appendix 10 for the DfE attendance codes.
- 2.10 There should be no pre-population of codes and individual school tracking systems which monitor the whereabouts of pupils educated off-site.
- 2.11 Where pupils are dual registered, are on voluntary service or are taking part in other approved educational activities, the register will be updated following regular discussion and information sharing with the other establishment.
- 2.12 The School Administrator will check the missing register report throughout the day and report any registers that have not been completed.

Appendix 3- Reporting Absence and reasons for absence

- 3.1 It is the responsibility of the parent to inform us of a pupil absence and to inform us of any changes to contact details.
- 3.2 Parents are expected to inform us of their pupil's absence before 8.20 a.m. on each day of absence providing the reason for absence and when their pupil will be returning to school. We will contact parents and/or other listed emergency contacts where no contact has been made. We will carry out welfare checks as necessary, either in person or on Teams. If no contact is made, we may request a welfare check from the police.
- 3.3 *Medical appointments:* As far as possible, medical, and dental appointments for day pupils should be made outside of the school day. Where this is not possible, the HsM should be notified prior to the appointment. The Health Centre will inform the HsMs of medical appointments for boarders. Pupils must attend school before and after a medical appointment where possible. Absences for medical appointments will be recorded with an M code.
- 3.4 *Religious observance:* Parents must inform us, in advance, if absences are required for days of religious observance. We will authorise absences where a reasonable request is made. Absences for religious observance will be recorded with the R code.

- 3.5 Illness or injury: In order to make informed decisions about their pupil's fitness for attending parents are encouraged to refer to the NHS guidance 'Is My Child Too Ill for School?'. Any authorisation of absence through illness is done so at the discretion of the DSL and HsM or member of staff delegated to carry out this task. In the case of an illness which lasts for five days or more (or four days in the event of an INSET day or Bank Holiday), parents may be asked to provide additional medical evidence before authorising the absence, however this will only be requested if there is any genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness. In this instance, if medical evidence is not provided, the absence may be recorded as unauthorised.

In some cases, a pupil may be absent for long term due to an illness or injury. We will liaise with families to ensure children return to school quickly and that there are no safeguarding concerns. The School will undertake regular welfare checks with the pupil on Teams and, where appropriate, provide work and academic support for ongoing learning.

3.6 Medical conditions or special educational needs and disabilities:

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. Their right to an education is the same as any other pupil and therefore, the attendance ambition for these pupils should be the same as they are for any other pupil.

The School will:

- Work with parents to improve attendance, be mindful of the barriers pupils face, make reasonable adjustments, and put additional support in place where necessary to help them access their full-time education. It is also expected that parents will engage with the support offered both internally and with external partners to ensure our children have all the support they need to thrive.
- Encourage positive conversations so that a good support plan can put in place including making reasonable adjustments.
- Consider possible explanations for absence including Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA).
- Work with parents to consider whether additional support from external partners (including the local authority or health services) would be appropriate, making referrals in a timely manner and working together with those services to deliver any subsequent support.
- Ensure relevant referrals are made for pupils who are too ill to attend school eg. medical agency support such as CAMHS.
- Establish strategies for removing the in-school barriers this may include considering support or reasonable adjustments for uniform, transport, routines, access to support in school and lunchtime arrangements.
- Ensure joined up pastoral care is in place and consider whether a time-limited, closely monitored and reviewed, phased return to school would be appropriate, for example for those affected by anxiety about school attendance.

Appendix 4- Requesting Leave in Term Time (“special exeat”)

