

# Attendance policy

The Lady Byron School



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# 1. Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#), through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all students
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every student has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to make sure students have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

Successfully treating the root cause of absence and removing barriers to attendance, at home, at school or more broadly requires schools and local partners to work collaboratively with, not against, families. All partners should work together to:

### **Expect**

Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.

### **Monitor**

Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.

### **Listen and understand**

When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents to listen to and understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.

### **Facilitate support**

Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.

### **Formalise support**

Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through an attendance contract or education supervision order.

### **Enforce**

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention: a penalty notice in line with the National Framework or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

## **2. Legislation and guidance**

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) and [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set 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 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a student's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

## 3. Roles and responsibilities

### 3.1 The Proprietor

The Proprietor is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, students and parents
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
  - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
  - Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific students, where appropriate
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for students who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all students, but adapts processes and support to students' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual students or cohorts who need it most
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge.
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting students' needs
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
  - The importance of good attendance
  - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
  - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
  - The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific students, where appropriate
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

### **3.2 The headteacher**

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to the proprietor
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual students
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising the deputy head to be able to do so
- Working with the parents of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for students with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where students with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a student with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the student's needs
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to students and parents through all available channels

### **3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance**

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaising with students, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with students and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to students and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Alison Siddons and can be contacted via the reception.

### **3.4 The attendance officer**

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement.
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence.
- Advising the headteacher when to issue fixed penalty notices.

The attendance officer is Jenny Mackow and can be contacted via 0116 4670811 or [reception@ladybyronschool.co.uk](mailto:reception@ladybyronschool.co.uk)

### 3.5 School reception staff

School reception staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system.
- Transfer calls and emails from parents/carers and students to the pastoral lead in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance.
- Be responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes.

### 3.6 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every timetabled session on time.
- Contact the school to report their child's absence before 08.45 on the day of the (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 day.

### 3.6 Students

Students are expected to:

- To be in school for their timetabled sessions and attend every timetabled session on time.

## 4. Recording attendance

### 4.1 Attendance register

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

We use an electronic system 'Arbor' to record all attendance details.

This is shared with the local authority on a daily basis, so they are aware of attendance patterns of all students.

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 authorised 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 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Students must arrive in school by 09.00 on each school day. The school day ends at 15.00.

The register for the first session will be taken at 09.00 and will be kept open until 09.30 (any student with an unplanned arrival from 09.15 will be marked as Late).

The register for the second session will be taken at 13.00 and will be kept open until 13.30 (any student with an unplanned arrival from 13.15 will be marked as Late)

## 4.2 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 08.45 or as soon as practically possible by contacting the school reception by telephone, text message or email. (see also section 7).

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

Where the absence is longer than 5 days or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for 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 with the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

## 4.3 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.

This can be done via email, phone or text to the dedicated parent contact line.

However, 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.

## 4.4 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.

## 4.5 Following up unexplained absence.

Where any student we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the student's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason.
- Email and text the parent/carer if a call is not answered.



- The student's emergency contacts will then be contacted by telephone.
- If the school cannot reach any of the student's emergency contacts, the school may contact police and / or social care and the Local Authority education welfare officer.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not.
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session.
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will contact the Local Authority education welfare officer, social care and / or police.
- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the student's youth offending team officer.
- Where appropriate, offer support to the student and/or their parents to improve attendance.
- Identify whether the student needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals.
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with: issue a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention as appropriate.

#### 4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

- The school will regularly inform parents/carers about their child's attendance and absence levels in termly review meetings.
- Parents will also receive a half termly text message with attendance figures.

## 5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

### 5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will allow students to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings.

The headteacher will only grant a **leave of absence** to a student during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the [2024 school attendance regulations](#). These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances

A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the student is authorised to be absent for.

Leave of absence will not be granted for a student to take part in protest activity during school hours.

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 4 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via school reception. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Other valid reasons for **authorised absence** include (but are not limited to):

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the student's parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – 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
- If the student is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

Other reasons the school may allow a student to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
- Attending another school at which the student is also registered (dual registration)
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority
- Attending work experience
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the student not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

Generally, the DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance. Leave of absence should not be granted for a student to take part in protest activity during school hours.

