



Attendance Policy

Document provenance

This Policy was approved as follows –

Approver: Education Committee

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Behaviour and Safeguarding.

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Unless there are legislative or regulatory changes in the interim, this policy will be reviewed every 2 years. Should no substantive changes be required at that point, the policy will move to the next review cycle.

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Key Academy Contacts

Academy	Fairlawn Primary School
SLT Attendance Champion	Name: Siobhan Lennox-Brown Contact: Siobhan.lennox-brown@fls.e-act.org.uk
Attendance Officer(s)	Name: Janine Cooksley and Sean Duffy Contact: Janine.cooksley@fls.e-act.org.uk and sean.duffy@fls.e-act.org.uk
School Office/Admissions/Absence Line	Contact: Sean Duffy sean.duffy@fls.e-act.org.uk

1 Introduction

- 1.1 E-ACTs Attendance Policy details what we expect from our academies to ensure we are doing all we can to support every child in our academies to have high attendance and, therefore, improved chances of achieving their full potential, succeeding at school, and improving life chances.
- 1.2 E-ACT expects high levels of attendance from all pupils. Good attendance is essential for all pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, well-being, and wider life chances.

2 Background

- 2.1 The law gives the right for every child of compulsory school age to a full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have.
- 2.2 Where parents/carers have decided to have their child registered at school, they have a legal responsibility to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend school every day the school is open, except for a small number of circumstances

where the child is too ill to attend, or they have been given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

- 2.3 Effective schools consistently promote the benefits of good attendance, they set high expectations for every pupil, communicate those expectations clearly and consistently to pupils and parents, methodically analyse their data to identify patterns to target their intervention, and work effectively with the local authority and other local partners to overcome barriers to attendance.
- 2.4 The relationship between good attendance and high-quality education is recognised and this forms the foundation to good attendance, delivered in a calm, safe and supportive environment in which all pupils feel safe, want to attend, learn, make progress, and thrive.
- 2.5 We recognise that some pupils find it harder than others to attend school. Therefore, schools need to work in partnership with pupils, parents, and relevant external support agencies to remove any barriers to good attendance through building strong relationships and working collaboratively to ensure the support is in place to secure good attendance to school. Consequently, achieving good attendance cannot be approached in isolation. Effective practices for improvement will involve a combination of academic and pastoral interventions along with behaviour support and procedures for more vulnerable children with special educational needs or mental health and wellbeing needs.
- 2.6 E-ACT academies are expected to use a range of effective resources, including Pupil Premium funding to support children at risk of, or with, attendance concerns.
- 2.7 Attendance is a key priority for the Trust and the Trust Board. The Education Committee, monitor attendance across the trust and the application of this policy. All staff involved in attendance are expected to have a strong knowledge of good practice in this area and the relevant national and local processes that support this.

3 Scope and application

- 3.1 In line with WTISA, this policy is trust-wide but is fully tailored to the needs of each Academy including through Appendix 1.
- 3.2 This policy applies to the whole Academy (including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and/or academy Sixth Form where applicable).
- 3.3 This policy is designed to address the specific statutory obligations on the Academy to record attendance and absence.

4 Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the working together to improve school attendance guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from

the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance. This policy has been prepared to meet the Academy's responsibilities under:

- 4.1.1 (WTISA) Working together to improve school attendance (DfE, August 2024).
 - 4.1.2 Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.
 - 4.1.3 Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (*DfE, March 2021*).
 - 4.1.4 Education and Skills Act 2008.
 - 4.1.5 Children Act 1989.
 - 4.1.6 Childcare Act 2006.
 - 4.1.7 Education (Pupil Registration Regulations) 2006.
 - 4.1.8 Equality Act 2010; and
 - 4.1.9 Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (**UK GDPR**)
- 4.2 This policy has regard to the following guidance and advice:
- 4.2.1 Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance (via WTISA above) (DfE, September 2022).
 - 4.2.2 Keeping children safe in education¹ (DfE, September 2022).
 - 4.2.3 School behaviour and attendance: parental responsibility measures (DfE, May 2020).
 - 4.2.4 Children missing education (DfE, September 2016).
 - 4.2.5 Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school (DfE, August 2017).
 - 4.2.6 Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff (DfE, September 2022).
 - 4.2.7 Remote education guidance (DfE, October 2022).
 - 4.2.8 School suspensions and permanent exclusions (DfE, September 2022); and
 - 4.2.9 SEND Code of practice: 0 to 25 years (DfE and Department of Health, May 2015).
- 4.3 The following School policies, procedures and resource materials are relevant to this policy:
- 4.3.1 Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy²
 - 4.3.2 SEND Policy³
 - 4.3.3 E-ACT Attendance Strategy Framework

¹ Keeping Children Safe in Education

² E-ACT Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

³ E-ACT SEND Policy

- 4.3.4 E-ACT Safeguarding Attendance Process
- 4.3.5 Academies are also advised to be familiar with the useful DfE guidance in Improving school attendance: support for schools and local authorities.
- 4.3.6 All work on attendance must also take place in the context of our approaches to safeguarding, behaviour, alternative provision, and elective home education.

5 Publication and availability

- 5.1.1 This policy is published on the Academy website.
- 5.1.2 This policy is available in hard copy on request.
- 5.1.3 A copy of the policy is available for inspection from the school office during the school day.
- 5.1.4 This policy can be made available in large print or other accessible formats if required.