- 4.1 Absence for purposes of leave during term time can only be authorised by the Head, within the boundaries set by the Education (Pupil Registrations) (England) Regulations (2006).
- 4.2 The fundamental principles for defining ‘exceptional circumstances’ are that they are: ‘rare; significant; unavoidable and short’. Holidays during term time will not usually be considered as exceptional circumstances. The following guiding principles apply:
- Term-times are for education. This is the priority. We will rightly prioritise attendance.
 - The decision to authorise a pupil’s absence is wholly at the Head’s discretion based on their assessment and merits of each individual request.
 - If an event can be reasonably scheduled outside of term-time, then it would be normal to authorise absence for such an event – holidays are therefore not considered ‘exceptional circumstances’. It is acceptable for the Head to take a pupil’s record of attendance into account when making absence-related decisions.
 - We will take the needs of the families of service personnel into account if this prevents them from being able to take family holidays during scheduled holiday time.
 - We have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with special needs and/or disabilities.
- 4.3 Family emergencies need careful consideration before decisions about attendance are made. It is not always appropriate or in the best interests of the pupil to miss education for emergencies which are being dealt with by adult family members. Being at school with support from staff and peers can provide children with stability. The school routine can offer a safe and familiar background during times of uncertainty. Relevant members of staff will work with parents to decide what is in the best interest of the pupil.
- 4.4 Pupil registration regulations states that absence should only be granted due to the exceptional circumstances relating to the request. It is important to note that the Head will determine the length of the authorised absence, as well as whether absence is authorised at all.
- 4.5 The following might be considered as exceptional circumstance:
- Religious festivals: the school should authorise any absence where the parent/carer’s religious organisation sets the day as a religious festival. Absences may be recorded as R.
 - Religious rites e.g. Holy Communion, Confirmation. The Headteacher will consider each request for leave of absence individually to determine the number of days approved.
 - Close family wedding if dates cannot be during school holidays.
 - Illness or death of an immediate family member.
 - Medical treatment overseas or elsewhere in the UK due to language barrier or requiring specialist treatment elsewhere.

- Length of journey from abroad; the Headteacher will consider length of journey or limited regional flights.
- If a pupil visa has been revoked and they need to return to their birth country whilst pursuing the renewal of a visa.

Appendix 5- Persistent Absence and Severe Absence

- 5.1 Pupils with 90% or less attendance are classified as Persistent Absence (PA). PA includes both authorised and unauthorised absences.
- 5.2 Pupils with 50% or less attendance are classified as Severe Absence (SA). SA includes both authorised and unauthorised absences.
- 5.3 All PA pupils will have actions to try to improve their attendance to above 90%. This will be monitored by the DSL with the support of the School Attendance Champion (SAC). Pupils who are PA will be discussed as a potential concern at the Safeguarding Committee meetings and Vulnerable Learner meetings. Where pupils have an identified special educational need, the school SENCO will also provide support, so that the impact of needs are clearly understood and appropriate, supportive actions are taken.

Appendix 6- Following Up Absence and Taking Action

- 6.1 We will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason. Any pupils who fail to attend regularly or who are absent for more than one week will be referred to the DSL and Head.
- 6.2 Unexplained absences will be followed up on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence and the school will identify whether the absence is approved or not. The school will identify the correct code to use and will input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained. This will take no longer than 5 working days after the session.
- 6.3 In the case where the reason for absence cannot be ascertained by the school and no reason has been issued for the pupil's absence, the school will initiate safeguarding procedures and the DSL will decide on the best course of action to ensure the safety of the pupil, following procedures for children missing in education as outlined in the document from the Department of Education.
- 6.4 Where it is appropriate, the HsM will meet with the pupil to discuss their return to school to ensure the correct support is in place. The HsM will liaise with parents
- 6.5 It may occasionally be necessary to inform parents that no further absences will be authorised for a particular pupil unless medical evidence is provided. This decision can only be made by the Head in consultation with the DSL and where relevant, the SENCO.

- 6.6 It is a parent's legal responsibility to ensure their children receive appropriate education. Failing to send children to school regularly without good reason is a criminal offence. The School will refer any failure to comply with this legal obligation to Somerset Support Services for Education.

Appendix 7- Attendance Causing Concern

- 7.1 Specific measures to monitor attendance are embedded and regularly checked to ensure the safeguarding of all pupils through specific and tailored interventions.
- 7.2 Downside School records and collects attendance data using our Data Management System, iSAMS. We recognise that there are pupils who are more vulnerable and susceptible to lower attendance patterns such as children with Special Educational Needs. We work with families to overcome any specific barriers that children may be facing regardless of these needs to ensure that pupils access all their education.
- 7.3 Where attendance is deemed to be a concern, we talk to pupils and parents. From this, there may be one of three Early Help outcomes:
- Initiate simple reasonable adjustments
 - Develop a school focused plan with the pupil and their parent as appropriate
 - Initiate a multi-agency Early Help Assessment (EHA)
- 7.4 If the conversation with the pupil indicates a serious safeguarding concern, we will follow our safeguarding procedures as set out in our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Appendix 8 -Children Missing from Education (CME)

- 8.1 We have due regard to our statutory duty to safeguard pupils who are CME. We follow the Local Authority's processes for reporting pupils missing from education.
- 8.2 If a pupil fails to return following a period of absence, investigations will be made by staff to their whereabouts. If our investigations fail to contact the parents/pupil the case will be referred to the Local Authority Children Missing Education (CME) Team within 20 days.

