Attendance Policy

Barking Abbey School

Approved by:	Chair of Governors	Date: October 2024
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Contents

1. Aims

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

- **Build Strong Relationships:** Collaborate with families to understand and address attendance barriers. Ensure that pupils feel that school is a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environment where all pupils are keen and ready to learn.

- **Promote Attendance and punctuality:** Foster a school culture that values high attendance and good punctuality. We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

- **Clear Policy:** Ensure everyone understands and follows the school attendance policy.

- **Accurate Records:** Maintain precise admission and attendance records, with effective absence follow-up.

- **Monitor Attendance:** Regularly review data to identify and support pupils needing help.

- **Collaborate:** Work with local schools, authorities, and partners for pupils at risk of persistent absence.

- **Support Needs:** Provide extra support for students with health issues (both physical and mental ill heath) or special educational needs and/ or disabilities.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy complies with the latest guidance on school attendance as outlined in the **Department for Education's (DfE) "Working Together to Improve School Attendance" (2024)**. It also refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance and parental responsibility measures. The relevant legislation governing school attendance includes:

- **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 (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006**, including subsequent amendments through 2023

- **The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007**, as amended

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- **Promoting Attendance:** Championing the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos.

- **Ensuring Compliance:** Overseeing that school leaders meet statutory duties and expectations related to attendance.

- **Reviewing Data:** Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data to ensure accuracy and effectiveness.

- **Monitoring Figures:** Monitoring overall school attendance figures and specific data on persistent and severe absentees.

- **Staff Training:** Ensuring all staff receive appropriate training on attendance management and related policies.

- **Holding the Headteacher Accountable:** Holding the headteacher accountable for the effective implementation of the attendance policy.

- **Strategic Meetings:** Meeting regularly with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to discuss attendance issues and strategies for addressing persistent and severe absenteeism.

- **Reporting:** Ensuring that the school reports regularly and accurately on overall attendance and figures for persistent and severe absentees, in line with statutory requirements.

- **Attendance Link Governor:** Appointing a Link Governor for attendance to provide oversight and support.

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- **Policy Implementation:** Overseeing the effective implementation of the attendance policy across the school.

- **Data Monitoring:** Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting findings to the governing board.

- **Staff Support:** Supporting staff in monitoring and addressing the attendance of individual pupils.

- **Strategy Evaluation:** Assessing the impact of implemented attendance strategies and making necessary adjustments.

- **Issuing Penalties:** Issuing fixed-penalty notices where appropriate, in line with statutory guidelines.

- **Term-Time Holiday Requests:** Reviewing and challenging requests for term-time holidays to ensure they comply with school policy and legal requirements.

3.3 The Designated Senior Attendance Champion

The designated Senior Attendance Champion is responsible for:

- **Leadership:** Leading and championing attendance across the school.

- **Vision and Strategy:** Developing and communicating a clear vision for improving attendance and setting strategic goals.

- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Evaluating and monitoring attendance expectations, processes, and their effectiveness.

- **Data Oversight:** Overseeing the analysis of attendance data to identify trends and areas for improvement.

- **Strategy Development:** Designing and implementing targeted strategies to address identified issues of poor attendance.

- **Parent Engagement:** Organising and conducting calls and meetings with parents to address attendance concerns and provide support.

- **Intervention and Support:** Delivering targeted interventions and support to pupils and families to improve attendance outcomes.

The designated Senior Attendance Champion is The Senior Deputy Headteacher- Head of Campuses who can contacted via **0203 967 7030.**

3.4 The attendance leads

The designated Attendance Leads are responsible for:

- **Data Monitoring and Analysis:** Monitoring and analysing attendance data to identify trends and areas for improvement.

- **Benchmarking:** Comparing attendance data with benchmarks to pinpoint focus areas for enhancement.

- **Reporting:** Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting any significant attendance concerns to the designated Senior Attendance Champion and the headteacher.

- **Collaboration:** Working with Education Welfare Officers, the safeguarding team, and pastoral teams to address and reduce persistent absenteeism.

- **Support Partnerships:** Liaising with the school's attendance support partners and guiding staff on issuing fixed-penalty notices and fines.

- **Home Visits:** Overseeing and coordinating the use of home visits by the Pastoral and Safeguard teams in conjunction with attendance support partners.

The designated Attendance Leads are the Assistant Head Teachers for Behaviour and Inclusion (at Longbridge and Sandringham), who can be contacted via 0203 967 7030.

3.5 The Pastoral Teams

The Pastoral Teams will:

- **Promote Attendance:** Collaborate with families and students to encourage high attendance in school and in lessons.

- **Engage with Data:** Actively engage with and respond to attendance data provided by the Attendance Leads.

- **Identify and Intervene:** Identify students with low attendance (persistent absenteeism or severe absenteeism) and implement targeted interventions and attendance improvement plans as needed.

- **Early Intervention:** Work with Reception teams to identify and address absence patterns early, involving students and their families.

- **Document Concerns:** Record significant concerns about low attendance using the Safeguard platform, noting any potential safeguarding risks.

- **Track Interventions:** Document attendance interventions on the Pastoral Attendance and Behaviour Narratives Tracker, including completion of attendance support plans.

- **Support Form Tutors:** Provide attendance data to Form Tutors to assist with their monitoring of attendance and punctuality.

3.6 The role of the Form Tutor

Form Tutors will:

- **Record Attendance**: Accurately record morning (AM) attendance daily using the appropriate codes (/, L, N) and submit this information to the school office by 8:40am.

- **Address Punctuality:** Address and manage concerns related to student punctuality to school and lessons.

- **Early Intervention:** Discuss early attendance concerns with students during welfare checks.

- **Report Concerns:** Refer any significant concerns regarding student attendance to the Safeguard and Pastoral teams when appropriate.

3.7 The role of the Classroom Teacher

Classroom Teachers will:

- **Lesson Attendance:** Record attendance for each lesson using the correct codes (/, L, N) and submit this information to the school office within 10 minutes of the lesson start time.

- **Flag Missing Students:** Use the LR or SR support email group to notify the Reception and Pastoral Teams of any students missing from their lessons.

- **Late Arrivals:** Mark students arriving late with an L code, noting the number of minutes late on the register.

3.8 The role of School Admin staff

School admin staff will:

- **Monitor Messages:** Daily review and respond to messages left by parents on the school phone system regarding student attendance.

- **Handle Absence Calls:** Take calls from parents about student absences, record the details on the school system using the correct codes, and include any relevant supplementary information.

- **Communicate with Year Teams:** Share information with Year Teams about concerning patterns of student absence, particularly unauthorized or unexplained absences.

- **Challenge Non-Attendance:** Investigate and question reasons for non-attendance to ensure accurate records and address any issues.

- **Escalate Concerns:** Forward concerns from parents to the Pastoral Team for additional support with attendance issues.

- **Monitor Trends:** Track patterns and trends in pupil attendance, highlighting concerns to the relevant attendance staff and Year Teams. Raise issues when students reach the new intervention thresholds: 10 half-day sessions (or 5 full days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10-week period, or 5 consecutive days of Term Time Leave.

- **Support for Persistent Absentees:** Closely monitor students identified as Severe or Persistent Absentees, assisting Year Teams with referrals to the school's attendance support partners.

- **Contact Families:** Contact families of pupils with frequent absences according to the guidance in this policy and refer any ongoing concerns to the Safeguarding or Pastoral Team.

- **Record Safeguarding Concerns:** Accurately document any safeguarding concerns using the school's safeguarding platform.

3.9 Parents/carers

Parents/Carers are expected to:

- **Ensure Regular Attendance:** Ensure their child attends school every day and arrives on time.

- **Report Absences:** Notify the school of their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence and on each subsequent day of absence. Provide an expected return date when possible.

- **Emergency Contacts:** Provide the school with at least two emergency contact numbers for their child.

