

# Greater Manchester Education Trust

## ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

V2.0

Whalley Range 11-18 High School

## Approval History

Approved By:	Date of Approval	Version Approved	Comments
Performance Board	17.11.22	1	Revisions from initial draft 10.22
Trust Board	16.10.24	2	Revisions to incorporate changes made to Working Together to Improve Attendance (February 2024)

## Revision History

Revision Date	Previous Revision Date	Summary of Changes	Owner/Editor

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## 1 AIMS

Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to achieve their full potential. Greater Manchester Education Trust is committed to ensuring that every student achieves in line with their potential and our academies recognise the value of regular attendance and its contribution to success. Our academies will adopt a systematic approach to ensuring good attendance for all individuals and groups of pupils and use a range of information to swiftly identify and act on causes for concern, supporting our students and their families in improving attendance and removing barriers to achievement.

As set out in our policy, we will work with our families in a variety of ways to identify the reasons for attendance issues and address and resolve any difficulties. The approach taken is aligned with the 'Support First' strategies outlined in Working Together to Improve Attendance.

The attendance champion for the school is Mr B Mustafa (Assistant Headteacher). If you have any concerns / questions, please email [bmustafa@wrhs1118.co.uk](mailto:bmustafa@wrhs1118.co.uk).

## 2 LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance and parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Education Act 2002
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- Working Together to Improve attendance (February 2024)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

## 3 ATTENDANCE REGISTER

By law, all schools are required to keep an attendance register, and all students must be placed on this register. The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session (*see paragraph 5*). It will mark whether every student is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity

- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

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

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Each school within the trust will have a localised attendance procedure that includes

- Students' expected arrival time in the Academy
- The time that the register for the first session will be taken and until what time it will be kept open.
- The time that the register for the second session will be taken after the lunch break

#### 4 WHY REGULAR ATTENDANCE IS SO IMPORTANT

When students are not present in school their absence disrupts the pattern of their education, disrupts teaching routines and will have an adverse effect on the learning of others and also presents safeguarding risks.

Students who attend for the full number of published student days will achieve 100% attendance for the academic year and are highly likely to achieve the greatest progress for their ability, enabling them to continue their studies and raise their future and earning potential in the world of work. We know that the students with the highest progress and attainment at the end of key stage 4 have higher rates of attendance compared to those with the lowest attainment and progress. The lower a student's attendance, the greater the impact is on their achievement at school.

#### Attendance percentage relating to learning days lost per academic year

Percentage Attendance	Days Lost
98%	4
95%	10
90%	19
85%	29
80%	38
75%	48

We know that some students find achieving high levels of attendance difficult and therefore we will work in partnership with families at all stages to try to remove any barriers and to put in place the right support at the right time.

## 5 PROMOTING REGULAR ATTENDANCE

At Greater Manchester Education Trust, our aim is for all students to achieve at least 98% attendance as we recognise that attendance below this will impact on a student's achievement.

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everyone's responsibility. To help us all to focus on this we will:

- give details of the whole academy attendance in our messages to families and the community.
- report to families on their child's performance at the academy, giving their attendance percentage and punctuality details, and how this relates to their attainment.
- celebrate good attendance.
- reward good or improving attendance.
- work with families and partner agencies to provide advice, challenge and support where attendance is a concern.

We will:

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>EXPECT</b></p> <p>High standards of attendance from all students and parents and maintain an academy culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>MONITOR</b></p> <p>Using attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance as soon as possible.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>LISTEN AND UNDERSTAND</b></p> <p>Talk with students and families to understand barriers to attendance and agree how we can all work together to resolve them through a support first based approach.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>FORMALISE SUPPORT</b></p> <p>Where absence persists and support is not working or not being engaged with, we will work with other agencies and advise families of the possible consequences if absence remains a concern. This may include formalising support through a parenting contract or education supervision order.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ENFORCE</b></p> <p>Where all options have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, we will enforce attendance through statutory intervention or prosecution to protect a student's right to an education.</p>

## Punctuality

Prompt arrival to school and for individual activities during the school day supports effective safeguarding of students and prepares them for the expectations of life outside of school. To that end students are expected to arrive promptly to lessons and lateness will be recorded as such and will be sanctioned where there is no suitable reason for lateness.

Morning registration begins at 08.30 am and closes at 09.00 am. Afternoon registers open at 1.45 pm. Arrival outside of these times will be marked as lateness/unauthorised absence and sanctioned as such where there is no justifiable cause.

### 5.1 Strategies for Promoting Attendance

Every academy within the trust will have localised strategies to promote good attendance which will include; rewards, sanctions, assemblies, meetings with parents and other levels of support. Low levels of attendance mean lost learning time which has a negative effect on student progress. Please refer to appendix 4 for levels of attendance and associated responses.

As standard our academies will:

- View and respond to daily attendance and punctuality information
- Monitor weekly patterns of attendance and identify actions through leadership and attendance teams
- Share this information with pastoral and classroom colleagues for discussion with students.
- Examine half-termly data reports against previous patterns and local and national data benchmarks
- Maintain a risk-register approach to the assessment of emerging concerns regarding students and how those concerns will be addressed, tracking the impact of interventions
- Examine attendance information alongside analysis of information relating to other areas of a student's education

## 6 TYPES OF ABSENCE

Every half-day absence will be classified by the academy (not by families), as either **authorised** or **unauthorised** in accordance with the categories as set out in 'Chapter 8: Contents of the attendance register' of [Working Together to Improve Attendance](#) (February 2024 - see Appendix 7).