Appendix 9- Supporting the Attendance of Every Pupil

- 9.1 We use a variety of strategies to encourage attendance:
- Building strong and enduring relationships with our pupils so they feel a sense of belonging in our school community
 - Verbal encouragement and praise
 - Create personalised and achievable targets for pupils, based on their medical needs and/or additional needs that is realistic and appropriate for each individual
 - Create safe spaces for pupils to thrive

- Make decisions on targets in consultation with families, while understanding that a medical condition can worsen suddenly and taking this into account.
- Create opportunities for dialogue with families about attendance, ensuring that we work in partnership with parents
- Use different methods to encourage attendance; for instance, explaining the links between attendance and outcomes
- Raise the profile of attendance with families, particularly those for whom we have concerns around absence
- Foster a love of learning, helping families to see the value of the education that is offered to them and know the strength of our community in terms of friendships, support and care
- Be alert to additional costs of travel for international boarders and limitations that may place on parents in terms of arriving and departing school on the correct dates
- Providing transport to and from London and Heathrow Airport and Bath station to encourage and help parents make good decisions about dates for arriving and leaving school at the school holidays.

9.2 We recognise that not all children, particularly those who are most vulnerable, are able to achieve 100% attendance through no fault of their own. We celebrate improvements in attendance and contextualised good attendance for individual pupils.

9.3 Each pupil is supported and encouraged to achieve their individual highest possible attendance. HsMs will meet with parents to set targets and ensure target individual support to improve attendance where attendance is of concern.

9.4 Our Behaviour Policy sets out the details of how we reward pupils and therefore encourage a positive experience and engagement with school, and what sanctions we apply for lateness.

Appendix 10 – Framework of Responsibilities

The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents, and the child, therefore, Downside School expects everyone to uphold their responsibilities for promoting attendance at school.

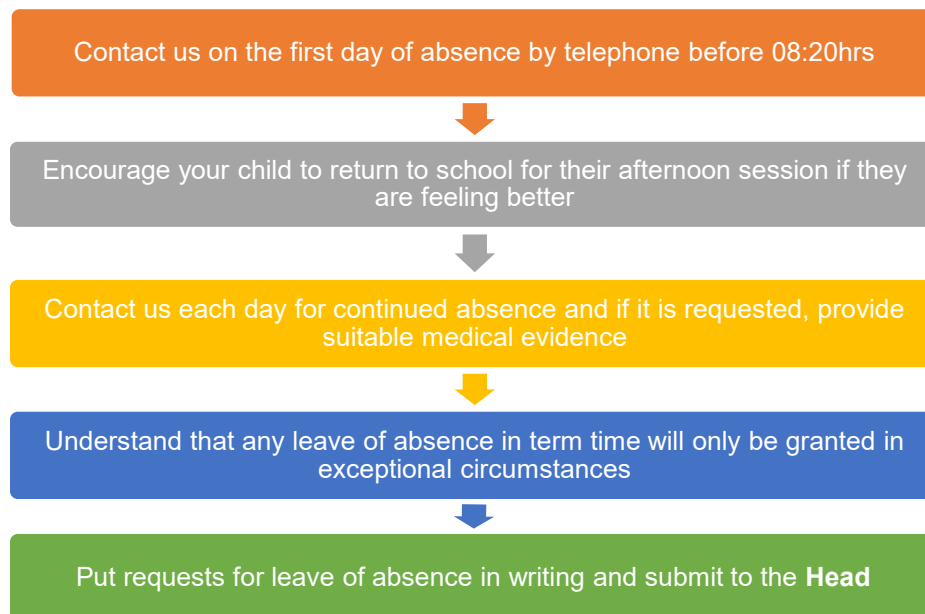
To do this everyone must understand their role in promoting a positive culture of attendance and be clear about what is required of them individually as well as how they need to work together in partnership with others.