6 Definitions and interpretation

- 6.1.1 Where the following words or phrases are used in this policy:
- 6.1.2 references to **attendance** include references to punctuality and to attendance for all or part of the timetabled school day.
- 6.1.3 References to the **Proprietor** are references to E-ACT, the Multi Academy Trust.
- 6.1.4 References to **Parent** or **Parents** means the natural or adoptive Parents of the pupil (irrespective of whether they are or have ever been married, with whom the pupil lives, or whether they have contact with the pupil) as well as any person who is not the natural or adoptive Parent of the pupil, but who has care of, or Parental responsibility for, the pupil (e.g., foster carer / legal guardian).
- 6.1.5 **SLT Attendance Champion** means the Academy's designated senior lead for attendance.
- 6.1.6 References to **compulsory school age** refer to when a child is required to attend school. This is on or after their fifth birthday. If they turn 5 between 1 January and 31 March, then they are of compulsory school age on 31 March; if they turn 5 between 1 April and 31 August, then they are of compulsory school age on 31 August. If they turn 5 between 1 September and 31 December, then they are of compulsory school age on 31 December. A child continues to be of compulsory school age until the last Friday of June in the school year that they reach sixteen.
- 6.1.7 References to **persistent absence (PA)** means when a child has an absence rate of 10% or more (i.e., attends for less than 90% of the time) and will be defined as a persistent absentee.

6.1.8 References to **severe absence (SA)** means when a child has an absence rate of 50% or more (i.e., attends for less than 50% of the time) and will be defined as a severe absentee.

7 E-ACT expectations of academies

In line with DfE expectations, to manage and improve attendance effectively, all academies in E-ACT are expected to:

- 7.1 Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance- *Attendance is everyone's responsibility.*
- 7.2 Have a clear school attendance policy which all staff, pupils and parents understand.
- 7.3 Accurately complete attendance registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence straight away.
- 7.4 Regularly monitor and analyse attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require support with their attendance and rapidly put effective strategies in place to prevent further absences and secure good attendance.
- 7.5 Build strong relationships with families, listen to, and understand barriers to attendance and work in partnership with families to remove them.
- 7.6 Share information and work collaboratively with relevant local partners, and particularly local authorities, when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.

The DfE use a helpful chart to describe the key stages in any attendance strategy:

Expect

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

Monitor

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

Listen and understand

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

Facilitate support

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

Formalise support

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

Enforce

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

8 The importance of good attendance

- 8.1 All academies recognise the importance of developing good patterns of attendance from the outset. This is an integral part of the Academy's ethos and culture. In building a culture of good school attendance it recognises:
- 8.1.1 the importance of good attendance as a learned behaviour, alongside good behaviour, as a central part of the school's vision, values, ethos, and day to day life.
 - 8.1.2 the interplay between attendance and wider school improvement efforts, building it into strategies on attainment, behaviour, bullying, special educational needs support, supporting pupils with medical conditions and / or disabilities, safeguarding wellbeing, and support for disadvantaged pupils.
 - 8.1.3 the importance of setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils and communicating these regularly and effectively to pupils and parents.
 - 8.1.4 that attendance is never "solved" and is a continuous process requiring continual monitoring and tracking of data and updating of messages, processes, and strategies as appropriate to secure good attendance.
 - 8.1.5 children missing education can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues, including neglect, sexual abuse, and child sexual and criminal exploitation.

9 Registers

9.1 In line with DfE requirements, academy leaders must ensure the register is taken at the start of each morning session of each school day and once during each afternoon session. On each occasion there must be a record of whether every pupil is present, attending an approved educational activity, absent, or unable to attend due to exceptional circumstance.

9.1.1 Academy leaders in E-ACT are expected to ensure that:

- a) registers are kept up to date
- b) register closing times are specified and adhered to
- c) registers are accurately completed using attendance and absence codes as defined by the DfE's statutory guidance Working Together to Improve School Attendance (August 2024)
- d) there are effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence quickly.

10 Monitoring and improving the attendance of children with a social worker.

10.1 In addition to the benefits for all pupils, good attendance at school also provides an additional safeguard for vulnerable pupils. Historically, the national absence rates for children who have ever needed a social worker are particularly of concern.

10.2 All E-ACT academies are expected to work in partnership with Local Authority, Virtual School Headteachers and are expected to inform a child's social worker if there are unexplained or unexpected absences from school.

11 Persistent and Severe absence

11.1.1 The most important element to attendance work are the everyday strategies to develop a culture of high expectations of attendance and punctuality and the work with families to prevent absence becoming a concern.

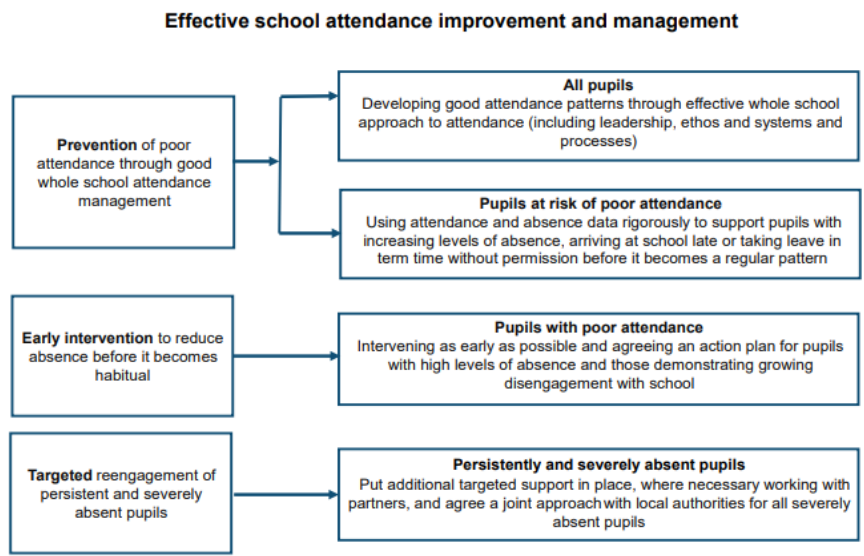
11.1.2 E-ACT academies are expected to have bespoke strategies to improve the attendance of pupils at risk of 'Persistent' or 'Severe' absence:

a) 'Persistence Absence' is where absence escalates, and pupils miss 10% or more of school (equivalent to 1 day or more a fortnight across a full school year). When a pupils attendance falls to 90%, they are deemed to be persistent absentee.

b) 'Severe Absence' is when pupil is absent from school more than they are present (those missing 50% or more of school). These pupils are likely to be finding it difficult to be in school or face significant barriers to their regular attendance and therefore are likely to need more intensive support across a range of partners.

c) These categories of absence will be particularly monitored and analysed at an academy and trust level. All E-ACT academies are expected to provide information to local partners about these cohorts so that pupils who need targeted attendance support receive it as quickly as possible.

