Trust Attendance Policy

Adopted by:	Dereham Neatherd High School Local Academy Committee	**Date:** 14.10.2026
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1. Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regard to school attendance, including those laid out in the statutory guidance on Working together to improve school attendance from the Department for Education (DfE). We aim to achieve this through our Trust culture and ethos that values good attendance, which includes:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Ensuring that all stakeholders in our trust recognise that attendance is a safeguarding issue and is the responsibility of all staff, families and pupils
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school

- We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the DfE's statutory guidance on Working together to improve school attendance and School attendance parental responsibility measures. The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

Part 6 of the Education Act 1996

Part 7 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006

The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024

https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/1751/contentsThe Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

The Equality Act 2010

https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/757/regulation/2/madeIt also refers to:

School census guidance

Keeping Children Safe in Education

Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools

Ofsted's 2025 framework toolkit

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 CEO and Executive Team

The CEO and Executive team are responsible for:

- Setting Trust attendance priorities
- Monitoring trends across academies and challenging areas of underperformance with the schools
- Ensuring attendance is embedded within Trust improvement planning
- Monitoring Trust-level attendance data and reporting it to the Trustees.

3.2 The Trust Board

Trustees are responsible for:

- Holding executive leaders accountable for attendance performance
- Receiving half-termly attendance reports.

3.2 The Local Academy Committee

The Local Academy Committee is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents/carers
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations, statutory duties and comply with the law on school attendance, including:
  - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
  - Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge

- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils' needs
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
  - The importance of good attendance
  - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues and can be a safeguarding issue
  - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
  - The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including interpreting and analysing attendance data
- Holding the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

3.3 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at school level
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing penalty notices, where necessary
- Working with the parents/carers of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents/carers through all available channels
- Sharing information from the school register with the local authority, including:
  - Notifying the local authority when a pupil's name is added to or deleted from the school admission register outside of standard transition times
  - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who fail to attend school regularly, or who have been marked with an unauthorised absence for a continuous period of 10 school days
  - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who the school believes will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness

3.4 The Designated Senior Leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis

- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Emma Webb and can be contacted at the school via telephone (01362 697981) or email (office@neatherd.org).

3.5 The Attendance Manager

The school's attendance manager is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 9)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance, and the Headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Holding meetings with families in partnership with other relevant stakeholders such as the school's pastoral support team, or SENCo where appropriate
- Advising the Headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- The attendance manager is Bobbie-Ann Mitchell and can be contacted at the school via telephone (01362 697981) or email (attendance@neatherd.org)

3.6 Teaching Staff

Class teachers and form tutors responsible for recording attendance using the correct codes (see Appendix 1) In our Trust secondary schools, each period of learning should be accurately registered and submitted to the office without delay so that missing pupils can be flagged and located. In our primary schools, a morning and afternoon register should be taken and submitted to the school office so that the first day calling process can be undertaken if a reason for absence has not already been recorded.

3.7 School Administrators

School administrators will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the pupil's Head of Year where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

3.8 Parents/carers

Where this policy refers to a parent/carer, it refers to the adult the school decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

- All natural parents/carers
- All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them)

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time

- Call the school to report their child's absence before 8.30am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than one emergency contact number for their child or, if the child is in Early Years, provide us with more than two emergency contacts where possible.
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting your child's Head of Year, who can be contacted via telephone (01362 697981) or email (office@neatherd.org)

3.9 Pupils

Pupils are expected to attend school every day, on time and attend every timetabled session, on time

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an electronic attendance register and place all pupils on this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of each morning session of each school day and once during each afternoon session. It will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending a place other than school
- Absent due to ill health
- Absent – unable to attend due to other unavoidable causes

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity, where a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances, where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for six years after the date on which the entry was made.

The school day starts at 8.40am and ends at 3.20pm. Pupils must arrive in school by 8.35am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.40am and will be kept open until 9.10am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1.15pm and will be kept open until 1.45pm.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day (and every subsequent day) of an unplanned absence by 8.30am, or as soon as practically possible, by calling the attendance team, who can be contacted via telephone on 01362 697981 or by email: attendance@neatherd.org

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

Where there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised **as long as** the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment and shows evidence of the appointment to the school office.

Where possible, the pupil should:

- Be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary, and attend school before/after their appointment
- Wear school uniform to their appointment, to make it easier to return to school afterwards.

We encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. See section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

At Enrich Learning Trust, we value the importance of punctuality and schools will follow up on cases of persistent lateness in the same way as absence, supporting pupils and their families to improve punctuality and mitigate against lost learning time.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

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

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts within two days, the school may contact Children's Services or the police to ensure that the pupil and their family are safe.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session(s) for which the pupil was absent
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary
- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the pupil's social worker and/or youth offending team office
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents/carers to improve attendance
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with the school will work with Norfolk County Council's attendance team to apply the appropriate sanction, which could include issuing a notice to improve, or penalty notice.