## 5.2 Legal sanctions

Our school will make use of the full range of potential sanctions – including, but not limited to, those listed below – to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

### Penalty notices

The headteacher (or someone authorised by them), local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

If the school issues a penalty notice, it will check with the local authority before doing so, and send it a copy of any penalty notice issued.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks)
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that student
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution

- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the student must not be present in a public place on that day).

Each parent who is liable for the student's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

If a **second** penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same student, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days.

A **third** penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

### Notices to improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the student attends school.

They will include:

- Details of the student's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under [section 7 of the Education Act 1996](#)
- Details of the support provided so far
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

## 6. Strategies for promoting attendance

Attendance is directly linked to our whole school privilege system. Students achieve more privilege points the higher their attendance.

Attendance data is based on individual students attending timetabled sessions. This takes into account students who are not in school full time, i.e. may be on a transition timetable or attending external alternative provision, therefore not penalising those who are not attending full time due to a valid and agreed case.

## 7. Supporting students who are absent or returning to school

### 7.1 Students absent due to complex barriers to attendance

**Approach:**

Our approach to addressing students with complex barriers to attendance involves a multi-faceted strategy that focuses on understanding the underlying issues, providing targeted support, and fostering a collaborative environment with families and external agencies.

#### **Identification and Assessment:**

- **Early Identification:** Utilise attendance monitoring systems to identify students with irregular attendance patterns.
- **Comprehensive Assessment:** Conduct thorough assessments to understand the specific barriers, such as socio-economic factors, family dynamics, transportation issues,

#### **Collaboration with Families:**

- **Open Communication:** Establish regular, open lines of communication with families to discuss attendance concerns and collaboratively develop solutions.
- **Family Support Services:** Connect families with community resources and support services

#### **In-School Strategies:**

- **Flexible Scheduling:** Offer flexible scheduling options, such as part-time attendance, staggered start times, or blended learning models.
- **Supportive Environment:** Create a welcoming and supportive school environment where students feel safe and valued.
- **Keyworker time:** Implement additional keyworker time to provide students with additional guidance and support.

#### **External Partnerships:**

- **Collaboration with Agencies:** Work with external agencies, including social services, health care providers, and community organisations, to address broader issues impacting attendance.

## **7.2 Students absent due to mental or physical ill health or SEND.**

Where a student has an education health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that related to the student's needs, the school will inform the local authority.

Our approach prioritises individualised support plans, family engagement, and a range of in-school adjustments to ensure that students with mental or physical ill health or special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can attend school as regularly as possible.

#### **Individualised Support:**

- **Personalised Learning Plans:** Develop personalised learning plans tailored to each student's needs, ensuring that their education continues despite health challenges.
- **Health and Education Coordination:** Collaborate with health professionals to align medical treatment plans with educational needs.

#### **Family Engagement:**

- **Regular Updates:** Maintain regular communication with families to provide updates on their child's progress and discuss any concerns.
- **Training:** Offer workshops and resources to help families support their child's education and well-being at home.

#### **In-School Adjustments:**

- **Reasonable Adjustments:** Implement reasonable adjustments such as modified timetables, reduced homework loads, or the provision of assistive technologies.

- **Accessible Facilities:** Ensure that school facilities are accessible and equipped to support students with physical disabilities.

#### **Additional Support:**

- **Counselling Services:** Provide access to school counsellors or external mental health services to support students' emotional well-being.
- **Peer Support Programs:** Establish peer support programs to help students build social connections and reduce feelings of isolation.

#### **EHC Plan Considerations:**

- **Monitoring and Reporting:** Monitor attendance closely and report any significant declines or emerging barriers related to a student's EHC plan to the local authority.
- **Review Meetings:** Schedule regular review meetings with all stakeholders to assess and adjust the support plan as needed.

### **7.3 Students returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence.**

#### **Approach:**

Our approach to reintegrating students after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence focuses on personalised reintegration plans, ongoing support, and close collaboration with families to ensure a smooth transition back to school.