### 6.1 Authorised absences

Authorised absences include mornings or afternoons absent for a valid reason such as illness, urgent medical/dental appointments or other emergencies. All non-urgent medical or routine dental appointments should be arranged outside of the academy day or during the holiday periods. Where this is not possible, **students should attend the academy before and after the appointment**. Families should provide the appointment letter, prescription or medication to enable the absence to be authorised as appropriate. If students are required to leave early or be absent from lessons for an urgent appointment, parents should telephone or email with this information.

If a student is absent for 5 days consecutive days due to illness, contact will always be made with families and medical evidence may be required in order to authorise the absence.

Students who have permission to leave during the day must sign out at Student Services. Students must report to the Attendance Team to obtain an official out of academy pass to produce in the event of being challenged.

### 6.1.1 Religious Observance

The Trust acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside holiday periods or weekends. The authorisation of absence, or special leave for religious observance, will be considered in these instances, but families are requested to give advance notice if they intend for their child to be absent. Greater Manchester Education Trust feels that it is reasonable that **no more than one day be designated for any individual occasion of religious observance or festival and no more than three days in total in any academic year**. Any further absence will be categorised as unauthorised.

### 6.1.2 Traveller Absence

Our aim for children within travelling families, in common with all other children, to attend school as regularly and as frequently as possible. To protect traveller parents from unreasonable prosecution for non-attendance, the Education Act 1944, section 86, states that a traveller parent is safe from prosecution if their child accrues 200 attendances (i.e. 200 half days) in a year. This is only when the family are engaged in a trade or business that requires them to travel and when the child is attending school as regularly as that trade permits.

Traveller children will be recorded as attending an approved educational activity when:

- The child is on roll and attending another visited school.
- The child is undertaking supervised educational activity under the jurisdiction of another Local Authority's Traveller Education Service.
- The child is undertaking computer-based distance learning that is time evidenced.

## 6.2 Unauthorised absences and Penalty Notices

Unauthorised absences are those which the academy does not consider reasonable and may result in the Local Authority issuing a School Attendance: Notice To Improve Letter and a Penalty Notice being issued by the Local Authority. Each academy will request that the LA take statutory action when 10 sessions of unauthorised absence over a 10-week period. A penalty notice may then be issued to each parent for each child where attendance is a concern. A 'First Action' Penalty Notice will incur a fine of £160, which is reduced to £80 if paid within the first 21 days.

Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in legal proceedings being taken against you in accordance with the Education Act 1996. This will involve being summoned to the Magistrates Court and if you are found guilty you will receive a criminal record and may receive a fine of up to £2,500 and/or 3 months imprisonment.

Unauthorised absences include:

- truancy during the academy day.
- absences which have no proper explanation.
- persistent absence due to illness that has no supporting medical evidence.

- students who arrive late to the academy after the registers have closed.
- absence for the purposes of shopping, to look after other children or celebrate birthdays.
- families keeping children away from the academy unnecessarily.
- day trips or holidays taken during term time.
- excessive absence due to medical/dental appointments without good reason or evidence.

Families will be asked to provide medical evidence where there are repeated absences due to reported illness. Families may also be asked to provide medical evidence where their child is absent for 5 consecutive days or more, or where there are repeated instances of absence.

### **6.3 Granting approval for term-time absence (See Appendix 1)**

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence to students during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. Each academy will have their own list of exceptional circumstances due to the needs of the community. However, exceptional circumstances are likely to include the following:

- acute family trauma
- terminal illness or death of a family member
- if a family member serves in the Armed Forces - Service personnel returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the individual will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays
- following advice from a health professional
- out of school programmes such as music, arts or sport operating at a high standard of achievement

### **6.4 Persistent Absence**

Students are classified as persistently absent when they miss 10% or more school sessions in an academic year. Students are, therefore, classed as persistently absent irrespective of whether absence is authorised or unauthorised.

We monitor all absences thoroughly and support and intervention will be provided by each school for students who are persistently absent or at risk of becoming persistently absent.

All our persistently absent students are subject to weekly review and actions are agreed in accordance with local academy policy. Mentoring is offered and support for learning where absence affects attainment. This may include support from partner agencies such as Early Help or School Health in addition to enforcement where interventions do not improve attendance.

### **6.5 Severe Absence**

A student is severely absent when they miss 50% or more schooling across the academic year, for whatever reason. Students are, therefore, classed as severely absent irrespective of whether absence is authorised or unauthorised. Schools and local authorities are specifically expected to have agreed a joint approach for all severely absent students.

All severely absent students across GMET are subject to weekly review and actions are agreed in accordance with academy-level procedure. Help and support will be offered from

partner agencies such as Early Help or School Health. Where interventions do not improve attendance, a range of legal actions will be explored with the local authority.

## **6.6 Long-term Absence due to Medical Conditions**

Where a student is absent from the academy due to a long-term medical condition, a care plan will be developed in accordance with the individual academy's Supporting Students with Medical Conditions policy. Where possible, the academy will support the student to continue his or her access to education by providing specialised provision or by engaging the Home/School Teaching Service. A reintegration plan will be agreed with families to enable a successful return to the academy.

Where an assessment of a student's illness or well-being concludes that their achievement will be significantly impaired unless alternative arrangements for education are made, a referral can be submitted to the Hospital School in Manchester under Section 19 of the Education Act 1996. This includes students who display Emotional Barriers to School Attendance. Referrals will be made in partnership with families and will require the support of a medical professional, such as a paediatrician or Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services, in order to be accepted.