- **Schedule Appointments:** Arrange medical and other appointments for their child outside of school hours wherever possible.

- **Avoid Term-Time Holidays:** Ensure that holidays are not taken during term time, as this can affect their child's attendance and may lead to penalties.

- **Understand Absence Thresholds:** Recognise that their child must not accumulate 10 half-day sessions (or 5 full days) of unauthorised absence within a 10-week period, or 5 consecutive days of Term Time Leave.

Exceeding these thresholds will trigger a warning letter and may lead to interventions or fines from the local authority.

- **Address Late Arrivals:** Understand that arriving late to school, particularly after the morning and afternoon registers have closed, can contribute to unauthorised absence sessions.

- **Engage with School:** Actively engage with the school's attendance procedures and respond to communications regarding their child's attendance and any required actions or interventions.

3.10 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- **Attend School on Time:** Arrive at school every day between 8:15am and 8:30am.

- **Be Punctual to Lessons:** Attend every lesson and timetabled activity punctually.

- **Meet Sanction Requirements:** Attend any school-imposed sanctions on time as directed.

- **Follow Off-Site Directions:** Attend any off-site directions or interventions from the school or local authority on time and for the duration specified.

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance Register

Register Keeping: We will maintain an attendance register for all pupils and take it at the start of the first session and once during the second session each school day.

Record Retention: We will retain all entries on the attendance register for 3 years from the date they were made

Marking Attendance: The register will indicate:

- Present

- Late (before and after registers have closed)

- Attending an approved off-site educational activity

- Absent

- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Amendments to the Register: Any changes to the attendance register will record:

- The original entry

- The amended entry

- The reason for the amendment

- The date of the amendment

- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

Additional Recording:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not

- The reason for the student's late arrival

- The nature of the activity for approved off-site educational activities

- Details of the circumstances for exceptional absences

Punctuality: Pupils must arrive by 8:30am each school day.

- The morning register is taken at 8:30am and remains open until 9:00am.

- The afternoon register is taken at 1:50pm and remains open until 2:20pm.

Late Arrival Codes:

- L (Late before registers close): Students arriving before the end of the registration period. This will be a present mark with the number of minutes late recorded.

- U (Late after registers close): Students arriving after the registration period closes, which is recorded as an unauthorised absence. Registers close

Unauthorised Absences:

- If no reason is known at registration, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised until a satisfactory reason is provided.

- If the reason provided is unsatisfactory, it will be recorded as 'O' (Unauthorised Absence).

- If the evidence is satisfactory, the code will be amended to an Authorised Absence.

Examples of Unauthorised Absences:

- Shopping with parents, celebrating birthdays, looking after younger siblings, staying home because other family members are unwell, visiting relatives, day trips and holidays in term time not agreed upon, arriving too late for a present mark (after registers have closed), truancy.

New Considerations:

1. Recording Attendance for Remote Education: School will ensure that attendance for any remote or hybrid learning arrangements is recorded according to the latest guidelines.

2. Regular Review: School will regularly review attendance codes and ensure that staff are up-to-date with any changes in guidance.

3. Training: School will ensure all staff involved in taking and amending registers receive adequate training on using the correct codes and understanding the reasons for their use.

4.2 Unplanned absence

Notification Requirement: The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8:30am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school admin staff on 0203 967 7030.

Follow-Up Actions: If the pupil's parent/carer have not contacted the school regarding attendance, the school may:

- Send a message to the family requesting reasons for the pupil's non-attendance.

- Phone the family of the pupil to request details of the pupil's non-attendance.

- Contact social services if non-attendance is a significant concern.

- Conduct a home visit to check on the welfare of the pupil.

Absence Due to Illness:

- Absence due to illness will be marked as authorised unless the school has genuine concerns about the authenticity of the illness.

- If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt or is part of a pattern of repeated absence, the school may request medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card, or other appropriate forms of evidence. Medical evidence will not be requested 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 decision in advance.

4.3 Planned Absence

Medical and Dental Appointments:

- Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised only if the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

- If a pupil has a pre-planned appointment that cannot be scheduled outside of school hours, the family should notify the school as soon as possible and give at least 24 hours' notice.

- Pupils are expected to attend school for the hours they can if the appointment occurs during the school day. We encourage parents/carers to schedule appointments outside of school hours where possible.

- If appointments during the school day are unavoidable, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

- Failure to Provide Evidence: Failure to provide medical evidence or to report the absence may result in the absence being considered unauthorised.

- Application for Term-Time Absence: The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. See Section 6 for details on which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A Pupil Who Arrives Late:

- Before the Register Closes: Will be marked as late, using the appropriate code 'L'.

- After the Register Closes: Will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code 'U'.

Late Arrival Procedures:

- Any pupil arriving after 8:30am must sign in at the Main Reception.

- They will be sanctioned with a 30-minute after-school reflection that day.

- A message will be sent home to families informing them that their child arrived late to school.

Arrivals After 8:50am:

- Any pupil arriving after 8:50am must sign in at the Main Reception.

- They will be held in the Main Reception until a member of the Admin Team has contacted home to inform the family of the time their child arrived at school and to question the reason for their lateness.

- Unless an adequate explanation is provided, they will be sanctioned with a 30-minute after-school reflection that day.

Persistent Lateness:

- Persistent lateness will be monitored and reviewed. If lateness contributes to a pupil being absent for 10% or more of school sessions and school support and intervention has been exhausted, the case may be referred to the Local Authority, who could consider legal action.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence.

Handling Unexplained Absences:

Initial Communication:

- On the morning of the first day of an unexplained absence, the school will contact the pupil's parent/carer to ascertain the reason for the absence.

- If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may refer the concern to the Pastoral or Safeguarding Team, who may liaise with Social Services or the Police if necessary.

Absence Classification:

- The school will determine whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised based on the information provided.

- The appropriate attendance code will be identified and input as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained.

Ongoing Absence Without Explanation:

- The school will call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken.

- If the absence continues without resolution, the school will consider involving an Education Welfare Officer for further support.

Consecutive Absence Without Communication:

In the event of consecutive absence without communication from the family, the school will take additional steps to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the pupil. This may include escalating the concern to the Safeguarding Team or Social Services for further investigation.

First Day Absence (No Notification)	Second Day Absence (No Notification)	Third Day Absence (No Notification)	Fourth Day Absence (No Notification)	Fifth Day Absence (No Notification)
Immediate Action: The school will message or telephone parents on the first day of absence as early as possible to ascertain the reason and notify parents if their child has not arrived at school. **If team have concerns about student safety: Safeguarding Alert**: Record concerns in the Safeguard Portal.	**Follow-Up:** If the child remains absent without contact, a second telephone call will be made. **Escalation:** If no contact is made, escalate the issue to the Pastoral Team for further contact attempts. **Home Visit:** The Safeguarding Team will conduct a home visit if serious SG concerns	**Follow-Up**: A third telephone call will be made. **Pastoral Team Involvement:** The Pastoral Team will take additional steps to contact the family. **Safeguarding Alert**: Record concerns in the Safeguard Portal. **Home Visit:** The Safeguarding Team will conduct a home visit if serious SG concerns	**Escalation to Safeguarding Team:** The Safeguarding Team will attempt to contact the family and arrange a home visit if necessary. **Involving Social Services:** If no contact is made or if concerns persist, a referral to Social Services will be made.	**Home Visit:** The Safeguarding Team will conduct a home visit if contact has not been established. **Further Escalation**: The Attendance Lead will liaise with the Local Authority regarding the ongoing absence.
Documentation: Record all attempts and outcomes of communication in Arbor.	**Documentation:** All actions and communications will be recorded in Arbor.	**Documentation:** Detail all communications and outcomes in Arbor	**Documentation:** Record all actions and communications in Arbor and Safeguard Portal.	**Documentation:** Continue recording all details in Arbor and Safeguard Portal.

