



GREENWOOD ACADEMIES TRUST

Kingswood Secondary Academy

Attendance Policy

Last Review: September 2021

Reviewed by: Michelle Newman

Next Review: September 2022

Named Personnel with designated responsibility for Attendance

SLT responsible for Attendance	Dan Scallan	
Attendance Manager	Julie Roberts	
Attendance Administrator		
SENDCo	Justyna Skorwida	
Year 7	Theresa George	Alex Bonner
Year 8	Ross Nightingale	Alex Bonner
Year 9	Gareth Thomas	Pete Sanderson
Year 10	Kyla Smith	Dan Scallan
Year 11	Zoe Bradley	Karen Martindale
Year 12	Ben Eley	Matt Gamble
Year 13	Ben Eley	Matt Gamble

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1.1 Statement of Intent

Kingswood Secondary Academy aims to work together with parents/carers to ensure that all children and young people registered at the Academy attend both regularly and punctually in order that their development and achievement are maximised. It is our aim that every student at Kingswood understands the importance of attending regularly and is working towards achieving a 100% attendance rate.

This policy highlights the importance of attendance in the education of our children. Kingswood Secondary Academy is committed to working towards our attendance targets as a milestone in striving towards the goal of 100% attendance for all. We are committed to our whole Academy approach in supporting and encouraging parents and students to attend. We operate an open-door policy and will always address individual needs to the best of our ability. In return we expect the support of both parents and children in achieving the best possible levels of attendance that we can.

The Academy has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and governors to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend.

All Academy staff are committed to working with parents and students as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible and that every child's welfare and life opportunities are promoted.

1.2. Parents'/carers' Responsibilities

- a. Parents/carers have a legal duty to ensure that children of compulsory Academy age attend on a regular and full-time basis
- b. Parents/carers should ensure that if their child is to be absent from Academy for any unavoidable reason such as sickness they should contact the Academy as soon as possible on the first morning of absence. This may be done by telephone, by letter or in person
- c. Parents/carers may not authorise their child's absence – only the Academy can do this on the basis of the explanation provided by the parents/carers. Should parents/carers fail to provide a satisfactory reason for their child's absence the Academy will record such absence as unauthorised until a reason is provided
- d. Parents/carers should ensure that their child arrives at Academy in time for the start of morning line-up (8:30am). If a student arrives after 8.40am they should report directly to the Academy office. Morning register closes at 9am, any child arriving after the closing of the register will be recorded as a code of U which is 'late after registration is closed' for that session which will impact on the student's attendance rate. This applies primarily to students who are transported by parents/carers or who walk/cycle to Academy.

1.3. Academy Responsibilities

- a. The Academy will record and monitor attendance in accordance both with the statutory requirements and with the principle that regular, uninterrupted attendance is vital to a child's educational progress
- b. Registers will be called twice daily (at 8.40am and at 12.30pm). Registers will close at 9.15am and at 12.45pm. For morning registration, any child arriving after 8.40am but before 9am will be recorded as a code of L which is 'late before registration is closed' and any child arriving after 9am (the closing of the morning register) will be recorded as a code of U which is 'late after registration is closed' for that session which will impact on the student's attendance rate
- c. Teachers will complete registers in accordance with the guidance contained in the staff handbook. The attendance administration support person will highlight any errors and/or inconsistencies on a daily basis and ensure class teachers correct these issues