## **7 ABSENCE PROCEDURES**

The Trust is committed to promoting the safety, health and welfare of all students and endeavours to manage absences fairly and consistently, with the aim of supporting students and their families.

Each academy in the Trust has a clear set of procedures for families to report and address absences in a timely and accurate way. These are outlined in Appendix 3.

## **8 CONTACT DETAILS FOR STUDENTS**

To comply with Health and Safety guidelines and Keeping Children Safe in Education it is important that we have more than one set of up-to-date contact details for all students. There are a variety of reasons that staff from the academy may need to contact parents or carers, including ill health when at the academy, emergencies, to discuss unexplained absences and to ensure students are safe. To confirm the reason for a student's absence with families, the academy will generally telephone the first contact number listed on the student's record. If the contact information changes, please telephone or email the academy so that contact details are correct and up to date.

## **9 MONITORING OF ATTENDANCE**

Each academy will monitor attendance at school and to all lessons closely throughout the year on a daily basis. Each academy will have a detailed set of procedures to provide support and challenge as appropriate to secure good attendance for all students. This may include utilising safeguarding procedures and working with external agencies.

An overview of those procedures against related levels of attendance is provided in Appendix 3.

## 9.1 Children at risk of missing education

All academies will inform the local authority (LA) of any student who fails to attend regularly or has been absent without the academy's permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more. As this could be a safeguarding issue leaders will ensure that regular follow up contact is made with the LA if the whereabouts of the student are not known or communicated to the academy. If a vulnerable child cannot be contacted on the first day of absence a home visit will be completed, a non-vulnerable child by the third day of absence. This will continue until the information has been secured. Leaders will follow the guidance issued by the Department for Education: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education>

## 9.2 Attendance Contracts

An attendance contract is a formal written agreement between a parent and the academy to address irregular attendance. In the past, these were known as parenting contracts. This is not legally binding but allows a more formal conversation to take place with clear outcomes and expectations where a voluntary Early Help plan has not worked or is not appropriate. An attendance contract is intended to provide support and offer an alternative to legal action. A separate leaflet is available from the academy which offers more information about attendance contracts and this will be shared with families if this process is deemed to be appropriate. It is also available on the academy's website.

## 9.3 Support from Early Help

Where barriers to attendance are complex, the academy will offer to work with students and families to complete an Early Help Assessment. This will enable more intensive support to be provided either at academy level or through the Early Help Hub and will establish a Lead Practitioner for the family. The Lead Practitioner will be from the team or service best placed to support the family and their needs, and may be from the academy, the local authority or another partner such as a health professional.

# 10 ENFORCING ATTENDANCE

## 10.1 Parenting Orders

Parenting orders are imposed by the Court following conviction for non-attendance alongside a fine and/or a community order. Parents' agreement is not required before an order is made. They may be appropriate where the parent has not engaged in support to improve their child's attendance.

The order requires a parent to comply with the arrangements specified in the order by the Court which can include a requirement for parents to a parenting class. A responsible officer will be named on the order to work with the family as the lead practitioner. If parents do not comply with the order, it can be seen as an offence and a fine can be imposed by the Court.

## 10.2 Education Supervision Orders

Where an early help plan or a parenting contract has not been successful, an application for an [Education Supervision Order](#) (ESO) can be made to provide legal intervention to improve attendance without families being prosecuted. In deciding whether to progress to an ESO, the academy will consult with the local authority and they will agree that support has not been

successful and that making the order would be beneficial for the student and the family. Where safeguarding concerns exist, the lead practitioner will agree with academy's safeguarding lead and children's social care that an ESO would be a more suitable option than a s.17 (Children in Need) or s.47 (Child Protection) plan. If it is decided to apply for an ESO, a meeting will be arranged with the family to notify them and a final decision made.

ESOs are made through the Family or High Court, rather than Magistrates Court. They give the local authority a formal role in advising, helping and directing the student and their family to ensure that the student receives an efficient, full-time, suitable education. For the duration of the ESO, the family's duties to secure the child's education and regular attendance are superseded by a duty to comply with any directions given under the ESO.

The order initially lasts for one year, but extensions can be applied for within the last 3 months for a period of up to 3 years at a time.

Where families persistently fail to comply with the directions given under the ESO, they may be guilty of an offence. Local authorities can prosecute in the Magistrates Court for persistent non-compliance with the Order and parents (upon conviction) will be liable to a fine of up to £1,000. The lead officer should also raise this with children's social care.

### 10.3 Notice to Improve Letters and Penalty Notices

After 10 sessions of unauthorised absence over a 10-week period each academy will make a referral to the Local Authority for statutory action. **The Local Authority may issue a School Attendance: Notice To Improve Letter.** Families would be offered a 6-week period to improve their attendance and engage with support before the LA progress to issuing a penalty notice.

**A Notice to Improve Letter does not need to be issued where support is not appropriate or where parents are deliberately avoiding the above threshold being met.**

**Where it is clear that improvement is not being made, it may be appropriate to issue a penalty notice before the improvement period has ended.**

A penalty notice is a fine which can be issued to each person with parental responsibility for every school-aged child or young person with irregular attendance. **A 'First Action' Penalty Notice will incur a fine of £160, which is reduced to £80 if paid within the first 21 days.** Penalty notice fines are issued by Manchester City Council in accordance with their Penalty Notice Protocol. Failure to pay the penalty in full by the end of the 28-day period may result in prosecution by the Local Authority for failure to ensure regular attendance, according to s444, Education Act 1996.

Further details of the Statutory Action Escalation Pathway can be found in Appendix 5.

Each academy will also request that the LA issue a penalty notice for taking leave of absence in term time without authorisation.