Any additional Absence.

Continuous Monitoring: For any ongoing or additional days of absence, the Attendance Lead will liaise with the Local Authority and ensure regular data sharing as per the 2024 guidelines.

Parental Communication: Ensure parents are fully informed of their legal obligations and the potential consequences, including fines or legal action, due to continued absence.

4.6 Children Missing in Education

The **Attendance Lead** will follow up in line with the **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**

In the event of a child

- Not returning to school for **10 consecutive school days after an authorised absence**, or

- **Being absent without authorisation for 10 consecutive school days**,

The Attendance Lead will:

- Follow up in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

- Initiate a formal missing child process, which may include:

  - Notifying the local authority as required by the 2024 guidance.

  - Conducting a thorough review of the child's absence history and any potential safeguarding concerns.

  - Attempting to make contact with the family and any other emergency contacts.

  - Engaging with external agencies such as social services or the police if necessary.

4.7 Vulnerable Groups

The school has identified target groups of pupils, whose families will be contacted on the first day of absence by the Reception team, the Safeguarding Team or Pastoral Teams. According to the 2024 guidance, the following groups of students should be considered vulnerable:

- **Students with Special Educational Needs (SEN):** These students may require additional support to engage with their education and could be at higher risk of poor attendance or disengagement.

- **Looked After Children (LAC):** Children in the care of local authorities may need additional support to ensure regular school attendance.

- **Children with a Social Worker:** Those known to social services or who have an allocated social worker, particularly those involved in child protection or family support services, may be more vulnerable.

- **Students on a Child Protection Plan:** Those subject to a child protection plan due to concerns about their safety or welfare require additional support.

- **Students with Mental Health Issues:** Those experiencing significant mental health challenges may face barriers to regular school attendance.

- **Students from Disadvantaged Backgrounds:** Those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds or facing other socio-economic challenges are also considered vulnerable.

- **Students with Family Issues:** Students experiencing significant family issues, such as domestic violence, homelessness, or parental separation, may need additional support.

- **Young Carers:** Students who have substantial caring responsibilities for family members can face challenges that affect their school attendance and performance.

4.8 Reporting to parents / carers

Student's Attendance and Punctuality Reporting:

Termly Reports:

- Each term, parents/carers will receive a detailed report that includes their child's attendance and punctuality. This report will be sent home and will form part of the termly academic report.

Parent Evenings:

- Attendance and punctuality will be discussed during scheduled parent evenings, providing an opportunity for direct feedback and dialogue about the child's attendance record and any necessary interventions.

Weekly Updates:

- Parents/carers will receive a brief summary of their child's attendance and punctuality on a weekly basis via email. This will be automated through Arbor and will keep parents informed of their child's current attendance status.

Half-Termly Communication:

In addition to weekly updates, parents/carers will receive a more comprehensive communication each half-term. This detailed report will include:

- Attendance and Punctuality Overview: An in-depth summary of their child's attendance and punctuality for the previous half-term.
- Support Strategies: Information on how the school supports students with attendance concerns, including any interventions or support mechanisms in place.
- Action Plans: If necessary, any required actions or improvements will be highlighted, with clear guidance on how the school and parents/carers can work together to address attendance issues.

5. A Staged Approach to Attendance

The school will work collaboratively with the local authority in adopting a *Staged Approach* to Attendance.

5.1 Prevention

High Expectations:

- **Communication of Expectations**: We will clearly set and communicate high expectations for attendance and punctuality to pupils and parents/carers. This includes explaining the importance of regular attendance and the potential consequences of poor attendance, including impacts on academic progress and wellbeing.

- **Integration into School Culture**: Good attendance will be made a central aspect of the school's vision, values, and daily activities, alongside fostering good behaviour. Attendance is not seen in isolation but is integrated into the overall ethos of the school.

- **Link with Welfare Issues**: We recognise that absence can reflect broader welfare issues. Therefore, we integrate attendance into strategies addressing attainment, behaviour, special educational needs (SEN) support, safeguarding, wellbeing, and support for disadvantaged students. This holistic approach ensures that attendance improvements are aligned with overall pupil welfare and support.

Support for Pupils:

- **Whole-School Approaches:** Pupils with attendance between 90% and 100% will be supported through whole-school attendance approaches that promote good attendance. This includes:
- **Proactive Communication**: Regular telephone calls, texts, letters, and meetings with parents/carers to reinforce the importance of attendance and address any emerging issues.
- **In-School Support Services**: Utilisation of in-school support services to address and resolve any attendance concerns. This may involve providing additional support or intervention if attendance begins to decline.

5.2 Early Help and Support

Early Help

At Barking Abbey, we recognise the importance of early intervention in addressing attendance issues and supporting students and families facing barriers to regular school attendance. Early Help is a proactive approach that enables us to identify and address concerns at the earliest stage, reducing the risk of persistent absenteeism and its associated impacts on a student's education and wellbeing.

Understanding and Support:

- **Sensitive Approach:** The school will prioritise understanding and addressing the reasons behind problematic attendance. We will consider the sensitive nature of some absences and focus on providing support rather than punishment.

- **Collaboration:** The school will collaborate with pupils and families to identify and tackle any in-school barriers to attendance. For external barriers, we will work with external partners to offer additional support as needed.

- **Regular Review:** We will hold regular meetings to review progress, assess the effectiveness of the interventions, and adjust actions as needed to ensure ongoing support and improvement.

Our Approach to Early Help Includes:

- Identification: We systematically monitor attendance data to identify students who may benefit from Early Help. This includes those with declining attendance, patterns of unauthorised absences, or known barriers to regular attendance.

- Engagement: We engage with students and families early, offering support tailored to their specific needs. This may involve conducting an Early Help Assessment (EHA) to better understand the family's circumstances and collaboratively plan appropriate interventions.

- Multi-Agency Collaboration: Where necessary, we work in partnership with external agencies, such as social services, health professionals, and local authority teams, to provide comprehensive support that addresses the underlying causes of attendance issues.

- Action Plans: For students identified through the Early Help process, we develop personalised action plans aimed at improving attendance and removing barriers to learning. These plans are reviewed regularly to ensure their effectiveness.

- Parental Involvement: We actively involve parents and carers in the Early Help process, recognising that their support is crucial to improving their child's attendance. We provide guidance and resources to assist families in overcoming challenges that may impact their child's school attendance.

- **Mental Heath and Wellbeing: T**he school understands that mental health and wellbeing are critical factors in a student's ability to attend and engage in school effectively. To support our students' mental health, we integrate wellbeing practices and mental health support into our overall attendance strategy, ensuring that students receive the help they need to thrive both academically and personally.

- **Our Approach to Mental Health and Wellbeing Includes**:

- Identification and Early Intervention: We regularly monitor students' mental health and wellbeing as part of our attendance tracking. Students showing signs of emotional distress, anxiety, or other mental health concerns are identified early, and appropriate support is offered promptly.

- Access to Support Services: We provide students with access to a range of mental health support services, including in-school counselling, pastoral care, and referrals to external mental health professionals when necessary. We maintain strong links with local mental health services to ensure that students receive comprehensive care.

- Staff Training: Our staff are trained to recognise signs of mental health issues and understand how these may affect attendance. This training enables them to respond effectively, offering initial support and referring students to appropriate services when needed.

- Creating a Supportive Environment: We are committed to fostering a school environment that promotes positive mental health and wellbeing. This includes implementing wellbeing initiatives, promoting a culture of openness about mental health, and encouraging students to seek help when needed.

- Parental Involvement: We involve parents and carers in discussions about their child's mental health and its impact on attendance. We provide resources and guidance to help families support their child's mental health at home and work collaboratively to find solutions that encourage regular school attendance.