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents/carers (see the definition of 'parent', as used in this policy, in section 3.7 above) about their child's attendance and absence levels.

- Parents can view their child's attendance, absence and late percentages at any time on the 'My Child At School' app (under 'attendance'). Please contact the school if you need assistance with accessing this app.
- Parents will receive written notification of their child's attendance percentage, number of days missed and lateness percentage three times a year: at the end of each school term.
- Parents will receive a written warning once their child has been unauthorized absent for 8 school sessions in a 10-week period. This is to remind parents that unauthorized absence of 10 sessions or more will be referred to Norfolk County Council for a fixed penalty fine.
- Parents will be contacted by their child's Head of Year (either by telephone or email) once their child has had two broken school weeks. This is a supportive phone call to offer support and find out more details about the reasons for absence.
- Parents will receive written notification once their child has had three broken school weeks. This letter will include the number of school days missed as well as the number of lessons and curriculum content missed. Parents will be offered a support meeting to improve their child's school attendance at this point.

5. Authorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

At Enrich Learning Trust, school's will only grant a **leave of absence** to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the 2024 school attendance regulations. These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances.

Enrich Learning Trust defines 'exceptional circumstances' as rare, one-off incidents that are unlikely to reoccur, such as acute medical incidences or close family bereavement. The authorisation is to cover the minimum time required to deal with the emergency and pupils are encouraged to return to school as soon as possible, so that they can benefit from the familiar routine and structure that is in place.

Leave of absence will **NOT** be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

As leave of absence will only be granted in the most exceptional circumstances, please note that a leave of absence will **NOT** be granted for the purposes of a family holiday and within our Trust, Headteachers do not have discretion in this matter. Trust schools will not authorise periods of absence retrospectively or apply exceptional circumstances authorisation after the period of holiday absence. Schools must also follow DfE guidance in the issuing of penalty notices relating to periods of absence of 10 sessions or more and will refer these cases to Norfolk County Council who manage the process and issue the fine. **Please note that schools do not receive the proceeds of the fine**.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 2 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school office or website. The Headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence, including requests for holiday absence. If the pupil is not of compulsory school age, they should still follow the processes outlined to make a request for a leave of absence.

Parents/carers should agree on a return date for any leave of absence. If the pupil does not return on the agreed date and contact is not received from the parent/carer, the school will seek advice from the Local Authority. This could result in the children missing from education procedures being instigated where the pupil is not able to be located.

5.2 Other reasons for authorised absence

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

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents/carers belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent/carer's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart for religious observance. Pupils should attend school on the days surrounding those set apart for religious observance
- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – a pupil is a mobile child if their parent is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with them. In these circumstances a pupil will be considered as a mobile child, provided they are of compulsory school age and have no fixed abode and whose parent is in a trade or business that requires them to travel from place to place (see 8.8 for specific circumstances relating to Gypsy, Roma or Traveller pupils (GRT))
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made).

5.3 Absences from the school site (which are not classified as absences)

The Headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings. These are not classified as absences. Reasons include (but are not limited to):

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

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

We want our pupils to succeed and develop their skills. To do this, pupils need to avoid missing lessons and days of school as much as possible. As a school, we want to reward high attendance and not just penalise pupils for poor attendance.

Good attendance is rewarded at Dereham Neatherd High School in the following ways:

- Weekly 100% attendance prize draw
- Weekly top attendance form
- Half termly attendance rewards

Weekly attendance rewards are designed to ensure that as many pupils as possible can be rewarded for good attendance, including those with long-standing medical conditions.

7. Supporting pupils with poor attendance

Where attendance drops below certain thresholds, our trust schools implement a process to ensure attendance improves rapidly. The flow chart for this process can be found in **Appendix 2**.

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

7.1 Education supervision order

In cases where voluntary early help plans have been unsuccessful, we may work with the local authority to issue an education supervision order. If an education supervision order is considered, the local authority will inform the parents/carers in writing and will set up a meeting.

An education supervision order is a formal intervention but **not** criminal prosecution.

An education supervision order initially lasts for 1 year, but it can be extended within the last 3 months for a period of up to 3 years at a time.

In cases where parents/carers persistently fail to meet the directions given under the education supervision order, they may be liable to a fine of up to £1,000 upon conviction.

7.2 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/carers a final chance to engage with support.

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

It will include:

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

7.3 Penalty notices

The Headteacher can work with the local authority or the police to fine parents/carers for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

- If the school refers a case for a penalty notice, this is reviewed by Norfolk County Council.
- Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:
    - Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks)
    - Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil
    - Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
    - Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

Each parent/carer who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, this includes biological parents who do not hold parental responsibility or reside with their child.