- d. Where a student is attending offsite provision, the provider will maintain a register in accordance with policy and notify the Academy directly of all incidences of non-attendance
- e. Should a class teacher have particular concerns about an individual child's attendance or punctuality, these should be recorded in a note to the Deputy Headteacher. As part of staff Pastoral duties and duty of care, all members of staff are encouraged to contact parents/carers when they are concerned about a student's attendance. Staff should inform the Attendance Team when they take such action so it can be recorded on SIMs
- f. Should a child/young person be absent the class teacher will enter the appropriate code in the register
- g. All absence notes from parents/carers should be dated and initialled by the Attendance Team or staff receiving the note
- h. The Deputy Principal and attendance administration team will regularly collect attendance data and will use this data during meetings with the Academy's Headteacher, Heads and Deputy Heads of Year, Form Tutors, students and Academy Advisory Council
- i. The Academy employs a number of strategies to promote regular, punctual attendance:
 - I. Regular class teacher input about the importance of attending to be shared in tutor time and daily lessons
 - II. Unexplained absence will be followed up on the first day with a text message home
 - III. Students who are on the Persistent Absence list and under Child in Need or Child Protection proceedings will have daily telephone calls
 - IV. Attendance data will be monitored each week by the Deputy Principal and attendance administration support team
 - V. Where attendance falls below 95% this will trigger intervention strategies which will ultimately, if not remedied, result in a referral to EIPT (Education Inclusion Partnership Team) and possible legal intervention
 - VI. Where attendance falls below 90% and all appropriate interventions have taken place, the case will be discussed with EIPT.

1.4. Rewarding Attendance

- a. At Kingswood Secondary Academy we believe that it is important to use positive and proactive strategies to promote good attendance in addition to the rigorous monitoring and interventions for poor attenders
- b. SLT and class teachers will communicate regularly with parents/carers regarding attendance including praising and encouraging good attendance
- c. Appropriate personal encouragement or congratulation will be offered to learners
- d. Rewards will be offered to those students whose attendance is 100% each week including the opportunity to win a significant prize at the end of the academic year
- e. Parents/carers will be sent a text message weekly to congratulate students on 100% attendance
- f. Staff will provide a good example by always being punctual to all sessions and actively promoting good attendance and punctuality.

1.5. Attendance Targets and Data

- a. Kingswood Secondary Academy's attendance target for the academic year 2020-2021 is 96%. This target takes into consideration the medical needs of some of our students
- b. As part of this process a PA (Persistent Absentee) Register will be maintained and regularly reviewed
- c. Where a student's attendance falls below 94%, we will identify these students "at risk" of persistent absenteeism and will implement strategies to address this

- d. A student becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more across the Academy year for whatever reason. Absence at this level will be doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents/carers fullest support and cooperation to tackle this
- e. We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and parents/carers will be informed of this immediately.

1.6. Holidays in Term Time (Leave of Absence)

- a. Taking holidays in term time will affect students' academic performance as much as any other absence and will bring the children/s' attendance percentage down. We expect parents/carers not to take children away in the academic year and remind them that there is no automatic entitlement to take leave of absence during Academy time
- a. When a leave of absence is absolutely unavoidable and only in extenuating circumstances, parents/carers will be asked to complete a "Request for leave during term time form"
- b. Any applications for leave of absence must be made on the "Request for leave during term time form" at least 1 month in advance and a decision will be made at the discretion of the Principal who will discuss this with the parents/carers. In making a decision the Academy will consider the circumstances of each application individually, including any previous pattern of leave in term time
- c. Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the Academy, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and may attract sanctions such as a Fixed Penalty.

1.7. Attendance Procedures

- a. First day of absence
 - I. When a student is absent from Academy and no contact has been made by parents/carers, attendance administration staff will send a text message and email home to determine the reason for absence. They will then log the appropriate absence code
 - II. If parents/carers do not respond and no reason for absence is provided, a code of N ("No reason yet provided for absence") will be recorded. This code will affect the overall rate of the student's attendance until a reason is provided. A letter will also be sent home and this will be classed as a first Intervention (**Reason for absence letter** - Appendix 1)
 - III. If after 3 days, parents/carers have still not provided a reason for absence, a permanent code of unauthorised absence will be recorded which will permanently affect the student's overall rate of attendance.
- b. Attendance falling below 94%
 - I. If a student's absence falls below 95%, attendance administration staff will inform the Year Team who will then consider the need to contact parents/carers to share the Academy's concern regarding their child's attendance. Staff should inform parents that a letter of information is being sent. **Letter 1 – attendance below 95%** (appendix 2) will be classed as a second intervention
 - II. In this letter parents / carers will be informed that should attendance fall below 90%, this will be classed as **Persistent Absenteeism** and the Academy will commence formal proceedings to investigate levels of attendance and a formal letter will be sent out inviting them to a meeting with a member of SLT
 - III. After 2 weeks, if attendance has not improved, **Letter 2 – meeting Invite** (appendix 3) will be delivered to the home of the student and a conversation will be had with the parents/carers inviting them in for a meeting to discuss attendance with a member of SLT. This letter will be classed as a third intervention. In this letter parents/carers will be asked to contact Academy if they cannot