- Tailored Attendance Plans: For students whose mental health significantly impacts their attendance, we develop tailored attendance plans that accommodate their needs. These plans may include flexible timetables, adjustments to the learning environment, and regular check-ins with a designated staff member.

Investigating Declining Attendance:

- **Action on Declining Attendance:** When a child's attendance is at risk of falling below 90%, the school will investigate potential underlying reasons for the absences. Recognising that absence is often a symptom of broader issues, we will take a holistic approach to identify and address these concerns.

- **Liaison with Local Authority:** If attendance continues to decline, the school will liaise timely and effectively with the local authority (LA) to address these issues. This collaboration may involve seeking tailored interventions and additional support.

Tailored Interventions and Support:

Intervention Options:

- Where available and appropriate, the school will work with the LA to explore tailored interventions. These may include:

- **Mentoring:** Providing one-on-one mentoring to support the student's engagement and attendance.

- **Careers Advice:** Offering guidance to help with future planning and motivation.

- **One-to-One Tuition:** Providing additional academic support to address learning needs.

- **Out-of-Hours Learning:** Offering extra learning opportunities outside of standard school hours.

Family-Wide Response: The school will provide a comprehensive family-wide response, including voluntary early help assessments if needed, to address any broader issues affecting attendance.

Formal Meetings:

- **Meetings with Parents and Pupils:** Formal meetings will be conducted with parents and the pupil (when appropriate) to discuss persistent absence. These meetings will cover potential legal consequences and available support.

- **Leadership and Local Authority Involvement:** These meetings will be led by senior staff members and may include local authority representatives to ensure a coordinated approach and to address any legal or procedural aspects.

5.3 Statutory Intervention

If voluntary support fails, school will collaborate with the local authority.

Collaboration with Local Authority:

Formal Support:

- **Attendance Contract: Implement formal measures such as an attendance contract, which outlines agreed actions and expectations for improvement.**

- **Education Supervision Order: Consider an education supervision order if necessary, which mandates specific actions to improve attendance.**

- **Referral to Social Care: Refer the case to children's social care if there are significant safeguarding concerns or if the absence continues despite previous interventions.**

Notices and Penalties:

- **Notice to Improve: Issue a Notice to Improve if previous support measures have been ineffective, to formally outline expectations and required actions.**

- **Penalty Notice: Issue a penalty notice as a deterrent if prior support has not led to improvement and if it is likely to influence parental behaviour.**

Intensify Support:

- **Statutory Children's Social Care: Involve statutory children's social care if there are safeguarding concerns or if the pupil's attendance is severely low (below 50%). This step is crucial for ensuring that the pupil receives appropriate support and intervention.**

Legal Action:

- **Prosecution: Pursue legal action if all other measures have failed or are deemed inappropriate. This may include requesting a community or parenting order to ensure that the family engages with support services and adheres to attendance requirements.**

Guidance and Resources:

- **Staged Approach to Intervention:** For full details on the staged approach to intervention, refer to the guidance document 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance,' available here: <u>Working Together to Improve School Attendance (August 2024)</u>.

- **Summary in Appendix:** A summary of this guidance is provided in Appendix 2: Whole School Attendance Strategy for quick reference.

6. Authorised and unauthorised absence

6.1 Approval for term-time absence

General Policy:

- Exceptional Circumstances: The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances.' The decision to grant leave, including the length of time, is at the headteacher's discretion.
- Application Process: Each application for term-time absence is considered individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances, and relevant context behind the request. Requests should be submitted as soon as possible, and at least one week before the planned absence where feasible, using the leave of absence request form available on the school website. For details of the Absence Request form, see Appendix 3: Absence Request Form. The headteacher may request supporting evidence for any leave of absence request.

Valid Reasons for Authorised Absence:

- Illness and Medical / Dental Appointments: Absences due to illness and medical or dental appointments are valid reasons, detailed in Sections 4.2 and 4.3.
- Religious Observance: Absences for religious observance are permitted if the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will consult the relevant religious body to confirm the day's status.
- Traveller Pupils: Absences for occupational purposes related to travelling communities (e.g., Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen, bargees, and new travellers) may be authorised if the pupil is travelling for occupational reasons and has agreed this with the school. However, the absence is not authorised if it is unclear whether the pupil is receiving educational provision.
- Safeguarding Concerns: Absences may be authorised if there are concerns about the pupil's safeguarding, either at school or on their way to school. This is at the discretion of the Deputy Head Teachers or the Headteacher and will be coded as 'C' for circumstances.
- Study Leave: The DfE guidance permits schools to grant study leave for students once external examinations have begun. If the school decides to grant study leave, it will use the 'S' code.

6.2 Legal sanctions

Actions for Unauthorised Attendance:

The Department for Education (DfE) has implemented significant changes to ensure a unified approach to issuing Penalty Notices for unauthorised school absences. These changes aim to provide consistency across all Local Authorities and introduce increased charges for Penalty Notices.

- **Unified Approach:** All Local Authorities are now required to follow the same rules, ensuring a consistent approach nationwide.

- **Trigger Points for Penalty Notices:** A Penalty Notice must be considered when a student reaches the trigger points of:

  10 (half-day) sessions (or 5 full days) of unauthorised absence within a 10-week period,

  or

  5 consecutive days of Term Time Leave.

Procedures and Notices:

- **Notice to Improve:** This notice serves as a final opportunity for parents to improve their child's attendance before a Penalty Notice is issued. If parents do not engage with support or if previous notices have been ineffective, a Penalty Notice may be issued during or at the end of the designated improvement period.

Penalty Notice Charges:

First Offence:

- £160 per parent, per child, payable within 28 days.

- Reduced to £80 per parent, per child, if paid within 21 days.

Second Offence:

- £160 per parent, per child, payable within 28 days.

- No reduction for early payment.

Third Offence Onwards:

- Cases are presented directly to the Magistrate's Court.

- Fines up to £2,500 per parent, per child.

- Possible criminal record if found guilty in court.

- Potential jail sentence of up to three months.

Financial Implications:

Penalty Notices are issued per parent, per child. This means each parent can be fined separately for each child who is absent without authorisation.

6.3 Unauthorised absence and safeguarding

Potential Safeguard Concerns:

- If a child has a high number of unauthorised absences and the family fails to notify the school, this may present a potential safeguarding concern.

Referral to Local Authority (LA) MASH Team:

- The school will make a referral to the Local Authority Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) team if there are concerns regarding the well-being of a child with a high number of unauthorised absences. The referral will follow the procedures outlined in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Missing Child Protocol:

- If the school believes that an absent child is at risk, or may be at risk, and there has been no communication from the parents, the school will contact 101 and register the child as missing. This step is essential to ensure the child's immediate safety and well-being.

Specific Safeguarding Concerns:

- If the school suspects that the absence is linked to concerns such as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), Honour-Based Violence (HBV), Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), County Lines, or Gang Exploitation, the school will follow the procedures outlined in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. This includes involving appropriate agencies and taking necessary actions to protect the child.

6.4 Leave in Term Time

Effect of Term-Time Holidays:

- Holidays taken during term time significantly impact a pupil's education. To support continuous learning and academic progress, parents and guardians are strongly advised to avoid scheduling holidays during term time.

Legislation and Authorisation:

- According to the updated government guidance effective from 19 August 2024, holidays during term time will only be authorised under exceptional circumstances. Requests for term-time leave must be submitted using the Absence Request Form (refer to Appendix 3). The Headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave.

Exceptional Circumstances:

- The government guidance specifies that there is no automatic entitlement to time off during term time for holidays. Requests will generally not be approved unless they meet the criteria for exceptional circumstances. Exceptional circumstances may include:

    - Significant family events or emergencies

    - Compassionate leave for urgent and unforeseen situations. Applications for compassionate leave should be detailed and supported with appropriate evidence.