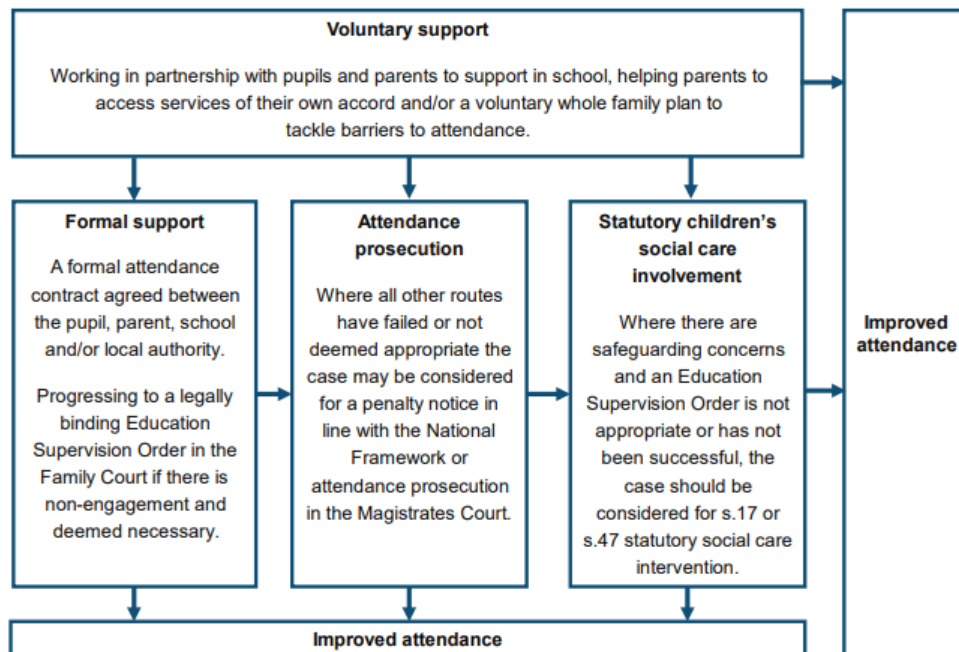
The DfE use a helpful diagram to describe the stages of an effective school improvement and management process:



12 Legal intervention

12.1 Where all voluntary support options are unsuccessful or are not appropriate (e.g., an unauthorised holiday in term time) the relevant Local Authority will take forward legal intervention to formalise support and/or enforce attendance as below:

Providing support first before attendance legal intervention



12.1.2 Whilst it is the local authority's responsibility to take forward Parenting Contracts, Supervision Orders or Prosecutions, academies must work closely with the local authority's School Attendance Support Team to provide appropriate information. Academy leaders are also expected to be familiar with their local authority arrangements so that they can be clear with families, where appropriate, about the process so that this route is avoided wherever possible.

13 Responsibility statement

- 13.1 The Proprietor has overall responsibility for all matters which are the subject of this policy.
- 13.2 The Proprietor is aware of its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and the requirement under S.149 of the Equality Act 2010 to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty. This means in carrying out its functions, the Proprietor is required to have due regard to the need to:
- 13.2.1 eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act.
 - 13.2.2 advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
 - 13.2.3 foster good relations across all characteristics - between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
 - 13.2.4 The Proprietor recognises that improving attendance is a school leadership issue and has appointed a designated senior leader to have overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance in school.

- 13.2.5 The Academy is responsible for implementing this policy in full.
- 13.2.6 The Academy is responsible for ensuring the implementation of the E-ACT Attendance Strategy Framework.
- 13.2.7 The Academy is responsible for ensuring full adherence to the E-ACT Safeguarding Attendance Process.

14 Proprietor responsibilities

- 14.1 The Proprietor will:
 - 14.1.1 Promote the importance of school attendance in the Academy.
 - 14.1.2 Appoint a senior member of staff of the Academy's leadership team as SLT Attendance Champion to have overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance in school.
 - 14.1.3 Ensure that support for attendance, and improving attendance, is appropriately resourced, including, where applicable, through the effective use of pupil premium funding.
 - 14.1.4 Ensure that the Academy's leadership team:
 - (a) Fulfil their statutory duties in respect of school attendance including support and challenge around the trends or areas identified as needing to improve.
 - (b) Receive regular adequate training to discharge their duties in respect of school attendance.
 - 14.1.5 Regularly review the data and reports provided by the Academy to identify patterns in attendance and common issues and barriers to pupils attending school using appropriate comparators including data from local authority area, region and nationally.
 - 14.1.6 Identify patterns in attendance and common issues and barriers to pupils attending school to ensure that effective practice can be shared across academies within the Trust.
 - 14.1.7 Work with Academy leaders to identify areas of focus for improvement.
 - 14.1.8 Devise specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data; and
 - 14.1.9 Monitor the impact of school-wide attendance efforts, including any specific strategies implemented.

15 Staff responsibilities

- 15.1 **The SLT Attendance Champion:** The Proprietor has appointed a senior member of staff of the Academy's leadership team to have overall responsibility for championing and improving

attendance in school. Details of the individual appointed are at the front of this policy and are widely publicised within the Academy.