attend this initial meeting so the meeting can be re-scheduled to a more convenient time. This letter will also inform parents that failure to attend or contact Academy may result in a referral to the EIPT at NCC

- IV. During the meeting, attendance and the implications of persistent absenteeism will be discussed. Parents/carers will be informed that attendance will be closely monitored for 3 weeks to ensure attendance percentage improves. Failure of this happening after 3 weeks will mean **Letter 4 - Academy attendance – first notice** (appendix 4) will be sent to parents/carers. This letter will be classed as a fourth intervention
- V. Failure to make contact with academy or attend the meeting will always result in **Letter 5 - Academy attendance – first notice** (appendix 5) being sent home. This letter will be classed as a fourth intervention
- VI. After 3 weeks, if attendance has not improved, an **Irregular academy attendance – final notice** (appendix 5) will be sent to parents/carers. This letter will be classed as a fifth intervention
- VII. After 6 weeks, if attendance has not improved, **Letter 6 - Irregular academy attendance – penalty notice monitoring** (appendix 6) will be sent to parents/carers. this letter will be classed as the sixth intervention
- VIII. attendance will be monitored for 15 academy days from the issue date of the irregular academy attendance – penalty notice monitoring. **During this period, the child must have no Unauthorised Absence**
- IX. If Unauthorised Absence is accrued during the 15 Academy day period of the Penalty Notice, a referral will be made to the Local Authority Prosecution Officer for consideration of legal enforcement action and a Penalty Notice may be issued.

Any student whose attendance is below 95% and is open to attendance procedures is requested to provide medical evidence for all absences.

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1.8. Absence work expectations

- a. To ensure students are not adversely affected by absence, they are expected to complete the work they have missed whilst absent
- b. If a student is self-isolating due to contact with a positive covid case or with mild symptoms, then they are expected to complete work set
- c. If a student is absent due to taking an authorised holiday, they are expected to catch up the work they have missed upon their return
- d. If a student is too ill to work whilst absent, they should discuss this with their class teachers upon their return and set a suitable timescale over which they will catch up the missing work
- e. Class teachers will set on ClassCharts work on a weekly basis for students to complete if they have missed any lesson (or part of lesson) that week
- f. Students are expected to catch up on any homework they may have missed whilst absent

1.9. The role of the Education Inclusion Partnerships Team (NCC)

- a. The Education Investigation Service works as a last resort strategy in Academy to reduce levels of unauthorised absence and promote whole Academy attendance
- b. When there is a serious concern about a student's attendance and after several steps for support no improvement is recorded (without acceptable reason for this), the Academy has a duty to consider a referral to the EIPT
- c. The EIPT acts on behalf of the Local Authority in enforcing a parent/carer's duty to ensure their child receives an appropriate education
- d. In enforcing attendance, the EIPT has a variety of powers to help them ensure that children are properly educated:
 - I. Academy Attendance Orders - Penalty Notices - Education Supervision Orders - Prosecution Parenting Orders
 - II. The Education Act 1996 section 444 states that "if a child of compulsory Academy age who is a registered student at a Academy fails to attend regularly at the Academy, his parent is guilty of an offence".