Criteria for Consideration:

Each request for leave will be assessed based on:

- **Timing of the Leave:** The impact on the pupil's education, especially during key periods such as the start of the academic year, assessment periods, or public examinations.

- **Attendance Record:** The pupil's current attendance record and any patterns of previous term-time leave.

- **Required Documentation:** Proof of travel bookings, medical certificates, or evidence of family emergencies.

When Leave Will Not Be Approved:

Term-time leave requests will typically not be approved in the following scenarios:

- **New Enrolment:** When a pupil is newly enrolled, as it is crucial for them to settle into their new educational environment.

- **Assessment Periods:** During assessment periods, GCSEs, or other public examinations.

- **Attendance Threshold:** If the pupil's attendance rate is below 94% or is expected to fall below this threshold as a result of the requested leave.

Consequences for Unauthorised Leave:

- Leave taken without prior authorisation or exceeding the approved duration will be considered unauthorised. This may lead to warnings or Fixed Penalty Notices. The school maintains a zero-tolerance policy regarding unauthorised holidays during term time. Unauthorised absences will be referred to the Attendance Leads, who may issue warnings or Fixed Penalty Notices as appropriate.

Medical Evidence:

- For absences occurring immediately before or after school holidays, medical evidence is required to substantiate the reason for absence. In the absence of such documentation, the case may be referred to the Attendance Leads for potential warnings or Fixed Penalty Notices.

6.3 Children Missing in Education

Action After Ten Days of Continuous Unauthorised Absence

Procedure:

- If a child has been absent for ten consecutive school days without notification and the school has been unable to determine their whereabouts, the school will:

    - **Refer to the Local Authority:** The child's details will be referred to the Local Authority (LA) for further action. The LA will undertake additional checks and investigations that the school may not be equipped to perform.

Documentation:

- Ensure all efforts and communications made by the school to locate the child are documented in the school's records. The school will also record the date and details of the referral to the LA.

Action After Twenty Days of Continuous Unauthorised Absence

Procedure:

- If, after twenty consecutive days of unauthorised absence, the child's whereabouts remain unknown, the school may:

  - **Consider Removal from Roll:** Proceed to remove the child from the school roll. This decision will be made in accordance with the latest guidance and only after all possible steps to trace the child have been exhausted.

Documentation:

- Document all actions taken to locate the child, including communication attempts and referrals. The school will ensure that the decision to remove the child from the roll complies with current guidance and is fully documented.

Students Who Fail to Start

Procedure:

- Students who are allocated a place but fail to start school will be considered under the Children Missing Education (CME) procedures. If the school:

Fails to Establish Contact:

- Cannot establish contact with the family within ten days following the expected start date, the case will be referred to the Local Authority's CME team for further investigation.

Documentation:

- Record all attempts to contact the family and any responses received. The school will also maintain records of the referral to the LA CME team, including the date and details of the referral.

Collaboration with Social Workers and Youth Offending Teams when a child is missing in Education:

- To facilitate effective collaboration across the local authority area, the school is expected to inform a pupil's social worker and/or youth offending team worker if there are unexplained absences from school.
- Additionally, if a pupil's name is to be deleted from the school register, the school's designated contact in the School Attendance Support Team or Children Missing Education (CME) Officer should also notify the pupil's social worker and/or youth offending team worker.

7. Strategies for promoting attendance

7.1 School stance on attendance

Promoting Attendance and Punctuality

Commitment:

The Governors, Headteacher, and staff are committed to promoting the importance of good attendance and punctuality through various channels:

- Home/School Agreements: Ensure these agreements clearly outline expectations for attendance and punctuality.

- Regular Newsletters: Include updates and tips on maintaining good attendance and punctuality.

- Rewards and Incentives: Offer rewards and incentives for exemplary or significantly improved attendance to encourage consistent attendance.

- Assemblies: Conduct assemblies to highlight the impact of good attendance on learning and personal development.

- Visual Information: Display visual information and reminders throughout the school to reinforce the importance of good attendance.

Student Expectations:

- Students are expected to attend school every day it is open, except in cases of illness or unavoidable circumstances. The school recognises that any absence disrupts the continuity of learning and strives to minimise absences.

Requests for Leave of Absence:

- Submission: All requests for leave of absence must be submitted in writing.

- Holidays: In line with the 2024 guidance, any leave taken for holidays will be recorded as unauthorised.

- Fines: The school, in coordination with the Local Authority, reserves the right to issue fines for unauthorised absences.

Monitoring Attendance:

Children's attendance is meticulously monitored by the Attendance Team, Heads of Year, and the Borough's Attendance Advisor. This involves:

- Tracking Patterns: Systematically tracking attendance patterns and identifying emerging issues.

- Implementing Interventions: Applying timely and appropriate interventions to support and improve regular attendance.

- Reporting: Maintaining and reporting accurate and up-to-date attendance records in accordance with the 2024 guidance.

7.2 Collaboration with families

The school recognises that maintaining consistent attendance is a collaborative effort involving the school, students, and families. To support this, the school implements the following procedures:

Weekly Attendance Reports:

- The school generates weekly reports that highlight overall student attendance and identify individuals with attendance concerns. These reports are used to monitor patterns and address issues promptly. The reports will include data on attendance codes and reasons for absences to ensure accurate tracking.

Intervention Procedures:

- The school employs a structured approach to managing attendance and punctuality concerns. This includes the use of Attendance and Punctuality Procedures to implement appropriate interventions. Interventions will be tailored to the individual needs of the student and may include support from external agencies if necessary.

Parental Meetings:

- Parents may be invited to meet with middle or senior leadership to discuss any concerns regarding their child's attendance or punctuality. During these meetings, strategies will be agreed upon to facilitate improvement and support the student's regular attendance. The school will ensure that these meetings are documented, and any agreed actions will be followed up to ensure compliance and progress.

7.2 Collaborative Working and Data Sharing with Local Authorities

Collaborative Efforts to Overcome Barriers to Attendance:

- The school is committed to working closely with the local community, including voluntary and community groups, to help remove barriers to attendance that families may face. Recognising that some families may experience similar attendance challenges across multiple children attending different schools in the area, the school collaborates with other local schools, particularly during key transition periods between feeder schools, to address these issues effectively.

Joint Working and Data Sharing with Local Authorities:

- To ensure that every pupil receives the necessary support for consistent school attendance, the school collaborates regularly with local authorities and other local partners. This joint effort is crucial in addressing

complex cases, such as those involving health conditions or extra-familial harms, where coordinated support from multiple agencies (e.g., health services or the police) is essential.

Key Aspects of Data Sharing and Collaboration:

- Targeted Support Meetings: The school participates in regular Targeting Support Meetings with the local authority and other schools to discuss and address attendance issues for individual pupils. This collaboration enables the timely identification of at-risk pupils and the implementation of effective interventions.

Legal Requirements for Data Sharing

New Pupil and Deletion Returns:

- The school informs the local authority whenever a pupil's name is added to or removed from the school's admission register outside of standard transition times. This ensures the local authority is aware of all students entering or leaving the school system.

Attendance Returns:

- **The school provides the local authority with the names and addresses of pupils of compulsory school age who fail to attend school regularly or have been absent for ten consecutive school days** with unauthorised absence codes (G, N, O, and/or U). The frequency of these returns is agreed with the local authority, but they occur no less than once per calendar month.

Sickness Returns:

- The school reports to the local authority the full name and address of any pupil recorded with the illness code (I) who is expected to miss **15 days of school**, either consecutively or cumulatively, due to sickness. This helps plan for the continuity of education for pupils who cannot attend school due to health needs.

Enhanced Data Sharing:

- The school is prepared to share more frequent or comprehensive data with the local authority when necessary to fulfil obligations under the Education Acts. To minimise the burden on staff, this data sharing is automated directly from the school's management information systems, ensuring efficient and timely collaboration with local authorities.