#### **Reintegration Plans:**

- **Individualised Reintegration Plans:** Develop tailored reintegration plans that consider the specific reasons for absence, academic gaps, and emotional needs.
- **Gradual Re-entry:** Implement a phased return to school if necessary, starting with part-time attendance and gradually increasing to full-time.

#### **Ongoing Support:**

- **Catch-Up Programs:** Provide targeted academic support to help students catch up on missed work, including tutoring, study groups, or online resources.
- **Emotional Support:** Offer counselling and peer support groups to address any emotional or social challenges resulting from the absence.

#### **Family Collaboration:**

- **Collaborative Planning:** Involve families in the planning process to ensure that the reintegration plan aligns with the student's needs and family circumstances.
- **Regular Check-ins:** Schedule regular check-ins with families to monitor progress and address any emerging concerns.

#### **School Environment:**

- **Welcoming Atmosphere:** Foster a welcoming and inclusive school environment that encourages students to re-engage with their peers and teachers.
- **Staff Training:** Train staff to recognize and support students who may be struggling with the transition back to school.

#### **Monitoring and Evaluation:**

- **Progress Tracking:** Continuously monitor the student's academic and social progress to ensure that the reintegration plan is effective.
- **Adjustments as Needed:** Be prepared to make adjustments to the plan based on ongoing assessments and feedback from the student and family.

## 8. Attendance monitoring

### 8.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data weekly (meeting agenda item) half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual student level.
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern.

Student-level absence data will be collected 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 this with the Proprietor.

### 8.2 Analysing attendance.

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify students, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and
- Identify students whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence.
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

### 8.3 Using data to improve attendance.

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class staff and 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.

### 8.4 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:

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. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's strategy for improving attendance.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence

- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of students who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
  - Discuss attendance and engagement at school
  - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
  - Explain the help that is available
  - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
  - Review any existing actions or interventions
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these students. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence.
- Implement sanctions, where necessary

## 9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum, annually, by the Headteacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Proprietor.

## 9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

## Appendix 1: attendance codes

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

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
<b>Attending a place other than the school</b>		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
<b>Absent – leave of absence</b>		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment

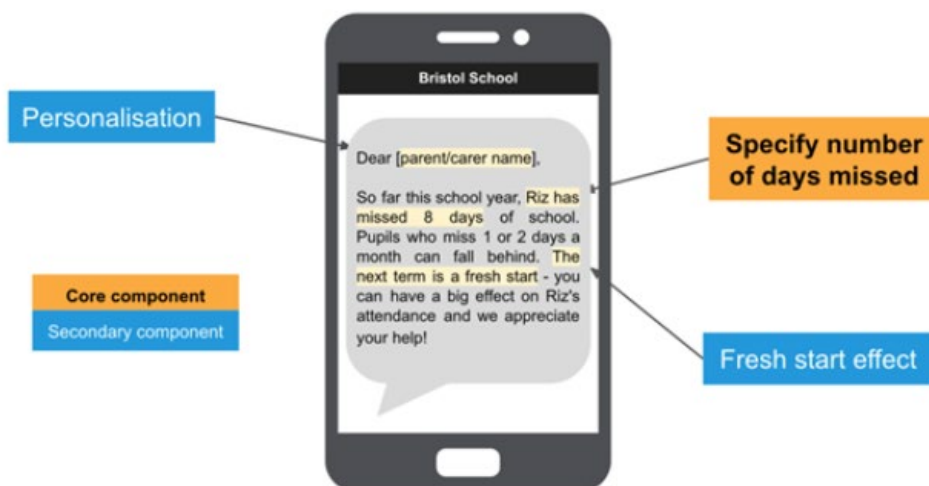


<b>S</b>	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>C2</b>	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
<b>C</b>	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
<b>Absent – other authorised reasons</b>		
<b>T</b>	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>I</b>	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
<b>E</b>	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
<b>Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause</b>		
<b>Q</b>	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
<b>Y1</b>	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
<b>Y2</b>	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
<b>Y3</b>	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open