APPENDIXES

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APPENDIX 1 – Reason for Absence Letter

«addressee»

«address_block»

Date

Dear «salutation»

Re: «chosen_forename» «chosen_surname» Form: «reg»

I am writing to ask if you could provide a reason for FORENAME’S absence on the dates listed below as a reason has not yet been provided. Please note that registers are taken in the morning and after lunch, therefore if your child was off for the whole day, both AM and PM sessions will appear on the list below.

DATES

I would be very grateful if you could complete the attached slip at the bottom and return it to the school office as soon as possible. Alternatively, you can telephone Kingswood Secondary Academy on **or email the office at** If no reason is provided for absence by DATE – 1 WEEK FROM THIS DATE, unfortunately a permanent mark of unauthorised absence must be recorded and this will affect FORENAME’S percentage attendance for the school year.

Yours sincerely

Mr Dan Scallan
Acting Deputy Principal

FORENAME AND SURNAME

REG GROUP

Absence DATEs

FORENAME was absent on the dates above for the following reason:

.....
.....

Signed: (Parent/Carer) Date:

APPENDIX 2 – 2nd INTERVENTION: Letter 1 – Attendance Below 95%

«addressee»

«address_block»

Date

Dear «salutation»

Re: «chosen_forename» «chosen_surname» Form: «reg»

Re: SCHOOL ATTENDANCE BELOW 95%

We monitor attendance very closely and expect at least 97% attendance from all students at Kingswood Secondary Academy. FORENAME's attendance has fallen substantially below this figure and this gives me cause for some concern.

I appreciate that illness can cause a student to miss time from school but without regular high attendance, progress at school is likely to be jeopardised. It is also a statutory duty for parents/carers to ensure that their children attend school regularly. Government guidelines state that students whose attendance falls below 90% are classed as persistent absentees. As FORENAME's attendance is already falling close to this mark, we would like to support you to avoid this figure getting any lower and therefore formal procedures needing to take place by the Education Inclusion Partnership Team at NCC.

FORENAME's attendance will be monitored over the next few weeks during which I hope to see an improvement. Unfortunately, any future absences FORENAME has will not be authorised unless medical evidence is provided.

If there are particular problems that you feel need to be brought to the school's attention, please contact me as soon as possible as we are keen to do what we can to support you to improve FORENAME's attendance.

Yours sincerely

Mr Dan Scallan

Acting Deputy Principal

APPENDIX 3 – 3rd INTERVENTION: Letter 2 – Attendance Below 90%

«addressee»

«address_block»

Date

Dear «salutation»

Re: «chosen_forename» «chosen_surname» Form: «reg»

As you will be aware, the Kingswood Secondary Academy strives to ensure that all students reach their potential and make progress every day. Our expectations are for all students to achieve 97% attendance or better. We are keen to work in partnership with you to make sure we are giving clear and consistent messages about the importance and value of good punctuality and attendance as essential life skills. «chosen_forename»'s attendance over the last three weeks has been below 90% and we are writing to let you know that we will be closely monitoring «his_her» attendance on a daily basis to check that there is an improvement.

The criteria for issuing a Penalty Notice is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence (5 school days) in a 6 week period. Referral to the Educational Inclusion and Partnership Team could result in a Penalty Notice, payable direct to the Local Authority. The Penalty Notice is £120 per parent/adult for each student to be paid within 28 days, decreasing to £60 per parent/adult for each student if paid within 21 days. If the Penalty Notice is not paid within 28 days, the Local Authority may instigate legal proceedings under section 444 (1) of the Education Act 1996. If found guilty of an offence under this Act, parents will receive a criminal record and could be fined up to £1000.

I would like to meet with you and «chosen_forename» so that we can work together to try and sort out any issues around attendance in school. I will contact you shortly to arrange a mutually convenient time when we can meet. If «chosen_forename» accrues 10 sessions (N.B. 2 sessions = 1 day) of absence by the end of term, «he_she» will be classed as a PA (Persistent Absent) student and will therefore have to be reported to the Local Authority.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you would like to discuss this matter further or if you feel we could offer you additional support in ensuring good attendance and punctuality.