7.4 Attendance displays.

The school actively promotes the importance of good attendance through various strategies:

Attendance Displays:

- Visual information and displays are strategically placed around the school to continually highlight the significance of attendance. These displays will include information on the benefits of regular attendance, attendance targets, and key attendance policies.

Assembly Updates:

- The pastoral teams regularly host assemblies that focus on the importance of consistent attendance. These updates cover the procedures for managing attendance, the impact of non-attendance on academic success, and the potential consequences for students. Assemblies will also include information on the latest attendance data and success stories to motivate students.

7.5 Attendance Rewards

The school's Achievement and Reward System, detailed in the Behaviour Policy, is designed to recognise and reward students for excellent attendance and punctuality:

Recognition for 100% Attendance:

- Students who achieve 100% attendance and punctuality are awarded Conduct Points and are celebrated in assembly. This recognition highlights the importance of regular attendance and punctuality. This will also include a mention in the school newsletter to further celebrate their achievement.

Year Group and Tutor Group Competitions:

- The school organises competitions among Year Groups and tutor groups to identify and reward the group with the best overall attendance. These competitions aim to foster a sense of community and collective responsibility for attendance. Competitions will be conducted termly to maintain engagement throughout the academic year.

Improvement Recognition:

- Students who show significant improvement in their attendance are acknowledged through the school's procedures. Letters are sent home to inform parents of their child's progress, reinforcing the value of improved attendance. Improvement awards will also be announced during assemblies to publicly recognise students' efforts.

Certificates and Badges:

- At the end of each term or academic year, students who maintain 100% attendance are awarded certificates and badges. This tangible recognition serves to celebrate their commitment and encourages continued excellence in attendance. Certificates and badges will be presented during a special awards ceremony to enhance the recognition.

End-of-Year Reward Trips:

- To qualify for the end-of-year reward trips, students must achieve a minimum of 90% attendance and be late to no more than 10% of their lessons throughout the academic year. Exceptions to this requirement will be considered for students with medical conditions, disabilities affecting attendance or punctuality, or other circumstances beyond their control, provided that these issues have been communicated to the Year Teams as needed. Details of the reward trips and qualification criteria will be clearly communicated at the start of the academic year to ensure transparency.

Post-16 Attendance Requirements for Sixth Form:

- Students in the Sixth Form are required to meet a minimum attendance target of 90% and be late to no more than 10% of their lessons to maintain their place. Exemptions may be granted for medical conditions, disabilities impacting attendance or punctuality, or other exceptional circumstances, provided that these situations have been communicated to the Year Teams. The attendance requirements for Post-16 students will be reviewed regularly, and support will be provided to those facing genuine difficulties in meeting these targets.

7.6 Attendance support.

The school welcomes parents to meet with the Attendance Team or Heads of Year to discuss any attendance or punctuality concerns.

Appointment Scheduling:

- Parents can schedule an appointment with these teams through the front office. The school will aim to arrange the meeting within 48 hours of the request being made. In cases where a more immediate response is necessary, the school will provide guidance on alternative support options.

Meeting Objectives:

- During the meeting, parents will have the opportunity to discuss their child's attendance or punctuality issues and collaborate with school staff to develop strategies for improvement. The school is committed to addressing concerns promptly and working with parents to support the student's needs.

7.7 Attendance improvement plans

If a student has poor or declining attendance, they may be placed on an Attendance Improvement Plan.

Purpose of the Plan:

- The plan sets specific targets for improvement and assesses barriers that may affect the student's ability to attend school. The goal is to support the student in overcoming these challenges and to enhance their attendance.

Plan Development:

- Attendance Improvement Plans are generally devised in collaboration with the student and their parents. While parental consent is not explicitly required by the guidance, the school will involve parents (when possible and necessary) in the development of the plan to ensure effective support and communication.

Recognition of Improvement:

- Successful completion of the improvement plan is acknowledged with a letter or phone call home to recognise and celebrate the progress made. This follow-up helps reinforce the positive changes and encourages continued improvement.

7.8 Attendance or punctuality report

- A student may be placed on an attendance or punctuality report to improve one or both areas. These reports are overseen by a form tutor or Head of Year.

- Parents can request that their child be placed on this intervention; however, the school will make the final decision based on the student's needs and circumstances.

7.9 Rewards and Consequences

Rewards:

- Conduct points are awarded for successfully passing the report, recognising the student's improvement and effort.

Consequences:

- If a report fails, the consequences will be implemented in line with the School Behaviour Policy. These consequences may include further interventions or sanctions as deemed appropriate by the school.

Ensuring Compliance:

- The school will ensure that any interventions and consequences are applied fairly and consistently, in accordance with the School Behaviour Policy and the 2024 guidance.

8. Attendance monitoring

8.1 Monitoring Attendance

Target:

- The school will aim for a minimum attendance target of 94%, monitoring trends in line with local and national benchmarks.

Monitoring:

- Attendance and absence data will be monitored weekly, half-termly, termly, and annually. Special attention will be given to vulnerable groups.

Data Sharing:

- Attendance data will be analysed, compared to national averages, and reported to the governing board.

Intervention:

- Targeted interventions will support pupils at risk of becoming persistent absentees (attendance below 90%).

8.2 Analysing Attendance

Data Analysis:

- Attendance and absence data will be analysed frequently to identify patterns and trends, providing tailored support for at-risk pupils.

Strategy Development:

- Strategies will be created to address identified issues, with progress monitored and reported to stakeholders.

Pastoral Role:

- Form Tutors will regularly discuss attendance with students as part of the pastoral curriculum, addressing any concerns immediately.

8.3 Using Data to Improve Attendance

Data Sharing:

- The school will provide regular attendance reports to form tutors, school leaders, and other relevant staff to facilitate informed discussions with pupils and families.

Monitoring Impact:

- Attendance data will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions, ensuring they are adjusted as needed and inform future strategies.

8.4 Reducing Persistent and Severe Absence

Data Analysis:

- The school will analyse attendance data to identify patterns in persistent (10% absence) and severe (50% absence) cases.

Parental Engagement:

- Regular meetings will be held with parents of vulnerable or persistently absent pupils, in coordination with the local authority, to discuss attendance and engagement.

Support Services:

- Access to wider support services will be provided to address barriers to attendance.

Family Communication:

- Frequent communication with families at risk of persistent or severe absence will be maintained.

Attendance Support Plans:

- Pupils at risk will be placed on an Attendance Support Plan and invited to targeted assemblies that address the importance of attendance.

Collaborative Support:

- The school will work with the local authority and social services to support families, including conducting home visits when necessary.

8.5 Removal from School Roll

Regulatory Compliance:

- A student can only be removed from the Admissions Register if their absence meets criteria set out in Regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 (amended in 2016) and subsequent DfE guidance, including the 2024 updates. The Local Authority must be informed prior to or at the point of removal, with full details provided. If a student has been absent for 20 consecutive school days (4 weeks) and the school and Local Authority cannot locate them despite reasonable efforts, they may be removed from the roll. This does not apply if the student is known to reside at a confirmed address, even if they are not responding to contact efforts. In such cases, referral to the Local Authority Officer is required.

Children Missing Education (CME) Procedures:

- The Children Missing Education Officer must be contacted before any removal from the roll.

Looked After Children:

- No student who is 'looked after' by the authority should be removed from the roll without prior contact with Social Services and the Local Authority Officer for Looked After Children.

9. Safeguarding and Attendance

- Nonattendance can indicate safeguarding concerns. Staff must follow the school's safeguarding procedures if concerns arise.

9.1 Child Criminal Exploitation and County Lines

- Sporadic/unauthorised absence may signal exploitation. Concerns must be reported following safeguarding protocols.

9.2 FGM, CSE, and Honour-Based Violence

- Staff are trained in recognising risks. Any concerns about well-being related to absence must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs). Referrals to LA MASH or police will be made if necessary. More information regarding this can be found within the **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**.