<b>Y4</b>	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
<b>Y5</b>	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In police detention</li> <li>• Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or</li> <li>• Detained under a sentence of detention</li> </ul>
<b>Y6</b>	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
<b>Y7</b>	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
<b>Absent – unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
<b>O</b>	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
<b>U</b>	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
<b>Administrative codes</b>		
<b>Z</b>	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
<b>#</b>	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

## Appendix 2: Contacting Parents regarding attendance.

### Example Text Messages



#### Template 1:

Dear {Parent Name}. Last term, {Student Name} missed {Number of days missed in previous term} days of school. Pupils who miss 1 or 2 days a month can fall behind. The next term is a fresh start - you can have a big effect on {Student Name}'s attendance and we appreciate your help!

#### Template 2:

Dear {Parent Name}. Last term, {Student Name} missed {Number of days missed in previous term} days of school. Absences can have lasting effects on learning. This term is a fresh start and we appreciate your support in getting {Student Name} to school every day!

#### Template 3:

Dear {Parent Name}. Last term, {Student Name} missed {Number of days missed in previous term} days of school. School attendance is more important than ever, and every day matters. This term is a fresh start and we appreciate your support in getting {Student Name} to school every day!

## Letters to Parents

### Letter 1 – Concerns about a student’s high level of absence

Use this letter in situations where a student’s absence has been authorised, but absence levels are high.

For example:

- A student is regularly ill, but doesn’t have an identified medical need
- Combined circumstances (such as a family bereavement and student illness) means the student has missed a lot of lesson time

We’ve noticed that [student name] has missed a lot of school recently. We’re concerned that they are missing out on key experiences because of this, and that they risk falling behind.

[Name] has missed [insert number of days missed and over what time period].

We know that every family’s circumstances are different, and want to work with you to provide the best education for your child. We are aware of [insert known reasons for absence]. Please let us know if there’s anything else going on at home or at school which might be making it difficult for [name] to attend regularly.

We want to make sure that we can support [name’s] education in the best way possible, including looking into how we can help them to address gaps in learning due to absence.

Please contact the school office on 0116 4670811 as soon as you can so we can arrange to discuss any reasons for these absences or helping [name] catch up on any missed schoolwork.

Yours sincerely,

[Name]

Headteacher

### Letter 2 – Concerns about a student’s unauthorised absence

Use this letter as the first step to address unauthorised absence.

#### Unauthorised absence from school

We’ve noticed that [name] has recently taken an unauthorised [absence/absences] from school.

[Name] has been absent from school for a total of [number] days on the following dates:

- [date]
- [date]
- [date]

It’s important that [name] attends regularly, so that they can get the best out of their education.

We know that every family’s circumstances are different and want to work with you to provide the best education for your child. Please let us know if there is anything going on at home or at school which might be making it difficult for [name] to attend regularly.

We want to make sure that we can support [name’s] education in the best way possible, including looking into how we can help them to address gaps in learning due to absence.

Please contact the school office on 0116 4670811 as soon as you can so we can arrange to discuss any reasons for these absences and helping [name] catch up on any missed schoolwork.

Please note that unauthorised absences can result in a penalty notice being issued. You can find more information about penalty notices in our school attendance policy. Copies of the policy are on the school website, or available from the school office.

Yours sincerely,

[Name]

Headteacher

### Letter 3 – Invite parents/carers in to discuss attendance

*Use this letter to invite parents/carers in to have a discussion about attendance*

#### Invitation for a meeting to discuss attendance

We would like to invite you to come in to have a chat about [name]'s attendance at school. We would like to find out whether there is anything:

- Happening at school that makes it difficult for [name] to attend
- Happening at home that we can help with, or that you think we should be aware of
- We can do to make it easier for [name] to attend school regularly

Please contact the school office on 0116 4670811 as soon as you can so we can arrange to discuss the above questions, and how we can work together to help [name] catch up on any missed school work.