15.1.1 The SLT Attendance Champion's responsibilities are:

- (a) To lead on and embed a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance, ensuring attendance is everyone's responsibility.
- (b) to formulate a clear vision for attendance and drive improvement.
- (c) to evaluate and monitor expectations and processes.
- (d) to have oversight of and regularly analyse attendance data to identify trends/patterns and ensure rapid and robust intervention is in place to secure good attendance.
- (e) to communicate clear messages on the importance of attendance to staff, pupils, and parents/carers.
- (f) to ensure whole school attendance is a standing agenda item in weekly SLT meetings.
- (g) to complete Appendix 1 of the E-ACT Attendance Strategy Framework and discuss regularly within the Academy SLT meetings.

15.2 **Staff with specific responsibilities for attendance:** The staff identified in Appendix 1 of this policy have day to day responsibility for monitoring and promoting good attendance and punctuality.

15.2.1 They should:

- (a) follow the academy's attendance policy and re-enforce expectations through interaction and communication with pupil and families.
- (b) have a formal routine for registers being taken accurately each morning and afternoon.
- (c) ensure all registers are completed accurately and on time every lesson, every day.
- (d) seek explanations of absences required from pupils, parent/carers and provide support, advice and guidance where required.
- (e) make enquiries about unexplained absences, including those within the school day, and follow up with pupils and parent/carers to ensure that an explanation has been formally given to the Academy.
- (f) look out for trends or patterns in a pupil's attendance and inform the SLT Attendance Champion of any specific concerns.
- (g) inform the SLT Attendance Champion of any known future absences for pupils.

- (h) deal with lateness to lessons consistently and promptly through robust tracking of registers and inform SLT Attendance Champion of any specific concerns.
- (i) discuss non-attendance and / or lateness with pupils and parents (where possible) and emphasise the importance of punctuality.
- (j) Consistently and robustly apply the Academy 'graduated response to attendance' (see Appendix 1) robustly.

15.3 All staff

15.4 The Academy ensures that all teaching and non-teaching staff know the importance of good attendance and are consistent in their communication with pupils and parents about it.

15.5 The Academy provides appropriate training and professional development for staff consistent with their roles and responsibilities.

16 Academy arrangements

16.1 The Academy will accurately complete admission and attendance registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence. Contact details of relevant staff can be found at the front of the policy and other details about the Academy's arrangements can be found in appendices 1-3.

17 Monitoring attendance

17.1 The Academy will undertake regular data analysis to identify and provide additional support to pupils or pupil cohorts that need it, and to look at historic and emerging patterns across the Academy and develop strategies to address them. In order to achieve this, it will:

17.1.1 monitor and analyse weekly attendance patterns and trends and deliver intervention and support in a targeted way to pupils and families.

17.1.2 use this analysis to provide regular attendance reports to class teachers to facilitate discussions with pupils and leaders (including the special educational needs coordinator and designated safeguarding lead).

17.1.3 conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full year data to identify patterns and trends.

17.1.4 effectively communicate attendance concerns with pupils, parents and carers and work with them to remove any barriers.

17.1.5 benchmark attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level to identify areas of focus for improvement.

- 17.1.6 devise specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data taking into account any reasonable adjustments that may be required to support students with special educational needs or mental health or well-being concerns.
- 17.1.7 monitor the impact of school-wide attendance efforts, including any specific strategies implemented; and
- 17.1.8 provide data and reports to the Proprietor to support its work.

18 Pupil responsibilities

- 18.1 School attendance is important to pupil attainment, wellbeing, and development. The Academy therefore has high expectations of pupils as to their attendance and has systems in place to reward good attendance and manage poor attendance.
- 18.2 Pupils should be aware that:
 - 18.2.1 they are expected to attend school, on time each school day.
 - 18.2.2 they are expected to attend all timetabled lessons on time.
 - 18.2.3 they should not leave a lesson or the Academy site without permission.
 - 18.2.4 they should engage with the Academy's arrangements for recording and managing attendance as set out in this policy.
 - 18.2.5 any unexplained absence will be followed up.
 - 18.2.6 persistent or severe lateness or non-attendance will result in action being taken by the Academy. This may take the form of:
 - (a) offers of support to seek to identify and address any barriers to attendance.
 - (b) communication with parents/carers.
 - (c) reporting to other agencies such as children's social care.
 - (d) Escalation of cases to the local authority which may lead to formal support or attendance prosecution.
 - 18.2.7 If pupils are having difficulties that might discourage or prevent them from attending school or specific lessons regularly, they should speak to the Academy via their class teacher/tutor, or pastoral/safeguarding team. Pupils are entitled to expect this information to be managed sensitively.

19 Additional needs

- 19.1 The Academy recognises some pupils may find it harder than others to attend school and will work with those pupils and parents/carers to try to remove barriers to attendance by

building strong and trusting relationships and work together to put the right support in place.

- 19.2 The Academy will make reasonable adjustments where a pupil has a disability that affects their ability to attend school regularly. These may include considering support or reasonable adjustments for transport, routines, access to support in school and lunchtime arrangements, and / or time limited phased returns.
- 19.3 It will also work with parents to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities and medical conditions as appropriate e.g., ensuring the provision outlined in a pupil's education, health and care plan is accessed.
- 19.4 Where barriers are outside of the Academy's control, the Academy will work with parents, pupils, and external agencies / partners to identify alternative sources of support or consider, where appropriate, making a referral for early help.