9.3 Early Intervention for Vulnerable Children

- Early intervention is adopted for vulnerable students, with first-day absence calls prioritised for those under safeguarding concerns. For students who have been identified as a safeguarding concern, or under CP or CiN plans, LAC or have EHCPs, the school adopts an early intervention approach to attendance. The DDSLs have a target group of pupils who will receive first day attendance calls in the event of non-attendance to school.

10. Alternative Provisions

Alternative Provision and Attendance Monitoring

Attendance Coding for Alternative Provision:

- If a student is at an alternative provision, the registers should be coded appropriately. In most cases, the student will be 'Dual Registered' and should be coded as 'D'. Students who are educated off-site but are not dual registered should be coded as 'B'. This may include, but is not exclusive to:

- Recovery placements at another school.

- Children educated in a medical centre for short- or long-term illness.

- Students receiving home tuition.

Responsibility for Attendance Monitoring:

- While the host school (the school where the student is physically attending) will manage and follow up on attendance concerns for dual-registered students, Barking Abbey School retains overall responsibility. This includes ensuring that the host school is actively monitoring attendance and addressing any issues in accordance with their procedures. Barking Abbey School will maintain oversight of the student's attendance, ensuring that all necessary follow-ups are conducted by the host school and that appropriate records are kept.

Safeguarding and Communication:

- Barking Abbey School holds copies of the safeguarding policies of all centres used for alternative provisions. The school ensures regular and timely communication with these providers to maintain ongoing awareness of the student's well-being and attendance. Communication with alternative providers will be well-documented and occur at regular, agreed-upon intervals to ensure all parties are aligned on the student's attendance and safeguarding needs.

Management of Students Coded as 'B':

- Barking Abbey School retains full responsibility for students coded as 'B' (educated off-site). This responsibility includes ensuring communication with alternative providers and maintaining comprehensive records of attendance and any interventions required.

Reference to Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy:

- Full details regarding alternative provisions can be found under Appendix 5 of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. This appendix includes comprehensive procedures for managing alternative provision arrangements in compliance with the latest Department for Education (DfE) guidance.

11. 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. Following each review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

12. Links with other school policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection policy

- Behaviour policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

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

This will help you comply with the legislation. They are also in-keeping with the school census system.		
Code	Definition	Scenario

/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed

Attending a place other than the school

K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience (short term OFF SITE DIRECTIONS) Recovery placements, MBP – short term
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered (IF STUDENT IS ENROLLED AT ANOTHER SCHOOL – long term off site directions with a view to them becoming managed moves or longer term provision such as 100% or Positive futures @ MBP/ Erkenwald)

Absent – leave of absence

C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination

X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances

Absent – other authorised reasons

T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made

Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause

Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: · In police detention · Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or · Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law

Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes

Absent – unauthorised absence

G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using 1 of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session

Administrative codes

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

Appendix 2: A Whole School Attendance Strategy

Category	Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy Trustees and Governing Bodies are expected to:	Local Authorities are expected to:
All Pupils	Ensure their child attends every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies.	Have a clear school attendance policy on the school website which all staff, pupils, and parents understand.	Take an active role in attendance improvement, support their school(s) to prioritize attendance, and work together with leaders to set whole school cultures.	Have a strategic approach to improving attendance for the whole area and make it a key focus of all frontline council services.
	Notify the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent (e.g. sickness).	Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance.	Ensure school leaders fulfill expectations and statutory duties.	Have a School Attendance Support Team that works with all schools in their area to remove area-wide barriers to attendance.
	Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance.	Accurately complete admission and attendance registers.	Use data to understand patterns of attendance, compare with other local schools, identify areas of progress and where greater focus is needed.	Provide each school with a named point of contact in the School Attendance Support Team who can support with queries and advice.
	Book any medical appointments around the school day where possible.	Have robust daily processes to follow up absence.	Ensure school staff receive training on attendance.	Offer opportunities for all schools in the area to share effective practice.
		Regularly monitor data to identify patterns and trends and understand which pupils and pupil cohorts to focus on.		
		Have a dedicated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance.		
Pupils at Risk of Becoming Persistently Absent	Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.	Proactively use data to identify pupils at risk of persistent absence.	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	Where there are out-of-school barriers, provide each identified pupil and their family with access to services they need in the first instance.
	Proactively engage with the support offered to prevent the need for more formal support.	Work with each identified pupil and their parents to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-school barriers to attendance.	Hold a regular conversation with every school to identify, discuss and signpost or provide access to services for pupils who are persistently or	If the issue persists, and there are multiple needs consider whether the threshold for early help is met and facilitate access where it is.

		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.	severely absent or at risk of becoming so.	Regardless, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the school and other partners.
		If the issue persists, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the local authority 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.
		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 local authority, continue to work with the school and partners.
		Where the lead practitioner is outside of the school, continue to work with the local authority and partners.		
Persistently Absent Pupils	Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.	Continue support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent and:	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	Monitor and support schools to ensure they are providing effective formal support for persistently absent pupils.
	Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.	Where absence becomes persistent, put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers.	Continue support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent and:	Track and review data on attendance and ensure local authority services are responsive to needs.
		Where necessary this includes working with partners.	Work jointly with the school to provide formal support options including attendance contracts and education supervision orders.	Support schools with legal interventions if necessary.
		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.	Where there are safeguarding concerns, ensure joint working between the school, children's social	Ensure a multi-agency approach is taken when needed, particularly in cases involving safeguarding concerns.

			care services and other statutory safeguarding partners.	
		Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, work with the local authority on legal intervention.	Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, enforce attendance through legal intervention (including prosecution as a last resort).	
		Where there are safeguarding concerns, intensify support through a referral to statutory children's social care.		
		Work with other schools in the local area, such as schools previously attended and the schools of any siblings.		
Severely Absent Pupils	Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.	Continue support as for persistently absent pupils and:	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	Prioritize severely absent pupils in strategic and operational planning.
	Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.	Agree a joint approach for all severely absent pupils with the local authority.	Continue support as for persistently absent pupils and:	Ensure a coordinated multi-agency approach with all services involved.
			All services should make this group the top priority for support.	Support schools in implementing and reviewing individual and family plans to address barriers to attendance.
			This may include a whole family plan, consideration for an education, health and care plan, or alternative form of educational provision.	
			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.	
Support for Cohorts with Lower Attendance	Not applicable.	Proactively use data to identify cohorts with, or at risk of, low attendance and develop strategies to support them.	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	Track local attendance data to prioritize support and unblock area-wide attendance barriers where they impact numerous schools.
		Work with other schools in the local area and the local authority to share effective practice where there are common barriers to attendance.		
Support for Pupils with Medical Conditions or SEND with Poor Attendance	Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.	Maintain the same ambition for attendance and work with pupils and parents to maximize attendance.	Regularly monitor data for such groups, including at board and governing body meetings and with local authorities.	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.
	Proactively engage with the support offered.	Ensure join up with pastoral support and where required, put in place additional support and adjustments, such as an individual healthcare plan and if applicable, ensuring the provision outlined in the pupil's EHCP is accessed.		Work closely with relevant services and partners, for example special educational needs, educational psychologists, and mental health services, to ensure joined-up support for families.
		Consider additional support from wider services and external partners, making timely referrals.		Ensure suitable education, such as alternative provision, is arranged for children of compulsory school age who because of health reasons would not otherwise receive a suitable education.
Support for Pupils with a Social Worker	Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.	Know who the pupils who have, or who have had, a social worker are.	Work in partnership with the local authority at a strategic and individual level, sharing data on attendance including, at an individual level,	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.