With the exception of unauthorised holidays taken in term time, parents will be sent a formal warning of their liability to receive such a notice before it is issued. A template letter is provided in Appendix 6. These should be sent to families at the end of each week so that families are provided with sufficient notification of the direction of travel in relation to the balance between support and challenge.

## 10.4 Legal proceedings for failing to ensure regular attendance

If a child of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly at a school at which they are registered, or at a place where alternative provision is provided for them, their family may be guilty of an offence and can be prosecuted by the local authority.

Prosecution in the Magistrates Court is the last resort where all other voluntary and formal support or legal intervention has failed or where support has been deemed inappropriate. In all cases, local authorities must fully consider using an ESO before moving forward to prosecution. Where it is decided to pursue prosecution, only local authorities can prosecute families.

Failing to ensure regular school attendance is an offence punishable in the Magistrates' Court with a fine of up to £1000 or in the case of 'aggravated' offences up to £2500 or a term of imprisonment of up to 3 months.

The local authority will make the decision to prosecute but in deciding, the following will be considered:

- The level of engagement from the family and whether prosecution is needed to demonstrate how serious the absence is and to ensure parental engagement with support.
- Whether all other legal interventions have been considered and are not appropriate or have been tried and have not worked.
- Whether statutory children's social care intervention would be more appropriate including a Child in Need or Child Protection Plan.
- The family's response to formal warnings and information provided relating to the absence.

## 11 SUMMARY

Greater Manchester Education Trust will regularly share data and information on attendance to promote high standards amongst its academies. Equally, parents and carers have a duty to ensure that their child attends regularly. The trust is committed to working with families and partner agencies to ensure the highest possible levels of attendance are achieved and to offer help and support to students and their families in order for them to achieve the best possible outcomes from their education.

Each academy within the trust will have guidance procedures which outline the following:

- Local procedures and graduated response to attendance support and challenge
- Scale of escalation
- Correspondence and templates
- Removal from roll procedures

### **The Trust and its Local Academy Committees will:**

- Ensure that the importance and value of good attendance is promoted to pupils and their parents
- Regularly review Attendance and Punctuality Policy and ensure the required resources are available to implement the policy
- Identify a member of the Trust Board to maintain oversight of attendance matters
- Ensure that the Registration Regulations, England, 2013 and other attendance related legislation is complied with

- Agree academy attendance targets annually
- Monitor the academy's attendance through termly reporting at Local Academy Committee Meetings
- Ensure that the official attendance data is reported to external bodies as required and on time
- Ensure that there is a named senior leader for attendance designated as Senior Attendance Champion in each academy who is fully aware of absence procedures and ensures their implementation. The Senior Attendance Champion is also expected to set a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance, establish and maintain effective systems for tackling absence and make sure they are followed by all staff and have a strong grasp of absence data to focus the collective efforts of the school. It is an ongoing responsibility, and the Senior Attendance Champion is also expected to regularly monitor and evaluate progress, including the efficacy of the school's strategies and processes.
- Ensure that the academy has clear systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site
- Ensure that there are implemented procedures for collecting and analysing attendance data and to identify causes and patterns of absence
- Ensure that data is understood and used to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions ensuring that there are aspirational targets for each individual pupil.
- Consider attendance information as part of wider scrutiny relating to other aspects of children's education and associated risks

#### **Senior Leaders will:**

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and parents
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents
- Ensure that there is a whole academy approach which reinforces good attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve
- Monitor the implementation of the Attendance and Punctuality Policy
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the Attendance and Punctuality Policy and adequately trained to address attendance issues
- Ensure that systems to report, record and monitor the attendance and punctuality of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site, are implemented
- Ensure that attendance and punctuality data is collected and analysed frequently to identify causes and patterns
- Interpret the data to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions
- Develop a multi-agency response to improve attendance and support pupils and their families
- Document interventions used to a standard required by the local authority should legal proceedings be instigated

#### **In order to support good attendance parents and carers should:**

- Instill the value of education and regular school attendance within the home environment
- Encourage their child to look to the future and have aspirations
- Contact the academy if their child is absent to let them know the reason why and the expected date of return.
- Avoid unnecessary absences. Wherever possible make appointments outside of school hours
- Ask for help if their child is experiencing difficulties

- Inform the academy of any change in circumstances that may impact on attendance
- Encourage routines and good preparation habits at home
- Avoid taking their child out of school during term-time

## Appendix 1: LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUEST



# Whalley Range 11-18 High School

Academy Headteacher: Mr M. Lea



Whalley Range 11-18 High School, Wilbraham Road, Manchester, M16 8GW  
T: 0161 861 9727 E: head@wrhs1118.co.uk W: www.wrhs1118.co.uk

### LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUEST FORM

Dear Parent/Carer,

The most important factor which determines success at school is attendance. The link between attendance and attainment is firmly established. Those students with the highest levels of attendance have greater access to academic content and therefore achieve stronger qualifications.

We recognise that many of our students have strong links abroad. There are thirteen weeks of school closure each academic year and we feel this is ample time for making family visits. For such visits, we advise all parents/carers to check the Travel Advice from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to establish whether they consider it safe for travel and if any precautions need to be taken ([www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice](http://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice)).

Leave of absence is not generally considered acceptable and will not be authorised unless under exceptional circumstances. I would hope that parents will understand how important their daughter's education is and will therefore will not make any unnecessary requests. All requests will be replied to in writing and authorisation will be to a maximum of 10 days. If a student cannot return on the stated (or agreed) date, you must contact us immediately to explain the delay. Evidence must be supplied in support of any delayed return, such as proof of rescheduled flight tickets.