Yours sincerely

Mr Dan Scallan

Acting Deputy Principal

APPENDIX 4 – 4th INTERVENTION: Letter 3 – SCHOOL ATTENDANCE – FIRST NOTICE

«addressee»

«address_block»

Date

Dear «salutation»

Re: «chosen_forename» «chosen_surname» Form: «reg»

This letter is further to my previous correspondence, meeting with you and Attendance Contract.

As explained to you Section 444 of the Education Act, 1996 states: “*If a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered student at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school, his (her) parent is guilty of an offence.*”

To confirm our discussion, you are now on notice that if your child continues to accrue unauthorised absences, we will consider referring the matter for consideration of legal enforcement action.

You are reminded that school requires medical evidence in order to authorise any absence incurred due to illness. Appropriate medical evidence can be a health professional’s note or letter, an appointment card, a prescription or sight of any medication. Whatever is produced must have the child’s name on it and a date relevant to the absence. If medical evidence is not provided an absence will remain unauthorised.

If you wish to further discuss this letter or any matters affecting your child’s ability to attend school, please contact me. Your child’s attendance will continue to be monitored closely and an immediate and sustained improvement is hoped for so that further action does not become necessary.

Yours sincerely

Mr Dan Scallan

Acting Deputy Principal

APPENDIX 5 – 5th INTERVENTION: Letter 4 – IRREGULAR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE - FINAL NOTICE

«addressee»

«address_block»

Date

Dear «salutation»

Re: «chosen_forename» «chosen_surname» Form: «reg»

S444 of the Education Act 1996 states: *“if a child of compulsory school age, who is registered at a school fails to attend regularly, the parent of the child shall be guilty of an offence”*.

School records show that your child now has an attendance rate below (**enter text here**) % **which includes (enter text here)** sessions of unauthorised absence and their attendance is deemed as irregular.

TAKE NOTICE that it is considered that you may be guilty of an offence under the above Act, in that you have failed to ensure that your child attends school regularly. Attending regularly also includes a requirement to attend punctually.

Unless resolved immediately we will therefore be presenting this matter to the Local Authority for consideration of legal enforcement action. The Local Authority may commence legal proceedings against you under the provisions of the Education Act 1996, in respect of this matter and/or any further complaint received from the school, or other places of learning. In the event of your conviction by a Magistrates' Court, you may be liable to a fine of up to £2,500.00 and/or the possibility of imprisonment for up to three months per offence.

Additionally, the Local Authority has a statutory duty to consider applying for an Education Supervision Order in respect of your child, together with a duty to consult with the Social Services Department.

Yours sincerely

Mr Dan Scallan

Acting Deputy Principal

APPENDIX 6 – 6th INTERVENTION: Letter 5 – IRREGULAR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE - PENALTY NOTICE MONITORING

«addressee»

«address_block»

Date

Dear «salutation»

Re: «chosen_forename» «chosen_surname» Form: «reg»

Re: Penalty Notice S.444(a) Education Act 1996 – School Non-Attendance

It has come to my attention that your child has been marked as having unauthorised absence from School. Section 444(1) of the Education Act, 1996 states: *“If a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered student at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school, his/her parent is guilty of an offence”*.

If the reasons given for your child’s irregular school attendance are not satisfactory, then the Local Authority may issue you with a Penalty Notice for failure to comply with the law.

On receipt of this letter you are being given the opportunity to take such steps as to ensure your child’s attendance at school. The Northamptonshire County Council Code of Conduct allows 15 school days from ***(Enter date for the 1st day of the notice) to (Enter the date for the last day of notice)*** inclusive, in which time child’s first name must have no unauthorised absence.

Failure will result in us presenting this matter to the Local Authority for consideration of legal enforcement action and a Penalty Notice may be issued to you. In pointing out the law to you in this way, I am simply making clear your obligations to your child, and I hope that you will take such steps as would render such a course of action unnecessary.