Yours sincerely,

[Name]

Headteacher

### Letter 4 – Invite parents/carers of a student with SEND in to discuss attendance

*Use this letter to invite parents/carers in to have a discussion about attendance*

#### Invitation for a meeting to discuss attendance

We would like to invite you to come in to have a chat about [name]'s attendance at school. We would like to find out whether there is/are:

- Anything happening at school that makes it difficult for [name] to attend
- Any issues around the level of support we are offering [name] to support their special educational needs
- Anything happening at home that we can help with, or that you think we should be aware of
- Anything we can do to make it easier for [name] to attend school regularly

Please contact the school office on 0116 4670811 as soon as you can so we can arrange to discuss any reasons for these absences, and what support we can offer to make regular attendance easier.

Yours sincerely,

[Name]

Headteacher

### Letter 4 – Formal notice about unauthorised absence

*Use this letter if:*

- *You have previously tried to address a student's unauthorised absence*

- *The student's unauthorised absence has reached the threshold set by your local authority for the use of a penalty notice*

## Unauthorised absence

We got in touch with you on [date] to discuss [name] taking unauthorised absence. Since then, we haven't seen much improvement in [name]'s rate of attendance. They missed the following days of school:

- [date]
- [date]
- [date]

In line with our attendance policy, and the local authority's code of practice, we have to now request a penalty notice be issued by the local authority.

When you receive the notice, you must pay:

- £80, if it's paid within 21 days
- £120, if it's paid after 21 days but within 28 days

If payment is not made within 28 days, the local authority may decide to pursue further legal action.

We would like to invite you to come for a discussion about [name]'s attendance at school. We would like to find out whether there is anything:

1. Happening at school that makes it difficult for [name] to attend
2. Happening at home that we can help with, or that you think we should be aware of
3. We can do to make it easier for [name] to attend school regularly

Please contact the school office on 0116 467 0811 as soon as you can so we can arrange to discuss any reasons for these absences, and how we can work together to help [name] catch up on any missed schoolwork.

Yours sincerely,

[Name]

Headteacher

## Letter 5 – Accepting a request for a holiday in term-time

### Your request for a holiday absence

Thank you for your request to take [name(s)] out of school between [date] and [date].

Having considered the exceptional circumstances set out in your application, I'm able to agree to your request.

I haven't come to this decision lightly. At The Lady Byron School we believe that regular attendance throughout the year is essential to every child's success and fulfilment.

We consider each request for a holiday absence on its merits and the family's specific circumstances.

Please be aware that that fact that I've agreed to this holiday request doesn't mean I'll necessarily be able to agree to any similar request from you, or other parents, in the future.

Yours sincerely,

[Name]

Headteacher

## Letter 6 – Declining a request for a holiday in term-time

### Your request for a holiday absence

Thank you for your request to take [name(s)] out of school between [date] and [date].

In this case I'm afraid I cannot consent to your request.

At The Lady Byron School we believe that regular attendance throughout the year is essential to every child's success and fulfilment.

I have not made this decision lightly. A request for an absence is considered on its specific circumstances, and I have taken many variables into consideration.

Because each request is different, this decision can't be compared with decisions made by the school in the past, and it won't affect future decisions.

I'm sorry to have to disappoint you on this occasion.

Yours sincerely,

[Name]

Headteacher

## Letter 7 – After an unauthorised holiday

### Holiday absence

I'm writing about your action in taking [name(s)] out of school for a family holiday between [date] and [date].

We're treating this as an unauthorised holiday because [explain the evidence you have].

At The Lady Byron school we believe that regular attendance throughout the year is essential to every child's success and fulfilment.

We expect you to consult the school before booking holidays that mean your child will be absent, or before making any plans that will involve your child's absence from lessons or other commitments.

We have the power to request that the local authority issue a penalty notice for unauthorised term-time holidays.

If you're issued with a penalty notice, you must pay:

- £80, if it's paid within 21 days of receiving the notice
- £160, if it's paid after 21 days but within 28 days

If you don't pay the penalty within 28 days, the local authority could pursue legal action.

Absences like these could have a detrimental effect on [name(s)] education.