20 Parent/carer responsibilities

- 20.1 The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. **It is the legal responsibility of every parent/carer to make sure their child receives that education.**
- 20.2 Where frequent sporadic illness occurs without sufficient justification in relation to health, the Academy will challenge the veracity of the illness and request that medical evidence be provided by the parent to authorise the absence (I code).
- 20.3 The Academy expects parents/carers to:
 - 20.3.1 ensure their child attends school every day on time and remains in school for the duration of the school day.
 - 20.3.2 notify the Academy of any absence or delay as soon as reasonably possible in accordance with this policy and when doing so, give an accurate explanation for this.
 - 20.3.3 understand that any appointments where possible need to be made for out of school hours to avoid their child missing any learning. Orthodontic appointments, specialist medical appointments and hospital appointments we recognise cannot always be moved to out of school hours.
 - 20.3.4 notify the Academy of any planned absence in advance and understand that this would be for exceptional circumstances only. This is in line with the Department for Education guidance which states that holidays and other leave of absence should not be taken during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Exceptional circumstances are a matter of discretion of the principal. All cases would be judged on a case-by-case basis.
 - 20.3.5 work with the Academy to explore barriers to attendance and to improve it where attendance has been raised as an issue.

- 20.4 Parents will be reminded of this policy at the start of each new school year and when any changes are made.

21 Training

- 21.1 **Staff:** The Academy ensures that regular guidance and training on attendance is arranged on induction and at regular intervals thereafter so that staff and volunteers understand what is expected of them by this policy and have the necessary knowledge and skills to carry out their roles. As a minimum this will include all staff understanding:

21.1.1 the law and requirements of schools including on the keeping of registers.

21.1.2 the importance of good attendance and that absence is always a symptom of wider circumstances; and

21.1.3 the Academy's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up and improving attendance.

- 21.2 Dedicated attendance training is provided to any member of staff with a specified attendance function in their role, including administrative, pastoral, or family support staff and senior leaders. This should include:

21.2.1 the law and requirements of schools including on the keeping of registers.

21.2.2 the process for working with other partners to provide more intensive support to pupils who need it.

21.2.3 the necessary skills to interpret and analyse attendance data; and

21.2.4 any additional training that would be beneficial to support pupils and pupil cohorts to overcome commonly seen barriers to attendance.

- 21.3 The Academy will help parents/carers to understand what is expected of them and why attendance is important to their child's attainment, wellbeing, and wider development and provide clarity on the short- and long-term consequences of poor attendance.

- 21.4 The Academy maintains written records of all staff training.

22 Information and sharing

- 22.1 Personal information on attendance will only be shared in line with legal obligations and having regard to Government guidance on attendance, safeguarding and children missing education.

23 Record keeping and confidentiality.

- 23.1 All records created in accordance with this policy are managed in accordance with the Academy's policies that apply to the retention and destruction of records.
- 23.2 The information created in connection with this policy may contain personal data. The Academy's use of this personal data will be in accordance with data protection law. The Academy has published privacy notices on its website which explains how the Academy will use personal data.

Appendix 1 Academy Arrangements

The importance of having good attendance and punctuality

School attendance is crucial for a child's educational development, social skills, and future opportunities. Regular attendance ensures that children benefit from the structured learning environment, engage in interactive lessons, and access a broad curriculum that is essential for their intellectual growth. Moreover, it fosters social interactions, helping children develop communication skills, build friendships, and learn teamwork and cooperation. Consistent attendance also instils discipline, responsibility, and a routine that is vital for personal development and future workplace expectations. Missing school can lead to gaps in knowledge, lower academic achievement, and can have long-term negative impacts on a child's educational and career prospects.

In the UK, school attendance is not only important but also a legal requirement. The Education Act 1996 mandates that parents ensure their children receive a full-time either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. Parents can face legal action if their children do not attend school regularly without a valid reason. Penalties for non-compliance can include fines, parenting orders, and in extreme cases, imprisonment. Local authorities also play a role in monitoring attendance and can issue fixed penalty notices to parents of truant children. This legal framework underscores the importance the UK places on education as a fundamental right, aiming to ensure that all children have access to the opportunities that education provides.

It is the responsibility of the school to support the attendance of its children and to deal with problems which may lead to non-attendance. Fairlawn Primary School is committed to identifying and remedying barriers that may prevent an individual from accessing their education.

Children who have an attendance rate of below 90% are considered persistent absentees. It is the goal of Fairlawn Primary School, not only to increase overall levels of attendance, but also ensure we reduce the number of persistent absentees. Fairlawn Primary School will seek to promote good attendance and punctuality through other policies and procedures including the behaviour policy and the school's approach to rewards and recognition.

The Attendance Policy and the Attendance Management Procedures outline the practice and procedures in place together with the stages of intervention adopted to promote good attendance and reduce persistent absenteeism. It is intended that with a consistent approach to promoting and securing good attendance across the academy, this will drive Fairlawn Primary School's expectations to meet a whole school target of 96%.

The intended outcomes of this policy are:

- To improve the overall percentage attendance of students registered at Fairlawn Primary School.
- To make attendance and punctuality everybody's responsibility at Fairlawn Primary School.
- To develop a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks with respect to promoting

attendance and punctuality.

- To work in partnership with parents/carers and children, providing support, advice and guidance.
- To develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance-related data. Identifying patterns of absence and providing targeted support to avoid further absences.
- To implement a system of rewards and sanctions with respect to attendance and punctuality.
- To promote effective partnership with Bristol City Council Education Welfare Services and other agencies.

Senior Leader Attendance Champion: Siobhan Lennox-Brown

School Times

Our breakfast club starts at 8am each morning and children may arrive between 8am and 8.20am. Families do not need to book to attend breakfast club.

Children must arrive in school by 8.50am on each school day.