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

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

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

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

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents/carers allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents/carers that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day). These penalty notices are not included in the National Framework, not subject to the same considerations about support being provided, and do not count towards the limit as part of the escalation process.

In these cases, the parent must pay £60 within 21 days, or £120. **Please note that the fine proceeds are not received by the school or trust.**

8. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

8.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance including SEND, mental or physical health needs

Where pupil absence is identified as an ongoing or emerging issue, the school will work closely and collaboratively with the pupil, the family and external agencies where appropriate to understand individual circumstances and identify barriers to attendance, then plan together to maximise attendance.

Many children will experience normal but difficult emotions that may make them anxious about attending school, such as worries about friendships, schoolwork, exams or family issues. It is important to note that these pupils are still expected to attend school regularly and maximise attendance.

Schools will work with parents/carers and pupils to ensure that such circumstances do not act as a barrier to regular attendance by arranging to meet with families where an existing or emerging attendance issue is identified. Together they will plan to mitigate as much as possible specific barriers to attendance by considering reasonable adjustments. These adjustments will be discussed and considered on a case-by-case basis and may include adjustments from parents/carers, the pupil and the school. Consideration will also be made of referrals for support both within and outside school. It should always be made clear that the aim of the plan is to maximise attendance.

There is no requirement to routinely ask for medical evidence to support recording an absence as authorised for mental or physical ill health, and lack of medical evidence should not be a barrier to support being put in place. This is because, in general, primary health care professionals such as General Practitioners (GP's) are unlikely to be able to offer such medical evidence to support one-off, short-term absences. However, in instances of long term or repeated absences, seeking medical evidence would be appropriate to assist in assessing whether the pupil requires additional or different support to help them attend school and whether the illness is likely to prevent the child from attending for extended periods.

Where a parent/carer seeks out and provides a note, letter or information from the GP, this does not imply a need for absence unless this is explicitly stated in the document.

There is further information from the Department for Education where mental health is affecting attendance. This applies for any pupil displaying any social, emotional or mental health issues that is affecting attendance and is not only for pupils who have a diagnosed mental disorder or disability or special educational need.

Where a pupil has a medical condition or allergy, the school will try to support them to allow them to access the same education as others. The school has separate policies (Supporting pupils with medical conditions and Pupils with allergies) that include details of how and when an Individual Healthcare Plan is drawn up. The school will alert the Local Authority if a pupil is recorded as "unable to attend because of sickness" (code I) for 15 days in a school year (whether consecutive or cumulative), or it is reasonable to expect the 15 days will be reached.

Where a pupil has an education health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, the school will inform the Local Authority.

In cases of short-term illness parents/carers should consult the NHS guidance Is my child too ill for school? when deciding whether to keep their child home due to illness. We will share this guidance with parents/carers, and provide support in understanding it, to promote school attendance wherever appropriate.

8.4 Pupils returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence

Our Trust aims to ensure that on returning to school from any absence all pupils are made to feel welcome back into their school community. The most appropriate adult to welcome them back is their Class Teacher or Form Tutor, as they are the consistent adult that they will see in school every day. The teacher should update them on any information that they may have missed because of their absence (for example any upcoming school events).

The pupil's class or subject teachers are best placed to help them catch up on any significant knowledge, skills or assessments that may have been missed due to absence. The pupil and their family should take responsibility for keeping up to date with their schoolwork and use resources available on the internet to aid this.

For pupils returning to school after a lengthy period of absence, it may be more appropriate for the family and pupil to meet with an appropriate member of staff (e.g. the Head of Year) to support a successful return to school. Either the family or the school can request this meeting to plan for the effective return to school.

8.5 Norfolk County Council Medical Needs Service

The school can make a Medical Needs Service referral for a child who cannot attend school because of health needs where they have been or will be away from school for 15 days or more. Before this referral can be considered, the school should seek advice from Just One Number (0300 300 0123) with consent from parents/carers and contact the GP (via the Joint Medical Protocol)

The referral should be made online and only after the checklist of actions prior to referral has been completed (NCC Medical Needs Service). The school will keep parents/carers informed about the outcome of any referral.

8.6 Pupils being supported through use of Part-Time Timetables

On rare occasions, the school may work with pupils who will benefit from a short-term reduction to their time in school. These part-time arrangements will only be used in exceptional circumstances, following Norfolk County Council's guidance and only with parent/carer and school agreement. There must be a clear rationale for the application of a reduced timetable, such as supporting pupil reintegration after a prolonged absence (such as medical leave of absence) and it must be kept under regular review, with the aim being to return the pupil to full-time education as soon as possible. Part-Time timetables are **not** used to manage pupil behaviour or to provide an alternative to appropriate SEND support.