We request 10 days notice, so requests can be considered and processed, and we advise you not to make travel bookings before receiving a written response. **You must complete all sections of the form which has been attached to this letter.**

If your request is refused (or not received) and you choose to take your daughter out of school for a period of leave without securing prior authorisation, you may be issued with a **Penalty Notice** by the Local Authority. Penalty Notices incur a fine of £160 per parent/carers, per child to be paid within 28 days of the date of issue. This is reduced to £80 if paid within the first 21 days. Failure to pay a Penalty Notice may result in prosecution.

If a student incurs absence of 20 consecutive days or more, her name may be removed from our admission register. This will be done in accordance with the Local Authority's Children Missing Education procedures. I advise you that should your daughter lose her place, you will be required to apply to Manchester City Council's school admissions service for re-admission. However, it is unlikely that she will be re-admitted to Whalley Range 11-18 High School due to the high demand for places.

Please protect your daughter's learning and achievement.

Yours sincerely

**Mr M Lea**  
Academy Headteacher  
Whalley Range 11-18 High School



# Whalley Range 11-18 High School

Academy Headteacher: Mr M. Lea



Whalley Range 11-18 High School, Wilbraham Road, Manchester, M16 8GW  
T: 0161 861 9727 E: head@wrhs1118.co.uk W: www.wrhs1118.co.uk

## DETAILS OF LEAVE BEING REQUESTED:

Name of student: \_\_\_\_\_

Year / Form: \_\_\_\_\_

Destination: \_\_\_\_\_

First day of absence will be: \_\_\_\_\_

My daughter will be returning to Manchester on: \_\_\_\_\_

My daughter will be back in school on: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for travel:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Contact numbers during absence: \_\_\_\_\_

Persons travelling (please list all):

\_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**This form must be returned to the ATTENDANCE OFFICE (Room A0/87) at least 10 days prior to travel. Please add any additional information which may be relevant to your request and explains the exceptional circumstances involved.**

## **Appendix 2: Reporting Absence:**

### **If a student is absent from the academy, families should:**

- contact the academy by 8.30am on the first day of absence by telephone on 01618602999 or by email to [attendance@wrhs1118.co.uk](mailto:attendance@wrhs1118.co.uk) and send any supporting medical evidence to the Attendance Team if the absence is likely to continue.
- maintain contact with the academy every day of absence for safeguarding reasons, ensuring that staff are aware of the reason for absence and the likely date of return.

### **It is a family's responsibility to contact the academy to advise staff of absence to support the safeguarding and welfare of all students.**

AM registration will take place at 8.30am. Once all students are registered for the morning session, the Attendance Team will send an email to the Year Teams enquiring if any absent students have been seen in the academy. Absent students will be coded as N unless a reason for absence has been received.

If a student is not registered in the academy we will:

- Text or email families.
- Make phone calls to contact numbers on SIMS held by the academy.
- Where students are vulnerable, make home visits and contact Social Workers or Early Help support workers.
- Send letters in accordance with the stages of our policy.

Once reasons for absence have been returned, N codes in the register will be changed to the appropriate authorised code or converted to code O to indicate an unauthorised absence or that no reason has been received.

Registration is taken throughout the academy day and always within 10 minutes of the start of the lesson.

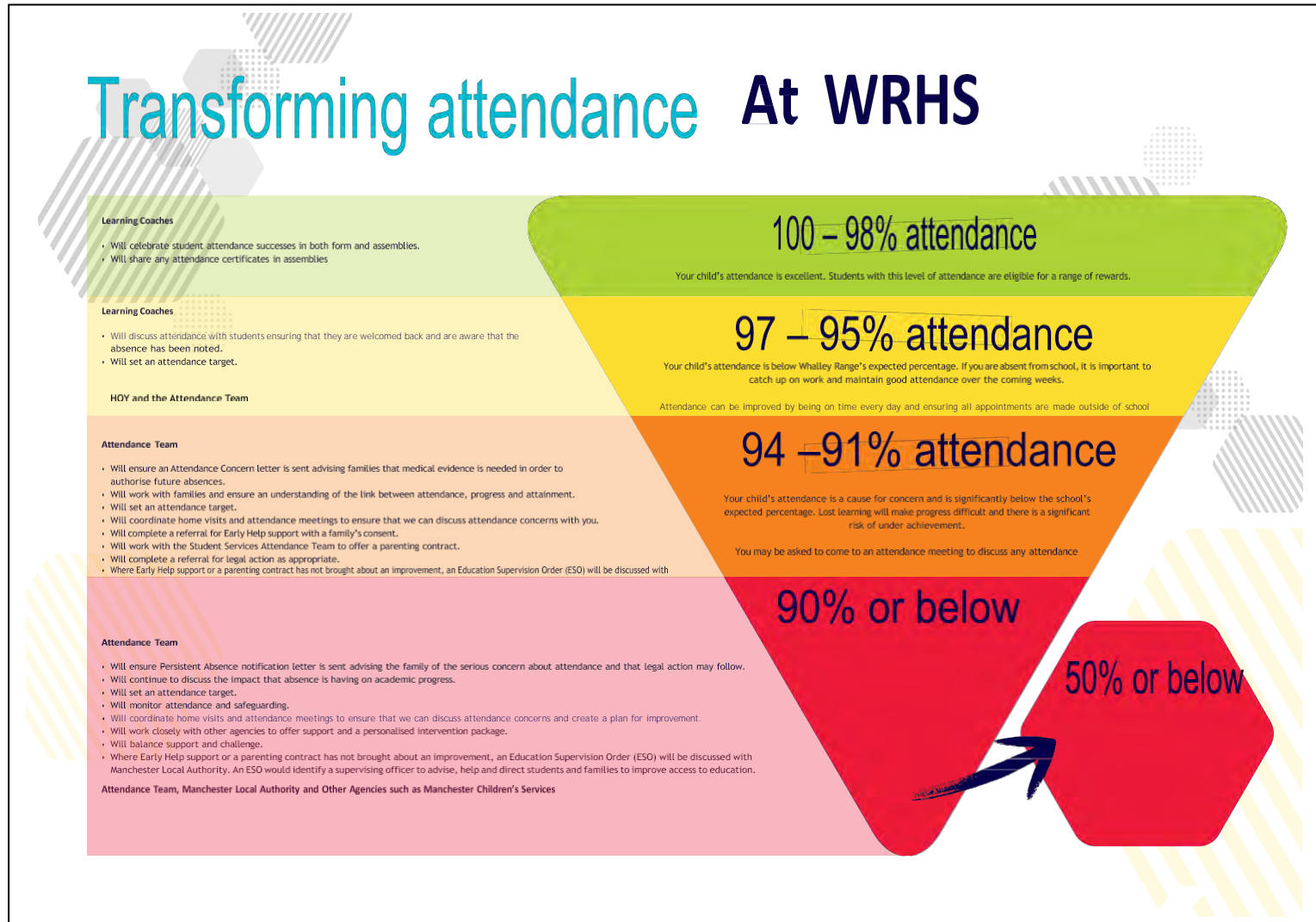
Where absence becomes a concern or no contact is possible with families, interventions will be in accordance with the various stages of our policy and will include:

- Inviting families into the academy for a meeting with Student Services.
- Notifying parents by letter when their child's attendance falls below certain parameters.
- Working closely with families and where consent is given, completing an Early Help Assessment to identify areas for support.
- Completing a parenting contract to agree actions and set targets.
- Make a referral to Manchester City Council for enforcement action.

### **Links to other Policies and documents:**

- Supporting students with medical conditions and administration of medication
- GMET Safeguarding Policy
- [Keeping Children Safe In Education](#)
- [Working Together to Improve Attendance](#)

## Appendix 3: Attendance Triangle



## Appendix 4: Letters

### Letter 1: Declining Attendance

Within our school community, every single child matters and we are committed to a 'Support First' approach to tackling any issues that may arise and to help enable each one to fulfil their potential.

One of the most important factors contributing to academic success is outstanding attendance (98% or above).

Whilst we accept that genuine authorised absences are sometimes unavoidable, even these are not without cost. The link between attendance, progress and examination results is firmly established. Those students who attend less achieve fewer qualifications and are less able to access higher education, employment or training, regardless of the reason for that absence.

I am writing to advise you that «forename»'s school attendance has been in decline for at least 3 consecutive weeks. Her current year-to-date attendance is «percentage\_attendance»%. She currently has «total\_unauthorised\_absences» unauthorised sessions of absence. We hope that bringing this to your attention will result in an improvement.

Sometimes, absence from school can be an indicator of other difficulties and in such circumstances WRHS adheres to a 'support first' approach. You are invited to contact the attendance team to arrange a meeting (or phone consultation) to assess available support strategies. These may include an attendance contract, student mentoring, a parenting course and /or referral to other agencies. Please ring 0161 860 2999 or email [attendance@wrhs1118.co.uk](mailto:attendance@wrhs1118.co.uk) within 1 week of the date of this letter.

The Local Authority also has a team of 'Early Help' workers who can support families with a range of issues. If you feel you would benefit from a conversation around this, you can contact school or visit: [manchester.gov.uk/helpandsupportmanchester](http://manchester.gov.uk/helpandsupportmanchester) to complete an Early Help Assessment form. Early Help is a completely voluntary process.

Yours sincerely,

## Letter 2: Attendance Concerns

Within our school community, every single child matters and we are committed to a 'Support First' approach to tackling any issues that may arise and to help enable each one to fulfil their potential.

One of the most important factors contributing to academic success is regular attendance (98% or above). Therefore, we want to encourage all parents and carers to make sure their child attends school on every possible day. Regular and punctual attendance will establish good habits for the future.

«forename»'s has recorded «total\_authorized\_absences» session of authorised absence and «total\_unauthorised\_absences» sessions of unauthorised absence. Her current attendance is «percentage\_attendance»% which is a cause for concern. As such, future absence will not be authorised unless supported by medical evidence, for example a prescription, appointment card or hospital referral letter.

We will continue to monitor «forename»'s attendance and hope that bringing this to your attention will result in an improvement.

Sometimes, absence from school can be an indicator of other difficulties and in such circumstances WRHS adheres to a 'Support First' approach. You are invited to contact the attendance team to arrange a meeting to assess available support strategies. These may include an attendance contract, student mentoring, a parenting course and /or referral to other agencies. Please email [attendance@wrhs1118.co.uk](mailto:attendance@wrhs1118.co.uk)

The Local Authority also has a team of 'Early Help' workers who can support families with a range of issues. If you feel you would benefit from a conversation around this, you can contact school or visit: [manchester.gov.uk/helpandsupportmanchester](http://manchester.gov.uk/helpandsupportmanchester) to complete an Early Help Assessment form. Early Help is a completely voluntary process.