The school gates are opened at 8.30am and will be kept open until 8.50am. Children will enter the school building at 8.45am with the register taken at 8.50am. Arrival to school after 9:20am will be considered late and Coded in the register as 'L' which counts as present mark for the morning session. Students arriving to school after 9:30am will be considered late after the close of register and will be coded as a 'U'. A 'U' code in the register represents unauthorised attendance and may count towards a Penalty Notice.

The register for the second session will be taken at 1pm and will be kept open until 1.15pm.

Absence Reporting

Unplanned absence: If a child is going to be absent, parents and carers must notify the school office and provide a reason for this absence by 9am. If the child is absent for more than one day, the parent or carer should contact the school each day to provide an update on the child's condition, unless otherwise agreed by the school.

If there is any doubt around the authenticity of the illness, school may ask that parents provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence.

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

Parents/Carers who do not contact the school by 9am will receive a phone call from the office staff each morning. Where a child has been absent with no contact, a home visit may take place on day 2. Where a child has been absent for 3 consecutive days, families may receive a home visit from the attendance officer or other appropriate member of

staff. Where any child is absent for 5 consecutive days, families will receive a welfare check on day 5.

PLEASE NOTE: Parents/Carers may receive a home visit at any time if school have concerns around a child's attendance, or there is uncertainty about the whereabouts of the child. If the home visit is unsuccessful, School may call upon the Local Authority Services to support us to ensure the child/ children's safety.

Planned Absence: Planned leave of absence will only be authorised in extenuating circumstance and will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Taking into consideration the reason for the request, the duration of the request, and the child's current and historic attendance at school.

All requests **must** be made by fully completing and returning a leave of absence request form from the school office for considerations by the Headteacher. We are unable to accept incomplete request forms. We are unable to consider any extended periods of absence where a request has not been submitted in advance, therefore these instances will be unauthorised.

PLEASE NOTE: Leave of absence will not be granted for holidays as this is not considered an extenuating circumstance. However, if parents/carers intend to travel during term time for the purposes of a holiday, parents/carers must still inform school of this intention through the completing of an absence request form. This is to prevent more serious consequences that may arise because of school being unaware of the whereabouts of the child.

Dentist and Medical Appointments: Parents/Carers should arrange any medical or dental appointments outside of school times, however if this is not possible school's agreement should be sought in advance, and the child should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment. The absence will be authorised and coded accordingly should the Parent/Carer be able to provide evidence. This may be in the form of a text, email, or letter to confirm the appointment. See the DfE guidance, working together to improve school attendance for further information.

Authorised and unauthorised absence

Valid reasons for absence include:

- Genuine illness unless your child has been classed as having persistent absence (below 90%).
- A medical appointment that could not have been made outside of school hours
- Being in the hospital or having hospital treatment
- Religious observance – Where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the child's parents/carers belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Attending an interview for a job or place at college, or transition day
- Taking part in an offsite examination

The Headteacher will not authorise absence for any of the following reasons:

- Term-time holidays (including visiting family abroad)
- Study leave
- Trivial illness
- Looking after the house or waiting for workmen/deliveries
- Looking after siblings, including dropping them off at school/nursery
- Helping with housework or a family business
- Being unhappy or not getting on with others at school
- Being up late the night before, including for a family problem
- Feeling under the weather
- Needing to take medication
- Parents/Carers being too unwell to bring them to school

This is not an exhaustive list.

Key Contacts

The Senior Leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance is Siobhan Lennox-Brown (Headteacher/DSL/Attendance Lead) and can be contacted by emailing siobhan.lennox-brown@fls.e-act.org.uk or calling 0117 955 3914.

Parents/Carers who wish to raise initial concerns around attendance, should contact their child's class teacher.

If Parents/Carers wish to ask for more in-depth support around attendance, they should contact Siobhan Lennox-Brown as above.

To report a child as absent, call the school office on 0117 955 3914 or email info@fls.e-act.org.uk or siobhan.lennox-brown@fls.e-act.org.uk.

To request a leave of absence, Parents/Carers must collect and complete a leave of absence request form, clearly outlining when they intend for their child to be absent from school, and the reasons for the request. Parents/Carers should request the minimum possible period of absence and provide as much evidence as they can to prove the extenuating circumstances. Leave of absence forms may be collected from the office.

Contacting the pastoral team for additional support

If your child is having issues in school, or are feeling anxious about school for any reason, please do not keep them home. This will often make the issues worse and is not helpful to the child overall.

You are able to contact the relevant person in school, using the information below. Please note; If you choose to keep your child off school without contacting the school for support, the absence will be determined to be unauthorised.

If you require support you may speak to your child's class teacher or contact the appropriate person using the table below.

Attendance	Siobhan Lennox-Brown	Headteacher DSL Attendance Lead	siobhan.lennox-brown@fls.e-act.org.uk
Mental Health and Wellbeing	Hannah Hayward	PSHE Lead Mental Health & Wellbeing Lead	hannah.haywayrd@fls.e-act.org.uk
Behaviour or Bullying	Bern Langton	Deputy Headteacher DDSL Behaviour Lead	bernard.langton@fls.e-act.org.uk
SEND	Lara Mairs	SENDCo DDSL	lara.mairs@fls.e-act.org.uk
Staff Concern	Siobhan Lennox-Brown	Headteacher DSL Attendance Lead	siobhan.lennox-brown@fls.e-act.org.uk

Additional Support and reasonable adjustments

Fairlawn Primary School recognises that some young people face challenging barrier that might impact their ability to attend school regularly. We work closely with families and outside agencies to provide additional support to mitigate these barriers. These situations are assessed on a case-by-case basis by the SENDCo with support from the attendance and safeguarding team.

To discuss this kind of additional support please use the table above to contact the relevant person.