In line with our Trust aims, the use of part-time timetables is carefully monitored and considered as a safeguarding issue if there is cause for concern about the pupil.

8.7 Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Pupils

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) pupils are among the lowest achieving groups pf pupils at every key stage in education, although some GRT pupils achieve very well at school. We recognise that there are many complex factors that may influence the educational attainment of GRT pupils. Our trust has high expectations of all pupils, regardless of their background, whilst also recognising the lifestyle and cultural transitions of GRT communities. In line with the Education Act (1996) the school will authorise the absence of a pupil who is a mobile child and unable to attend school because:

- The parent is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require them to travel from place to place
- That the child has attended at a school as a registered pupil as regularly as the nature of the trade or business permits, and from the age of 6 has accrued at least 200 attendances at the registered school during the preceding 12-month period

This authorised provision applies only where the family has no fixed abode and where the family can provide evidence that their children are provided with suitable education during the period where they are not attending school. Where the family is trading or conducting their business in or around Norfolk, if the family can reasonably travel back to their base school, then the expectation is that their child will attend full time.

If families choose to register their child at another school whilst travelling, then the trust will hold open the place providing that parents/carers have:

- Notified the school of their travelling patterns as soon as they are known and before they happen
- Inform the school of their child's proposed return date

9. Attendance monitoring

9.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) weekly, half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level.

Specific pupil information will be shared with the DfE:

Our Trust has granted the DfE access to its schools' management information system 'Bromcom' so that data is accessed securely on a daily basis.

There is termly publication of school data at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics.

The school will benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement and share this with their Local Academy Committee.

9.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

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

9.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school and Trust will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
- Provide targeted support to the pupils we have identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence, and their families (see section 9.4 below)
- Provide regular attendance reports to class-based colleagues to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and also to the local academy committee, trustees and school leaders, including the SENCo, Pupil Premium Co-ordinator and pastoral support teams
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate.

9.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's strategy for improving attendance.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Hold regular meetings with the parents/carers of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
    - Discuss attendance and engagement at school
    - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
    - Explain the help that is available
    - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
    - Review any existing actions or interventions
    - Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant
    - Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
    - Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 7, above)

Our school's specific approach is laid out in **Appendix 2** of this policy.

9.5 Children Missing in Education (CME)

Children Missing Education (CME) are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise at a school.

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to an education suitable to their age, ability, aptitude, and any special educational needs they may have. Children missing, or at risk of missing, education are vulnerable to academic underachievement and risk being out of education, employment or training (NEET) in later life. They may also be at risk of abuse and exploitation.

Our ambition is for all children in our Trust to achieve their full potential and have their needs met at the earliest possible opportunity.

Our Trust will work with Norfolk County Council to refer children who we believe are missing education. We will follow this policy to ensure that we are making timely notifications and safeguarding pupils and families.

10. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the school's Local Academy Committee.

11. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- Pupils with allergies policy

- Children with health needs who cannot attend school policy
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions

Appendix 1: Attendance Codes

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

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

X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or

		• Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

Appendix 2 – School process for attendance interventions

Our graduated response prioritises support, partnership and early intervention before formal legal action is considered.

1: Second broken week of attendance

- Contact from Head of Year to offer support (by telephone or email)
- Discuss reasons for absence and agree actions to support improved attendance
- Inform parents that a warning letter will be sent after three broken weeks of attendance

2: Third broken week of attendance

- Letter from Attendance Team to offer support and highlight impact of absence (days missed, lessons missed and curriculum content missed)

3: Targeted support (SF1)

- Invite parents / carers for first attendance support meeting (with formal letter) after further unauthorised absence (by telephone, online or in person)
- Discuss attendance and barriers, and agree supportive actions.
- Gather pupil voice

4: Enhanced support (SF2)

- Invite parents / carers for second attendance support meeting (with formal letter) after further unauthorised absence (online or in person). Attendance Manager to be in meeting.
- Review actions from first meeting and agree next steps
- Raise at Stuck Cases Meeting (Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher, SENDCo, Attendance Manager)
- Consider external agency support or Medical Needs Service referral
- Offer attendance contract

5: Warning (SF3)

- Invite parents / carers for final attendance support meeting with Deputy Head Teacher (with formal letter) after further unauthorised absence (in person)
- Review support offered to date and agree next steps
- Warn of possible legal intervention

6: Notice to improve

Issue written legal notice to improve where support has been unsuccessful and/or declined, or where an Attendance Contract has been declined and/or failed

7: Referral for prosecution

Refer to Norfolk County Council for prosecution when unauthorised absence continues, despite offers of support in steps 1-6

Welfare check: all absent pupils

A welfare check will be made with all pupils on the third consecutive day of unauthorised absence, and the sixth consecutive day of authorised absence. This will be either a video call or a home visit from a member of the attendance or pastoral teams.