You can contact the Attendance Team on 0161 860 2999 or email [attendance@wrhs1118.co.uk](mailto:attendance@wrhs1118.co.uk)

Yours sincerely,

### **Letter 3: Meeting Invitation (Attendance contract / Improvement plan)**

Within our school community, every single child matters and we are committed to a 'Support First' approach to tackling any issues that may arise and to help enable each one to fulfil their potential.

On reviewing «forename»'s attendance record we have identified an issue with her rate of absence. Her current year-to-date attendance is «percentage\_attendance»% and she has «total\_unauthorised\_absences» sessions of unauthorised absence. As such, we would like you to attend a meeting in school to establish an Attendance Improvement Plan which will include a Home-School contract with clear targets and support measures.

Issues are best addressed by open and honest communication between home and school, so it is essential that you engage with this process to ensure your daughter's needs are being met with the correct support. The meeting will allow us to discuss any support that your daughter / family may require, such as a voluntary Early Help Assessment or referral to other support services.

Your appointment has been scheduled for (insert Time and Date). Please report to the main visitor reception at the front of school on arrival. You are free to bring a friend or support worker with you but please let us know if you intend to do this so we can ensure a suitable meeting room is arranged.

If you would like to discuss this letter or re-arrange your appointment, please do not hesitate to contact me on 0161 860 2999 or via email at [attendance@wrhs1118.co.uk](mailto:attendance@wrhs1118.co.uk)

Yours sincerely,

## Letter 4: Persistent Absence

Within our school community, every single child matters and we are committed to a 'Support First' approach to tackling any issues that may arise and to help enable each one to fulfil their potential.

Without question, the most important factor which determines success at school is attendance. The link between attendance and attainment is firmly established. Those students with the highest levels of attendance have greater access to academic content and in turn achieve stronger qualifications. This enables these students to access their chosen pathways when it comes to higher education, employment, or training.

Any student with an attendance of 90% or below is categorised as a Persistent Absentee by the Department for Education, regardless of the reason for this. We have an obligation to notify our Local Authority of all students who fall into this category and if the absence is unauthorised (10 or more sessions in a 10-week period) this could result in legal action against you.

«forename»'s current year to date attendance is «percentage\_attendance»%. She has recorded «total\_unauthorised\_absences» unauthorised sessions and «total\_authorised\_absences» authorised sessions of absence. Details are provided on the attached registration certificate.

As your daughter's attendance has dropped below 90%, we request that you provide medical evidence before we consider authorising any future absences. Please refer to the enclosed 'Attendance Matters' leaflet for further details on medical evidence and use of penalty notices.

Sometimes, absence from school can be an indicator of other difficulties and in such circumstances WRHS adheres to a 'support first' approach. You are invited to contact the attendance team to arrange a meeting to assess available support strategies. These may include an attendance contract, student mentoring, a parenting course and /or referral to other agencies. Please ring 0161 860 2999 or email [attendance@wrhs1118.co.uk](mailto:attendance@wrhs1118.co.uk)

The Local Authority also has a team of 'Early Help' workers who can support families with a range of issues. If you feel you would benefit from a conversation around this, you can contact school or visit: [manchester.gov.uk/helpandsupportmanchester](http://manchester.gov.uk/helpandsupportmanchester) to complete an Early Help Assessment form. Early Help is a completely voluntary process.

Yours sincerely,

## Letter 5: Statutory warning

Under the Education Act 1996, as a parent/carer of a child of compulsory school age, registered at a school, it is your responsibility to ensure they attend regularly. Failure to comply may result in legal action. In the first instance, this is usually in the form of a penalty notice to each parent of £160, (reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days and no previous fine has been issued in the last 3 years). The maximum penalty is up to £2,500 and/or imprisonment for up to 3 months. We are required to keep a record of all our contacts and attempted contacts and this information may be used in evidence.

Penalty notice fines may apply for 10 sessions (or 5 days) of unauthorised absence, in a 10-week period. «forename» has currently recorded «total\_unauthorised\_absences» sessions of unauthorised absence. Her current attendance is «percentage\_attendance»% which is a cause for concern. Future absence may not be authorised unless supported by medical evidence.

We will continue to monitor «forename»'s attendance and hope that bringing this to your attention will result in an improvement.

Sometimes, absence from school can be an indicator of other difficulties and in such circumstances WRHS adheres to a 'Support First' approach. You are invited to contact the attendance team to arrange a meeting to assess available support strategies. These may include an attendance contract, student mentoring, a parenting course and /or referral to other agencies. Please ring 0161 860 2999 or email [attendance@wrhs1118.co.uk](mailto:attendance@wrhs1118.co.uk)

The Local Authority also has a team of 'Early Help' workers who can support families with a range of issues. If you feel you would benefit from a conversation around this, you can contact school or visit: [manchester.gov.uk/helpandsupportmanchester](http://manchester.gov.uk/helpandsupportmanchester) to complete an Early Help Assessment form. Early Help is a completely voluntary process.

Yours sincerely,

## Letter 6: Leave of Absence Decline

Thank you for your application to take «forename» out of school during term time which has been carefully considered.

As a school we may only authorise absence for exceptional and unavoidable circumstances. Outside of this, we require «forename» to be in school every day in order to make full use of the learning opportunities open to her. Your request has been declined as there is insufficient evidence to support exceptional and unavoidable cause on the dates requested.

If you take your daughter out of school without permission, then the absences will be recorded as unauthorised in the school register. As a result, the Local Authority may issue you with a penalty notice upon your return. Penalty notices incur a charge of £160 to be paid within 28 days of being served, reduced to £80 if paid within the first 21 days, for a first offence. If a second PN is issued within a 3-year period, there will be no option to pay the lower amount. Notices are issued to each responsible parent for each child and failure to pay may result in prosecution. Any subsequent offences within 3 years would result in a prosecution, with no option to pay a Penalty Notice.