Yours sincerely

Mr Dan Scallan

Acting Deputy Principal

APPENDIX 6 – Absence and Attendance Codes

The following codes are the codes used by school to analyse attendance data:

Code	Description	Statistical meaning	Legal meaning	Affects attendance negatively
/ or \	Present	Present	Present	NO
B	Educated off site	Approved educational activity	Attending approved educational activity	NO
C	Other authorised circumstances	Authorised absence	Absent	YES
D	Dual registration	Approved educational activity	Attending approved educational activity	NO
E	Exclusion	Authorised absence	Absent	YES
G	Family holiday (not agreed)	Unauthorised absence	Absent	YES
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence	Absent	YES
I	Illness	Authorised absence	Absent	YES
J	Interview	Approved educational activity	Attending approved educational activity	NO
L	Late (before registration closes)	Present	Present	NO
M	Medical/dental appointment	Authorised absence	Absent	YES
N	Reason not yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence	Absent	YES
O	Unauthorised absence	Unauthorised absence	Absent	YES
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved educational activity	Attending approved educational activity	NO
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence	Absent	YES
S	Study leave	Authorised absence	Absent	YES
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Authorised absence	Absent	YES
U	Late (after registration closes)	Unauthorised absence	Absent	YES
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved educational activity	Attending approved educational activity	NO
W	Work experience	Approved educational activity	Attending approved educational activity	NO
X	Non-compulsory school age absence	Not counted in possible attendances	Absent	NO
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	NO
Z	Student not on roll	Not counted in possible attendances	Student not registered at the school	NO

The national codes enable schools to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with the regulations. They are also used for collecting statistics through the School Census System. The data helps schools, local authorities and the Government to gain a greater understanding of the level of, and the reasons for, absence.

The codes are:

Present at School

Students must not be marked present if they were not in school during registration. If a student were to leave the school premises after registration they would still be counted as present for statistical purposes.

Registration Code / \: Present in school / = am \ = pm

Present in school during registration.

Code L: Late arrival before the register has closed

Schools should have a policy on how long registers should be kept open; this should be for a reasonable length of time but not that registers are to be kept open for the whole session. A student arriving after the register has closed should be marked absent with code U, or with another absence code if that is more appropriate.

Present at an Approved Off-Site Educational Activity

An approved educational activity is where a student is taking part in supervised educational activity such as field trips, educational visits, work experience or alternative provision. Students can only be recorded as receiving off-site educational activity if the activity meets the requirements prescribed in regulation 6(4) of the Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. The activity must be of an educational nature approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school. The activity must take place during the session for which the mark is recorded.

Attendance codes for when students are present at approved off-site educational activity are as follows:

Code B: Off-site educational activity

This code should be used when students are present at an off-site educational activity that has been approved by the school. Ultimately schools are responsible for the Safeguarding and welfare of students educated off-site. Therefore by using code B, schools are certifying that the education is supervised and measures have been taken to safeguard students. This code should not be used for any unsupervised educational activity or where a student is at home doing school work. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the alternative activity notifies the school of any absences by individual students. The school should record the student's absence using the relevant absence code.

Code D: Dual Registered - at another educational establishment

This code is not counted as a possible attendance in the School Census. The law allows for dual registration of students at more than one school. This code is used to indicate that the student was not expected to attend the session in question because they were scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered.

The main examples of dual registration are students who are attending a student referral unit, a hospital school or a special school on a temporary basis. It can also be used when the student is known to be registered at another school during the session in question. Each school should only record the student's attendance and absence for those sessions that the student is scheduled to attend their school. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby all unexplained and unexpected absence is followed up in a timely manner.

Code J: At an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment

This code should be used to record time spent in interviews with prospective employers or another educational establishment. Schools should be satisfied that the interview is linked to employment prospects, further education or transfer to another educational establishment.

Code P: Participating in a supervised sporting activity

This code should be used to record the sessions when a student is taking part in a sporting activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school.