	Proactively engage with the support offered.	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.	informing the pupil's social worker if there are any unexplained absences and if their name is to be deleted from the register.	Ensure that all Children's Social Care practitioners understand the importance of good attendance for pupils' educational progress, for their welfare, and their wider development – and understand their role in improving it.
		Provide additional academic support and make reasonable adjustments to help them, recognizing that even when statutory social care intervention has ended, there can be a lasting impact on children's educational outcomes.		Through the work of Virtual School Heads, they should: 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 Provide advice, challenge, and training to schools on how to promote and secure good attendance for children with a social worker. Develop whole system approaches, with social care, to support the attendance of children in need
Looked After and Previously Looked After Children	Work with the school and local authority to help them understand the child's barriers to attendance – including the development of Personal Education Plans.	Have high expectations for the cohort – with expert support and leadership provided by the designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after pupils.	Designate a member of staff to have responsibility for the promotion of the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after pupils.	(LA that looks after the child:)

		Proactively engage with the support offered.	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.	Monitor and review attendance of the cohort and consider how school policies, including behavior policies, are sensitive to their needs and support good attendance.	Appoint an expert Virtual School Head (VSH) – will: 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. 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 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. Provide expert advice and information on the education of previously looked-after pupils to schools and parents – including their attendance
			Work directly with parents to develop good home-school links that support good attendance.	Promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children – doing everything possible to minimize disruption to education when a pupil enters care.	
			For previously looked-after pupils, this could include discussion on the use of the Pupil Premium Plus funding managed by the school.		

Monitoring	Schools regularly update parents on their child's attendance. (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.)	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.	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.	Ofsted will expect schools to do all they reasonably can to achieve the highest possible attendance as part of the behavior and attitudes judgment. 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. Ultimately, in cases where a school has not met expectations or statutory duties, the Secretary of State can consider a complaint.
				DfE Regions Group considers multi-academy trusts' efforts on attendance as part of decision making.
				Ofsted considers governing bodies' efforts as part of inspections.
				DfE Regions Group monitors local authority efforts as part of regular interaction.

				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. 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.

Appendix 3:

Longridge Campus
Barking Abbey School
Longbridge Road
Barking
Essex
IG11 8UF

Sandringham Campus
Barking Abbey School
Sandringham Road
Barking
Essex
IG11 9AG

Tel
020 3967 7030

Fax
020 8270 4080

Email
office@barkingabbeyschool.co.uk

Website
www.barkingabbeyschool.co.uk

BARKING ABBEY SCHOOL
GIVE AND EXPECT THE BEST

Holiday Absence Request Form

In exceptional circumstances, when leave of absence is granted, the Headteacher will determine the number of school days a child or young person can be away from school.

Parents should not plan for their child to be absent from school without gaining prior agreement. Requests for a planned leave of absence under exceptional circumstances should be made at least 1 week in advance of the start date of the requested absence, by completing the Holiday Absence Request Form in the document below and returning to the Attendance Officer. The Headteacher cannot retrospectively authorise a planned absence.

Please email the below form to the following address, ensuring that your child's relevant Head of Year is also Ccd into the email: HannamC@barkingabbeyschool.co.uk

Longbridge Road		Sandringham Road	
Year	Contact	Year	Contact
7	WebbS@barkingabbeyschool.co.uk	7	SearleA@barkingabbeyschool.co.uk
8	BrooksA@barkingabbeyschool.co.uk	8	willerA@barkingabbeyschool.co.uk
9	WilsonJ@barkingabbeyschool.co.uk	9	WynterC@barkingabbeyschool.co.uk
10	AgathangelouA@barkingabbeyschool.co.uk	10	CopeT@barkingabbeyschool.co.uk
11	StylianouR@barkingabbeyschool.co.uk	11	WharnsbyK@barkingabbeyschool.co.uk
		12	MoloneyA@barkingabbeyschool.co.uk
		13	MuhibuIS@barkingabbeyschool.co.uk

APPLICATION FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL DURING TERM TIME

Important information for parents – please read before completing this form

Working together to improve school attendance advises all schools that they should only grant a leave of absence during term time in exceptional circumstances, considering each request on a case-by-case basis. If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the headteacher to determine the length of time the pupil can be away from school. Although we recognise the value and benefits of family holidays, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for a family holiday as the Government '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'.

Requests for leave must be made in advance, otherwise we will be unable to consider your individual circumstances and the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. Headteachers are not obligated to reconsider authorising leave if an application was not made in advance.

Our aim is for every pupil's attendance to be 100% unless there are exceptional or unavoidable reasons for absence. If you require any support with ensuring your child's attendance, please contact [Insert name and contact details].

I have read the above information and wish to apply for leave of absence from school for:

Child's Full Name:		Date of Birth:		Class:	

Parent/Carer Details (please list all parents)				
First Name:		Surname:		
Date of Birth:		Relationship to the child:		
Address and postcode:				
Telephone number:				
First Name:		Surname:		
Date of Birth:		Relationship to the child:		
Address and postcode:				
Telephone number:				

Siblings: Please provide the name of any siblings and the school that they attend				
Child's Full Name:		Date of Birth:		School:

Details of the absence			
Date of First day of absence:		Date of last day of absence:	
Total Number of days absent:		Expected date of return to school:	

Please provide the reason for this request including supporting evidence:

Please read the following statement and sign to indicate you understand the this:

I would like to request the above absence. I understand that the school strongly advises against taking unnecessary absence during term time and accept that this may have a detrimental impact on my child/ren's progress. I understand that a penalty notice may be issued if this request is denied, and my child is absent during this period. I understand that a fine will be payable per parent, per child.

I have read and understood Barking Abbey's information regarding penalty notices for absence from school and the action they may take.

Signed:		Full name:		Date:	
Signed:		Full name:		Date:	

<u>Penalty Notices regarding absence from school - Guidance for parents</u>

Regular school attendance and parent's legal responsibilities

At Barking Abbey our aim is to collaborate with parents to ensure that all our pupils receive the most from their education and reach their full potential.

This guidance is to remind all parents about the law that requires them to ensure that their child attends school regularly. The Government is very clear that no child should miss school apart from in exceptional circumstances and schools must take steps to reduce absence to support children's attainment.

The important legal information – New from August 19th, 2024

The Government have introduced a single national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England. This threshold is **10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period**. These sessions do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence. The period of 10 school weeks can span different terms or school years.

In line with national guidance, the Local Authority (LA) retains the discretion to issue a penalty notice before the threshold is met. This might apply for example, where parents take several term time holidays below the national threshold. The LA also retains the discretion to consider going straight to prosecution where appropriate.

A maximum of 2 penalty notices per parent, per child can be issued within a rolling 3-year period. This period will start from the issue of the 1st penalty notice. The national framework also sets out the escalation process which applies to such penalty notices. If the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within 3 years, another tool should be used. In Norfolk, where a pupil's attendance has met the national threshold for a third time within 3 years and the parent/s have already been issued with 2 penalty notices within that period, consideration will be given to prosecution under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, which can result in a criminal conviction and a fine of up to £2,500.

A parent includes any person who is not a natural parent but who has parental responsibility for the child **or** who has care of the child, as set out in section 576 of the Education Act 1996. Penalty notices will usually be issued to the parent/s with day-to-day responsibility for the child's attendance or the parent/s who have allowed the absence (regardless of which parent has applied for a leave of absence).

The first penalty notice issued to a parent for a child will be charged at £160 to be paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. Where it is deemed appropriate to issue a second penalty notice, the second penalty notice to the same parent for the same child within 3 years of the first offence, is charged at a flat rate of £160 and is payable within 28 days. **There is no reduced sum available in this instance**.

Part payments or payment plans are not acceptable, and fines must be paid in full within 21 or 28 days, at the rate specified within the penalty notice. There is no right of appeal against a penalty notice.

Appendix 4:

Stage 1 – Prevention
Can attendance be improved through stage 1 measures?

YES

NO

Continue to use stage 1 measure to improve attendance

Are there safeguarding concerns?

YES

NO