Parents

- Ensure pupils attend regularly and punctually.
- Promote the value of good education and the importance of regular school attendance at home
- Do everything you can to prevent unnecessary school absences, such as by making medical and dental appointments outside of school hours.

- Work with the school and your child to address any in-school barriers to attendance and support their learning by taking an interest in what they have been doing at school.
- Make early contact with us when you become aware of problems with your child attending school.
- Attend meetings if concerns are identified.
- Participate in Early Help Meetings if required.
- Support attendance contracts where appropriate.
- Support us in actioning agreed interventions/action plans.

Please follow this process if your child is going to be absent from school:



Pupils

- Attend school every day and every timetabled lesson punctually
- Acknowledge positive behaviours needed both inside and outside of our school
- Adhere to our systems for registration and signing in / out
- Adhere to attendance contracts if they are in place
- Aim for the highest possible attendance
- Discuss concerns about your attendance or punctuality with a trusted adult in our school, especially if you are experiencing difficulties at school or at home which may impact on your attendance and/or learning
- Attend all lessons ready to learn with the appropriate learning tools requested and on time for your class. Lesson times will be made clear through your school timetable

House Masters and Mistresses (HsMs) and Assistant HsMs

- Understand that promoting pupil attendance is the responsibility of all staff. Be curious, aware, vigilant, well-informed and listen to what children say about the barriers to accessing education
- Assist in ensuring attendance has a high profile within the school
- Build on a culture of challenge when addressing persistent illness absences with parents
- Challenge parents when no reason has been provided for an absence
- Complete return to school interviews with pupils when required
- Escalate concerns where required as per the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Take calls and emails from parents about absence and record on iSAMS
- Record concerns about absence on MyConcern

Teachers and tutors

- Understand that promoting pupil attendance is the responsibility of all staff. Be curious, aware, vigilant, well-informed and listen to what children say about the barriers to accessing education
- Ensure attendance has a high profile
- Consider whether a pupils known, or not yet identified, SEN could be impacting on attendance and whether provision and/or further reasonable adjustments should be made
- Take registers at the beginning of every lesson
- Escalate concerns as per the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- Participate in training relating to attendance as appropriate
- Raise concerns about attendance to the relevant staff

Where a pupil or family need support with attendance, the best placed person in the school will support the family, this may or may not be the child's tutor or HsM. This person should remain consistent, and the school will draw on positive relationships to listen to and understand the barriers to attendance the pupil or family is experiencing.

The School Attendance Champion and School Administrator

- Offer support and guidance on attendance where needed
- Monitor and analyse attendance data and ensure these are sent regularly to class teachers
- Benchmark attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Provide regular attendance reports to school staff and report concerns about attendance to the Designated Senior Leader and Governor responsible for attendance
- Monitor pupils with attendance below 95% with regular communication with both the pupil and their parents, holding attendance meetings where required and agreeing individual action plans
- Attend welfare home visits, or welfare checks on Teams, where required
- Escalate concerns where required to External Agencies (eg. Somerset ESS)

School Attendance Champion

- Take a lead in promoting pupil attendance ensuring it is the responsibility of all staff. Be aware, vigilant, well-informed and listen to what children say about the barriers to accessing education
- Develop a clear strategy and vision for improving attendance
- Work with the SENCO, where relevant, to ensure any SEND needs are fully understood, including how these may impact on attendance, and to ensure that the provision in place meets needs and supports good attendance
- Monitor daily attendance for vulnerable pupils and track weekly attendance patterns and trends for all pupils, delivering intervention and support in a targeted way to pupils and families. This needs to include patterns of attendance for individual pupils, cohorts, and groups but particularly for pupils with attendance below 90%
- Support all staff to monitor attendance patterns and tackle attendance concerns effectively by providing regular attendance reports to HsMs or tutors / subject leaders so they can facilitate discussions with pupils (this also includes any special educational needs coordinators, designated safeguarding lead).
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full year data to identify patterns and trends including analysis of pupils and cohorts and identifying patterns in uses of certain codes, days of poor attendance and where appropriate, subjects which have low lesson attendance.
- Work with the leadership team and the School Attendance Governor to analyse data and to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Monitor data to assess the impact of school wide attendance efforts, including any specific strategies implemented ensuring there is regular and positive communication with parents
- Ensure attendance is a standing agenda item for every safeguarding committee meeting and use practice examples to explore safeguarding themes and review relevant policy and procedures regularly
- Ensure return to school interviews are conducted by a member of staff where pupils are returning after a prolonged absence
- Set annual school attendance targets with the Head
- Work on proactively on building strong relationships with families
- Work with the LA, agencies, and safeguarding partners to overcome barriers to attendance
- Ensure welfare visits are carried out when required and recorded on MyConcern
- Escalate concerns when deemed appropriate as per the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Lead attendance training for staff and governors