Attendance monitoring

The attendance Lead monitors childrens' absence daily. If a child shows patterns of absence that are unusual or include unauthorised sessions, we will contact the Parents/Carers to discuss the reasons for this. The persistent absence threshold is 10%

therefore if a child's school attendance is below or equal to 90% the student is classified as a persistent absentee. If strategies are unsuccessful in improving attendance, a referral will be made to the Local Authority's Educational Welfare Service and may result in the issue of a formal warning notice.

Child level absence data is collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics release. We compare our attendance data to the national and local averages and share this at Trust level.

	Days missed at 98%	Days missed at 95%	Days missed at 93%	Days missed at 90%
Half term 1	0.5 days	2 days	3 days	3 days
Half term 2	1.5 days	4 days	6 days	8 days
Half term 3	2 days	5 days	8 days	10 days
Half term 4	2.5 days	6 days	10 days	14 days
Half term 5	3 days	8 days	12 days	17 days
Half term 6	4 days	10 days	15 days	21 days

Reporting to parents

Threshold letters are sent routinely to parents of children who have fallen below specific attendance percentage thresholds. Weekly messages are sent to inform any Parents/Carers of late or unauthorised session that have been recorded in the register that week. If Parents/Carers wish to discuss specific unauthorised sessions, they may contact Siobhan Lennox-Brown on the email address above.

Addressing Poor or Declining Attendance

At Fairlawn Primary School we work diligently to help children attend well. We will communicate regularly with Parents/Carers and always provide support to overcome barrier to good attendance.

We address poor attendance through our graduated response:

Primary Trust Graduated Response to Attendance 24/25:

% Attendance	Impact on learning	Interventions
99%-100%	Children are accessing all	Inclusion in termly attendance incentives Attendance recognition certificates Improved attendance recognition

	learning opportunities	
97%-98.9%	Some learning opportunities are being missed	<p>Attendance Officer to phone parent/carer of child and explain their child has now had 2% unauthorised absence as per half termly triggers (see table below)</p> <p>Attendance officer/pastoral staff to conduct early help assessment of needs to identify causes of unauthorised absence for students with 4% unauthorised absence. <u>Log on CPOMs.</u></p>
94-96.9%	Risk of underachievement	<p>Letter 1 to be sent to parents of students with 5% unauthorised absence. <u>Log on CPOMs.</u></p> <p>Attendance Officer/Headteacher to develop an attendance support plan with student and parent and set targets for students with unauthorised absence of 5%. <u>Log on CPOMs.</u></p>
91-93.9%	High risk of underachievement	<p>Letter 2 to be sent to parents of students with 8% unauthorised absence. <u>Log on CPOMs.</u></p> <p>Headteacher develops an attendance improvement plan with student and parent for students with unauthorised absence of 8% or more. <u>Log on CPOMs.</u></p> <p>Targeted Support meeting with the Local Authority Education Welfare Service (if your LA offers this)</p> <p>Referral to Education Welfare Service in targeted support meetings.</p>
Under 90.9%	Severe risk of underachievement	<p>Letter 3 -PA Letter to be sent to parents/carers of students with more than 10% unauthorised absence. <u>Log on CPOMs.</u></p> <p>Cases monitored by the Attendance Officer & Headteacher.</p> <p>Formal warning notices issued. <u>Log on CPOMs</u></p>

Legal Sanctions

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

Penalty Notices

A penalty notice is a fine that can be issued by the local authority, in this case, Bristol City Council, to Parents/Carers if their child has a certain number of unauthorised absences and are compulsory school age. Here are the key points:

1. **Amount of the Fine:** The first fine is £80 if paid within 21 days. If the fine is not paid within 21 days, it increases to £160 if paid within 28 days. If a second fine is issued for another period of absence, the amount will be £160 if paid within 28 days. There is no option for the smaller if it is a second offence.
2. **Issuance:** A penalty notice can be issued if a child has 10 sessions (equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence including across different terms or school years. Unauthorised absences include absences without a valid reason or without the school's permission.

Parents/Carers may be issued up to 2 penalty notices within a 3-year period. A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative actions will be taken instead.

The local authority may not issue a penalty notice and may decide to prosecute instead if it is decided that this is a more appropriate response.

3. **Payment:** The fine must be paid in full; there is no option to pay in instalments, and is payable to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. Failure to pay the fine can result in prosecution.
4. **Legal framework:** The legal basis for penalty notices comes from the **Education Act 1996**: This act mandates that parents ensure their children receive a full-time education. Under Section 444, if a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly, the parent is guilty of an offence.

Prosecution

Local authorities, including Bristol City Council, have the discretion to issue penalty notices. They often work with schools to monitor attendance and determine when it is appropriate to issue a notice. Persistent unauthorised absence can lead to further legal action, including prosecution, which may result in a fine of up to £2,500, a community order, or even a prison sentence of up to 3 months.

By enforcing these measures, the local authority aims to ensure that children attend school regularly, benefiting from the education system and reducing the risk of negative outcomes associated with poor attendance.

Notice to improve

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

Notices to improve will be issued in line with local authority processes set out in the local code of conduct.

They will include:

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

Appendix 2 Attendance Early Help Assessment of Need

Attendance Early Help Assessment of Need (EHAN)

To be completed by appropriate member of school staff. This can be through conversation and log on CPOMs or completion of appendix 2 below (Academy choice).
Attendance certificates to be provided for MOS conducting EHAN.

Pupil Details	
Name	
Year/Tutor Group/Class	
Reasons for Unauthorised Absence Identify absences (particularly unauthorised absence) on the attendance certificate. Discussion with student and/or parent to determine reasons for the absence.	
Barriers Identified Discussion with student/parent to identify any barriers they may have to prevent them attending.	
Interventions/Targets discussed. Attendance improvement target set Outline any interventions needed or put in place to prevent further absence.	