We would like to arrange a meeting so that we can discuss this further. Please contact the school office as soon as possible on 0116 4670811

Yours sincerely,

[Name]

Headteacher

## Letter 8 – Accepting a request for absence for religious observance

## Your request for absence for religious observance

Thank you for your request to take [name(s)] out of school on [date] because of [religious occasion].

In this case, I'm prepared to agree to your request and it will be considered an authorised absence.

Each request for an absence is considered on its merits at the time. We recognise that a family's religious beliefs and traditions are intrinsic to their sense of identity.

However, please note that my decision in this instance does not set a precedent and does not necessarily mean I'll agree to a similar request, from you or other parents, in the future.

Yours sincerely,

[Name]

Headteacher

## Letter 9 – Concern about punctuality

### Poor punctuality

I'm writing to you because [name] has been late to school [number] times in [timeframe].

They have arrived at school after the register had closed on the following dates:

- [date]
- [date]
- [date]

They also arrived at school late (but before the register had closed) on the following dates:

- [date]
- [date]
- [date]

The school day begins promptly at [time] and registration closes at [time]. Afternoon registration takes place between [time slot].

Arriving promptly makes sure that your child doesn't miss schoolwork, and prevents disruption to the teacher and other students. Persistent lateness can lead to a significant loss in learning time.

Persistent lateness can result in a penalty notice. The school can request that the local authority issues a penalty notice related to lateness.

We would like to invite you to come in to have a chat about [name]'s punctuality. We would like to find out whether there is anything:

- Happening at school that makes it difficult for [name] to get to school on time
- Happening at home that we can help with, or that you think we should be aware of
- We can do to make it easier for [name] to be on time for school

Please contact the school office on [number] to arrange a meeting.

Yours sincerely,

[Name]

Headteacher



## Letter 10 – Congratulations for improving attendance rate

### Well done [name] for improving their attendance!

I'm writing to you to let you know that [name] has done a great job of improving their attendance rate.

Since [date], their attendance rate has improved from [percentage] to [percentage].

Well done to [name] and to you at home for your support.

[name] will be rewarded in line with the school privilege system

Yours sincerely,

[Name]

Headteacher

## Appendix 3: Privilege system



### The Lady Byron School Privilege system



The stars earned will determine the choice of reward activity available on a Wednesday for an hour out of the academic timetable.

Therefore, if a pupil achieved 4 stars, then they would be able to choose any of the reward activities specified within 1-4 stars. Student privilege levels are reviewed and revised on a weekly basis (Wednesday – Wednesday) to maximise motivation and engagement and the privileges will/can change half termly to motivate the students.

The fourth star, often referred to as pupils 'bonus' star would be achieved if a pupil is able to show considerable effort towards achieving their personal (Thrive) related target.

### Example of the privilege system

Star Level	Attendance	Privilege	Behaviours
BRONZE Every student starts here at the beginning of the week. 		Sensory Box activities Indoor board game or card game	(Every student starts here at the beginning of the week.) Engaged in learning.
SILVER 		Outside sports games Indoor Wii games Mindful activities Hot chocolate and biscuits.	Completes learning. Pupils show they can adhere to School values towards peers & Staff Pupils show they can adhere to the non negotiables
GOLD		Supervised ICT	Further learning shown 90%-95%

	<p>access (iPad/laptop)</p>	<p>following completion of work. Pupils adhere to the non-negotiables.</p>	
<p>PLATINUM</p> 	<p>Watch a film (pre-selected) listen to music, relax in the common room Park trip</p>	<p>Further learning shown following completion of work with no support. Pupils consistently adhere to the non-negotiables</p>	<p>95% Attendance or above</p>