Additionally, you should also be aware that if «forename»'s absence exceeds 20 school days, her name may be removed from our admission register and the place be offered to another student from our waiting list. Any such action will be taken in accordance with the City Council's protocols.

Should «forename» lose her place here you will be required to apply to the Local Authority for readmission to a Manchester school. It is unlikely that «forename» will be readmitted to Whalley Range 11-18 High School due to the current high demand for places.

Sometimes, absence from school can be an indicator of other difficulties and in such circumstances WRHS adheres to a 'support first' approach. You are invited to contact the attendance team to arrange a meeting to assess available support strategies. These may include an attendance contract, student mentoring, a parenting course and /or referral to other agencies.

To contact the Attendance Team ring 0161 860 2999 or email [attendance@wrhs1118.co.uk](mailto:attendance@wrhs1118.co.uk)

The Local Authority also has a team of 'Early Help' workers who can support families with a range of issues. If you feel you would benefit from a conversation around this, you can contact school or visit: [manchester.gov.uk/helpandsupportmanchester](http://manchester.gov.uk/helpandsupportmanchester) to complete an Early Help Assessment form. Early Help is a completely voluntary process.

Yours sincerely,

## Letter 7: Punctuality Concern

We are writing to highlight that «forename»'s punctuality to school is currently below expectation.

This academic year, she has arrived late to school «total\_lates\_both» times. «total\_lates\_before» times before close of registration (ie. between 8:30am - 9am) and «total\_lates\_after» times after close of registration.

«chosen\_forename» should be on school premises no later than 8:20am to ensure she can be present in her form room when lessons start at 8:30am. Students that arrive to form after 8:30am are required to attend a social time detention at first break.

Being on time is the product of proper planning, personal discipline and a respect for other people's time. It also reflects a strong work ethic. It is essential your daughter develops this habit as there is such a very clear link between punctual attendance and attainment. By arriving late, she will miss key messages and explanations at the start of the day.

We will be monitoring «forename»'s progress in the coming weeks and thank you in anticipation of your co-operation in addressing this matter. To help you in this, we have highlighted some top tips on the reverse of this letter.

A copy of «forename»'s attendance certificate and minutes late report are available upon request. If you would like to respond please contact us on 0161 860 2999 or via email at [attendance@wrhs1118.co.uk](mailto:attendance@wrhs1118.co.uk)

Yours sincerely,

# Statutory Action Escalation Pathway



1 Support First	2 Notice to Improve	3 First Action (£80)	4 Second Action (£160)	5 Final Action
<p>Manchester adopts a 'support first' based approach.</p> <p>All families should be offered support to break down in-school and out-of-school barriers to attendance in line with Manchester's Graduated Approach.</p> <p>At Whalley Range 11 to 18 High School this offer will include our Transforming Attendance Family Guide, Attendance Letters, telephone calls, home visits, Head of Learning, Director of Learning &amp; Attendance Team Meetings, Early Help, Parenting Contracts and other interventions as appropriate.</p> <p>If your child has been experiencing any problems that may be affecting their attendance or punctuality, then please contact the school on 0161 860 2999 to discuss the support that can be provided in partnership with you so that we can work together to improve attendance.</p>	<p><u>Sporadic Absence:</u> Issued for 10 sessions of unauthorised absence over a 10-week period. Families are offered a 6-week period to improve their attendance and engage with support.</p> <p><b>A Notice to Improve does not need to be issued where support is not appropriate or where parents are deliberately avoiding the above threshold being met.</b></p> <p><b>Where it is clear that improvement is not being made, it may be appropriate to issue a penalty notice before the improvement period has ended.</b></p> <p><u>Holidays</u> Not used for unauthorised holidays taken in term time.</p>	<p><u>Sporadic Absence:</u> Issued for 10 sessions of unauthorised absence over a 10-week period.</p> <p><u>Holidays</u> Issued for a first unauthorised holiday taken in term time.</p> <p><b>PENALTY:</b> £80 per pupil, per parent if paid within 21 days. £160 up to 28 days.</p> <p><b>If unpaid within 28 days, it will proceed to court.</b></p>	<p><u>Sporadic Absence:</u> Issued for second period of 10 sessions missed over a 10-week period within a 3-year rolling time frame.</p> <p><u>Holidays</u> Issued for a second unauthorised holiday taken in term time over a 3- year period.</p> <p><b>PENALTY:</b> £160 per pupil, per parent.</p> <p><b>If unpaid within 28 days will proceed to court.</b></p>	<p>A weekly panel will meet to decide appropriate next steps for pupils who reach this stage of the escalation pathway.</p> <p>Options include:  <b>PACE Face to Face</b>  <b>PACE by Post</b>  <b>Direct Prosecution Section1</b>  <b>Direct Prosecution Section 1a</b>  <b>Formal Caution</b>  <b>No Further Action</b></p> <p>Pupils coming into this stage of the pathway for a second or multiple times will be taken to multi-agency panels such as Early Help Allocations or Advice &amp; Guidance</p>



## Appendix 7: Attendance Coding

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
<b>Attending at a place other than at school</b>		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registration	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
<b>Absent – approved leave of absence</b>		
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
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
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
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 school
<b>Absent – other authorised reasons</b>		
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
<b>Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause</b>		
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	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
<b>Absent – unauthorised absence</b>		
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 (must be cleared at least weekly)
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
<b>Administrative codes</b>		
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