Senior Leadership Team

- Take a lead in promoting pupil attendance ensuring it is the responsibility of all staff. Be curious, aware, vigilant, well-informed and listen to what children say about the barriers to accessing education
- Ensure attendance has a high profile across the school.
- Work on proactively building strong relationships with families.
- Build a culture of challenge when addressing persistent illness absences with parents.
- Escalate concerns where required as per the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- Liaise with Attendance Champion, DSL, Director of Pastoral Care and SENCo as appropriate to discuss attendance concerns for individual pupils.
- Participate in appropriate training in relation to attendance.
- Ensure there are designated staff with day-to-day responsibility for attendance matters and ensure that adequate, protected time is allocated to discharge these responsibilities.
- Take overall responsibility for ensuring our school conforms to all statutory requirements in respect of attendance e.g., deletion from school roll is adhered to for example.

Head

- Take a lead in promoting pupil attendance ensuring it is the responsibility of all staff. Be aware, vigilant, well-informed and listen to what children say about the barriers to accessing education
- Ensure the attendance policy is implemented consistently across the school
- Ensure attendance has a high profile across the school
- Monitor school level absence data with the School Attendance Champion and report data to the Governors Education Committee
- Support other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Decide whether to grant leave during term time for exceptional circumstances
- Ensure attendance training is including provided to staff regularly

Local Governing Board

- Recognise the importance of school attendance and promote it across the school
- Review the implementation of the School Attendance Policy
- Ensure the school fulfil their statutory duties
- Ensure the importance of school attendance is promoted across policies and procedures
- Regularly monitor attendance. Ask questions about attendance trends and be curious about what is being done to challenge and prevent persistent poor absence

Appendix II – Attendance Codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE’s guidance on school attendance

Register Code	Description
/	Present AM
\	Present PM
L	Late (before registers closed) marked as present
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
C	Authorised absence as pupil is absent due to other authorised circumstances
CI	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
E	Authorised absence as pupil is excluded, with no alternative provision made
I	Illness (NOT appointments)
M	Authorised absence due to medical/dental appointments
R	Authorised absence due to religious observance
S	Authorised absence due to study leave
T	Authorised absence due to traveller absence
Jl	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
B	Approved education activity as pupil being educated off site (NOT dual registration)
P	Approved educational activity as pupil is attending an approved sporting activity
V	Approved education activity as pupil is away on an educational visit or trip
W	Approved educational activity as pupil is attending work experience
KI	Early Departure/Late return
G	Unauthorised absence as pupil is on a family holiday, NOT agreed, or is taking days in excess of an agreed family holiday
N	Unauthorised absence as pupil missed sessions for a reason that has not yet been provided
O	Unauthorised absence as pupil missed sessions for an unauthorised absence not covered by any other code/description
U	Unauthorised absence as pupil arrived after registers closed

D	Dual registered (at another establishment - NOT counted in possible attendance)
X	Not required to be in school - for non-compulsory school age children
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances - not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll - not counted in possible attendances
#	Planned whole or partial school closure - NOT counted in possible attendances
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
YS	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause

Internal suspension (sometimes called internal exclusion or isolation) does not have a specific, formal DfE exclusion code because it is considered an internal school management strategy rather than a statutory exclusion. It should not be recorded as a suspension (fixed-period exclusion) in census data.

Attendance Coding: While not a statutory exclusion, internal suspension time is typically recorded under attendance code **'C'** if the pupil is not receiving approved off-site education or **'B'** if they are working in an alternative, supervised location within the school.