## Appendix 4: Table of responsibilities

### All pupils

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Ensure their child attends every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies.</p> <p>Notify the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent (e.g. sickness).</p> <p>Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance.</p> <p>Book any medical appointments around the school day where possible.</p>	<p>Have a clear school attendance policy on the school website which all staff, pupils and parents understand.</p> <p>Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance.</p> <p>Accurately complete admission and attendance registers.</p> <p>Have robust daily processes to follow up absence.</p> <p>Regularly monitor data to identify patterns and trends and understand which pupils and pupil cohorts to focus on.</p> <p>Have a dedicated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance.</p>	<p>Take an active role in attendance improvement, support their school(s) to prioritise attendance, and work together with leaders to set whole school cultures.</p> <p>Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.</p> <p>Use data to understand patterns of attendance, compare with other local schools, identify areas of progress and where greater focus is needed.</p> <p>Ensure school staff receive training on attendance.</p>	<p>Have a strategic approach to improving attendance for the whole area and make it a key focus of all frontline council services.</p> <p>Have a School Attendance Support Team that works with all schools in their area to remove area-wide barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Provide each school with a named point of contact in the School Attendance Support Team who can support with queries and advice.</p> <p>Offer opportunities for all schools in the area to share effective practice.</p>

## Pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered to prevent the need for more formal support.</p>	<p>Proactively use data to identify pupils at risk of persistent absence.</p> <p>Work with each identified pupil and their parents to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-school barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Where out of school barriers are identified, signpost and support access to any required services in the first instance and act as lead practitioner if attendance is the only issue and/or the local threshold for formal early help is not met.</p> <p>If the issue persists, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the local authority and other partners. If a case meets the local threshold for formal early help/family support, this includes conducting the early help assessment and acting as the lead practitioner where all partners agree that the school is the best placed lead service. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the school, continue to work with the local authority and partners.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Hold a regular conversation with every school to identify, discuss and signpost or provide access to services for pupils who are persistently or severely absent or at risk of becoming so.</p> <p>Where there are out of school barriers, provide each identified pupil and their family with access to services they need in the first instance.</p> <p>If the issue persists, and there are multiple needs consider whether the threshold for early help is met and facilitate access where it is. Regardless, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the school and other partners. Provide the lead practitioner in cases where threshold is met and all partners agree that a local authority service is best placed to lead. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the local authority, continue to work with the school and partners.</p>

## Persistently absent pupils

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.</p>	<p>Continue support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent and:</p> <p>Where absence becomes persistent, put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers. Where necessary this includes working with partners.</p> <p>Where there is a lack of engagement, hold more formal conversations with parents and be clear about the potential need for legal intervention in future.</p> <p>Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, work with the local authority on legal intervention.</p> <p>Where there are safeguarding concerns, intensify support through a referral to statutory children's social care.</p> <p>Work with other schools in the local area, such as schools previously attended and the schools of any siblings.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Continue support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent and:</p> <p>Work jointly with the school to provide formal support options including attendance contracts and education supervision orders.</p> <p>Where there are safeguarding concerns, ensure joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners.</p> <p>Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, enforce attendance through legal intervention (including prosecution as a last resort).</p>

## Severely absent pupils

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.</p>	<p>Continue support as for persistently absent pupils and:</p> <p>Agree a joint approach for all severely absent pupils with the local authority.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Continue support as for persistently absent pupils and:</p> <p>All services should make this group the top priority for support. This may include a whole family plan, consideration for an education, health and care plan, or alternative form of educational provision.</p> <p>Be especially conscious of any potential safeguarding issues, ensuring joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners. Where appropriate, this could include conducting a full children's social care assessment and building attendance into children in need and child protection plans.</p>

## Support for cohorts of pupils with lower attendance than their peers

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Not applicable.</p>	<p>Proactively use data to identify cohorts with, or at risk of, low attendance and develop strategies to support them.</p> <p>Work with other schools in the local area and the local authority to share effective practice where there are common barriers to attendance.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Track local attendance data to prioritise support and unblock area wide attendance barriers where they impact numerous schools.</p>