Appendix 3 Attendance Support Plan

Attendance Support Plan (94% to 96.9%)

To be completed by the Headteacher (Primary only) or pastoral team (Secondary)

Pupil Details	
Name	
Year/Tutor Group/Class	
Home language	
Parent's/carers names	
Student Care Team Lead	

Attendance	
Attendance data overview	

Attendance Meeting 1	Date	
Attendees		
Pupil's view		
Parents' view		
Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • • • • 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • • • • • •
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Agreed Aims	
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Commitments	Evaluation <i>(to be completed in review meeting)</i>
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The pupil agrees to:	
The parent(s) / carer(s) agree to:	
The school agrees to:	

Signed

.....(pupil)

.....(parent/carer)

.....(school)

Review Meeting	Date	
Attendees		

Next steps	
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Appendix 4 Attendance Improvement Plan

Attendance Improvement Plan (91% to 93.9%)

To be completed by the Headteacher (Primary) or Attendance Officer/SLT (Secondary)

Pupil Details

Name	
Year/Tutor Group/Class	
Home language	
Parent's names and contact details	
Attendance Officer	

Attendance

Attendance data overview	
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Attendance Meeting 1	Date	
Attendees		
Pupil's view		
Parents' view		
Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • 	

	•
Agreed Aims	
Commitments	Evaluation (<i>to be completed in review meeting</i>)
The pupil agrees to:	
The parent(s) /carer(s) agree to:	
The school agrees to:	
Signed	
.....(pupil)	
.....(parent/carers)	
.....(school)	

Review Meeting	Date	
Attendees		
Next steps		

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Appendix 5 Admission register

1 Admission register

- 1.1 In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended), the Academy will:
 - 1.1.1 maintain an admission register of pupils admitted to the Academy (also known as the school roll); and
 - 1.1.2 inform the local authority of any pupil who is going to be added to or deleted from the Academy's admission register at non-standard transition points.
- 1.2 The admissions register contains specific personal details of every pupil in the Academy, including their date of admission, information regarding parents and carers and details of the school they last attended.
- 1.3 The Academy will not 'off-roll' pupils, that is, it will not remove a pupil from the school roll without a formal, permanent exclusion or by encouraging a parent to remove their child from the school roll, when the removal would be primarily in the interests of the school rather than in the best interests of the pupil.
- 1.4 Where the Academy notifies the local authority that the pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register, the Academy must provide it with the following information:
 - 1.4.1 the full name of the pupil.
 - 1.4.2 the full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil lives.
 - 1.4.3 at least one telephone number of any parent with whom the pupil lives.
 - 1.4.4 the full name and address of the parent who the pupil is going to live with, and the date the pupil is expected to start living there, if applicable.
 - 1.4.5 name of the pupil's other or future school and pupil's start date or expected start date there, if applicable.
 - 1.4.6 the ground (set out in regulation 9 (1) or (3) under which the pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register.

Appendix 6 Attendance register

1 Attendance register

- 1.1 Attendance of compulsory school-aged pupils is recorded and monitored in accordance with the statutory requirements and the Academy has adopted the national codes system to enable it to monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with the regulations.
- 1.2 The attendance of non-compulsory school age will be recorded in the same way so that attendance can be monitored, unexplained absences are investigated, and the Academy can ensure their safety and welfare.
- 1.3 The Academy will also use these records to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) and work with pupils and parents to resolve any issues before they become entrenched.
- 1.4 The Academy is required by law to take attendance registers twice daily - once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session.
- 1.5 On each occasion it will be recorded whether every pupil is:
 - 1.5.1 present.
 - 1.5.2 absent.
 - 1.5.3 attending an approved educational activity.
 - 1.5.4 unable to attend school due to an exceptional circumstance.

2 Recording absence

- 2.1 Absence will be recorded as set out in 3 and 5 below using national absence codes correlating to:
 - 2.1.1 authorised absence.
 - 2.1.2 excluded (while still on the admission register).
 - 2.1.3 holiday authorised by the Academy.
 - 2.1.4 illness.
 - 2.1.5 medical or dental appointments.
 - 2.1.6 religious observance.
 - 2.1.7 study leave.
 - 2.1.8 Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller absence.

3 Authorised absence from school.

- 3.1 All applications for authorised absence from school should be made with reasonable notice and addressed to the Headteacher.

- 3.2 Only exceptional circumstances will warrant an authorised leave of absence. The Academy will consider each application for authorised absence individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and the relevant background context behind the request.
- 3.3 If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the Headteacher to determine the length of time the pupil is authorised to be away from school.
- 3.4 Absence will usually be authorised for religious observance if the day concerned is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which parents and pupils belong. Parents are expected to make a request for this type of leave of absence in advance.

4 Remote education

- 4.1 The Academy is required to record all absence from in-person lessons.
- 4.2 The Academy may, in limited circumstances, provide remote education to enable pupils, who are well enough to learn but unable to attend the Academy site, to keep pace with their education.
- 4.3 The Academy must ensure pupils accessing remote education are marked as absent on the register using the most appropriate absent code (para 311 in WTISA 2024). Separate records will be maintained to monitor a pupil's engagement with this activity and plans for their reintegration to class.

5 Unauthorised absence

- 5.1 The "unauthorised absence" code will be used when prior permission for absence has not been given and where the Academy is not satisfied with the explanation given for absence or delayed attendance meaning that the code for "unable to attend due to an exceptional circumstance" is not appropriate. Examples include:
 - 5.1.1 holiday has not been authorised by the Academy or is in excess of the period determined by the Headteacher.
 - 5.1.2 the reason for absence has not been provided.
 - 5.1.3 a pupil is absent from school without authorisation.
 - 5.1.4 a pupil has arrived in school after registration has closed and without reasonable explanation.
 - 5.1.5 frequent sporadic illness without sufficient justification in relation to health.