Code V: Educational visit or trip

This code should be used for attendance at an organised trip or visit, including residential trips organised by the school, or attendance at a supervised trip of a strictly educational nature arranged by an organisation approved by the school.

Code W: Work experience

Work experience is for students in the final two years of compulsory education. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the work experience placement provider notifies the school of any absences by individual students. Any absence should be recorded using the relevant code.

Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised Absence from School Unauthorised absence is where a school is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence. Absence codes are as follows:

Code G: Holiday not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the head teacher.

If a school does not authorise a leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday but the parents still take the child out of school, or the child is kept away for longer than was agreed, the absence is unauthorised. The regulations do not allow schools to give retrospective approval. If the parents did not apply for leave of absence in advance, the absence must be recorded as unauthorised.

Code N: Reason for absence not yet provided

Schools should follow up all unexplained and unexpected absences in a timely manner. Every effort should be made to establish the reason for a student's absence. When the reason for the student's absence has been established the register should be amended. This code should not be left on a student's attendance record indefinitely; if no reason for absence is provided after a reasonable amount of time it should be replaced with code O (absent from school without authorisation).

Code O: Absent from school without authorisation

If the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence, they should record it as unauthorised.

Code U: Arrived in school after registration closed

Schools should actively discourage late arrival, be alert to patterns of late arrival and seek an explanation from the parent.

Authorised Absence

Authorised Absence from School Authorised absence' means that the school has either given approval in advance for a student of compulsory school age to be away or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence.

Absence codes when students are not present in school are as follows:

Code C: Leave of absence authorised by the school

Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. Schools should consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Code E: Excluded but no alternative provision made

If no alternative provision is made for a student to continue their education whilst they are excluded but still on the admission register, they should be marked absent in the attendance register using Code E. Alternative provision must be arranged for each excluded student from the sixth consecutive day of any fixed period or permanent exclusion.

Where alternative provision is made, they should be marked using the appropriate attendance code.

Code H: Holiday authorised by the school

Head teachers should not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. The application must be made in advance and the head teacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case which warrant the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the head teacher will determine the number of days a student can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the head teacher's discretion.

Code I: Illness (not medical or dental appointments)

Schools should advise parents to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness. Schools should authorise absences due to illness unless they have genuine cause for concern about the veracity of an illness. If the authenticity of illness is in doubt, schools can request parents to provide medical evidence to support illness. Schools can record the absence as unauthorised if not satisfied of the authenticity of the illness but should advise parents of their intention. Schools are advised not to request medical evidence unnecessarily. Medical evidence can take the form of prescriptions, appointment cards, etc. rather than doctors' notes.

Code M: Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence. Schools should, however, encourage parents to make appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, the student should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.

Code R: Religious observance

Schools must treat absence as authorised when it is due to religious observance. The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong. Where necessary, schools should seek advice from the parents' religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance.

Code S: Study leave

Schools must record study leave as authorised absence. Study leave should be used sparingly and only granted to Year 11 students during public examinations. Provision should still be made available for those students who want to continue to come into school to revise.

Code T: Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence

A number of different groups are covered by the generic term Traveller – Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. This code should be used when Traveller families are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the student is attending educational provision. It should not be used for any other types of absence by these groups. To help ensure continuity of education for Traveller children it is expected that the child should attend school elsewhere when their family is travelling and be dual registered at that school and the main school. Children from these groups whose families do not travel are expected to register at a school and attend as normal. They are subject to the same rules as other children in terms of the requirement to attend school regularly once registered at a school.

COVID-19 related absence

Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19) For the school year 2020 to 2021, a new category has been added to record instances when a student is ‘not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)’.

Code X: not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)

(This code is not counted as an absence in the school census) This code is used to record sessions where the student’s travel to or presence at school would conflict with:

- guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) from Public Health England or the Department of Health and Social Care¹²
or
- any legislation (or instruments such as statutory directions) relating to the incidence or transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19).