## Support for pupils with a social worker

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered.</p>	<p>Know who the pupils who have, or who have had, a social worker are.</p> <p>Understand how the welfare, safeguarding, and child protection issues that they are experiencing, or have experienced, can have an impact on attendance – whilst maintaining a culture of high aspiration for the cohort.</p> <p>Provide additional academic support and make reasonable adjustments to help them, recognising that even when statutory social care intervention has ended, there can be a lasting impact on children's educational outcomes.</p> <p>Work in partnership with the local authority at a strategic and individual level, sharing data on attendance including, at an individual level, informing the pupil's social worker if there are any unexplained absences and if their name is to be deleted from the register.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Ensure that all Children's Social Care practitioners, understand the importance of good attendance for pupil's educational progress, for their welfare and their wider development – and understand their role in improving it.</p> <p>Through the work of Virtual School Heads, they should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake systemic monitoring and data sharing of the attendance of children with a social worker in their area: developing and implementing targeted cohort level interventions to improve attendance.</li> <li>• Provide advice, challenge and training to schools on how to promote and secure good attendance for children with a social worker.</li> <li>• Develop whole system approaches, with social care, to support the attendance of children in need.</li> </ul>

## Looked after and previously looked after children

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand the child's barriers to attendance – including the development of Personal Education Plans.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered.</p>	<p>Have high expectations for the cohort – with expert support and leadership provided by the designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after pupils.</p> <p>Work in partnership with the local authority Virtual School Head to develop and deliver high quality Personal Education Plans for looked-after children that support good attendance.</p> <p>Work directly with parents to develop good home-school links that support good attendance. For previously looked-after pupils this could include discussion on use of the Pupil Premium Plus funding managed by the school.</p>	<p>Designate a member of staff to have responsibility for the promotion of the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after pupils.</p> <p>Monitor and review attendance of the cohort and consider how school policies, including behaviour policies, are sensitive to their needs and support good attendance.</p>	<p>Promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children – doing everything possible to minimise disruption to education when a pupil enters care.</p> <p>(LA that looks after the child:) Appoint an expert Virtual School Head (VSH) – will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor, report on, and evaluate the education outcomes of looked after children, including their attendance, as if they attended a single school- whenever they live or are educated.</li> <li>• Ensure schools know when they have a pupil looked after by the authority on their role and that information is shared with the school on issues that may impact on their attendance.</li> <li>• Ensure that all looked-after pupils have high quality, up to date, effective Personal Education Plans developed in partnership with schools, social workers and carers – including, where necessary, clear interventions and use of pupil premium plus funding to support good attendance.</li> <li>• Provide expert advice and information on the education of previously looked-after pupils to schools and parents – including their attendance.</li> </ul>

## Monitoring

Parents:	Schools:	Academy trustees and governing bodies:	Local authorities:
<p>Schools regularly update parents on their child's attendance.</p> <p>(If parents feel the school and or local authority have not delivered what they are expected to they should discuss the case with the school and/or local authority's attendance support team.)</p>	<p>The school's Senior Attendance Champion will ensure all school based staff complete their attendance responsibilities in line with the school's policies and procedures.</p> <p>The governing board or academy trust will hold the headteacher or executive leadership to account for their delegated responsibilities and for compliance with regulatory and statutory requirements. They will review progress and provide challenge when required. The board will help school leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most and ensure that school staff receive adequate training on attendance.</p> <p>Ofsted will expect schools to do all they reasonably can to achieve the highest possible attendance as part of the behaviour and attitudes judgement. This includes, where attendance is not consistently at or above what could reasonably be expected, that schools have a strong understanding of the causes of absence (particularly for persistent and severe absence) and a clear strategy in place that takes account of those causes to improve attendance for all pupils.</p> <p>Ultimately, in cases where a school has not met expectations or statutory duties the Secretary of State can consider a complaint.</p>	<p>DfE Regions Group considers multi academy trusts' efforts on attendance as part of decision making.</p> <p>Ofsted considers governing bodies' efforts as part of inspections.</p>	<p>DfE Regions Group monitors local authority efforts as part of regular interaction.</p> <p>Ofsted may consider the local area partnership's approach to improving attendance of children and young people with SEND as part of the SEND Area Inspection, and the local authority's approach to improving attendance for children with a social worker through inspecting local authority children's services.</p> <p>Ultimately, in cases where a local authority has not met expectations or statutory duties the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman or the Secretary of State can consider a complaint.</p>