Inclusion is at the
heart of our trust

Attendance Policy

Special and Alternative Provision Phase

Oak
Learning Partnership

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1	November 2025	O Langley-Sadler/R. Carney	New Policy to cover all trust special and alternative provision schools
2	Oct 26	O Langley-Sadler/R. Carney	Updated to reflect latest guidance. Formatting updated. No substantial changes.
2.1	October 26	R Carney	Inclusion of privacy notices, relevant data protection legislation and principles, removal of references to Registration Regulations (England) 2013, Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026 and clarification about EHE requests. Section 4.3 includes clarifications regarding when medical evidence may be required and includes the provision of welfare home visits. Section 4.4 includes circumstances under which home visits may be undertaken for planned absences. Section 5.5 clarification that the triage meeting will include prioritisation for home visits based on vulnerabilities. Appendix 6 updated to better align with policy, removing medical evidence request for illness absence on day 3 and includes home visits where concern indicators are met.

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1. Aims

The following attendance policy has been created to support our schools and their families and local community and explains the rationale and the systems that work in our schools every day, to ensure our pupils are in school learning, and if not in school, that they are safe.

Oak Learning Partnership (OLP) and it schools have a duty to promote full attendance and give a high priority to conveying to families and pupils the importance of regular and punctual

attendance. OLP is committed to the continuous raising of achievement of all our pupils. Regular attendance is essential if our pupils are to be successful and benefit from the opportunities offered to them.

Consistent attendance is fundamental to a successful and fulfilling school experience. We actively promote 100% attendance for all our pupils, and we use a variety of weekly, termly and annual awards to promote good attendance and punctuality.

We recognise that parents and carers have a vital role to play and there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems that can be used whenever there is concern about attendance. If there are problems which affect a pupil's attendance we will strive, in partnership with the family and pupil, to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible. We will always adopt a clearly focused but sympathetic approach, aimed at always returning pupils to full attendance.

We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children and celebrate this in assemblies and at rewards events, with all pupils being recognised for this super achievement each half term. We also celebrate with the pupils who have above 90% attendance, which is above the national average for special school/alternative provision attendance as well as celebrating any improvement of attendance from a pupil's starting point.

Our Attendance Bands are as follows and are in line with the DFE Banding Attendance System:

97%-100%	**Band 1**	**Expect**
95%-96.9%	**Band 2**	**Monitor**
93%-94.9%	**Band 3**	**Early Intervention**
90% -92.9%	**Band 4**	**Facilitate Support**
50%-89.9%	**Band 5**	**Persistent Absence (PA)**
50% and below	**Band 6**	**Serious Absence (SA)**

We recognise that some pupils cannot achieve 100% attendance, and we understand this, particularly when families communicate with us effectively and share information. We consistently celebrate improvement and where a pupil has made a considerable progress in improving their percentage of attendance.

Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils, and their parents or carers, the importance of regular and punctual attendance, through letters, emails, the web site, telephone and text messages.

The banding system improves attendance by:

1. **Early Identification of Risk**
   Pupils don't need to be under 90% (Persistent Absentee) to trigger concern. Even dropping into 'Band 2' can alert staff to emerging issues before they get worse.

2. **Targeted Interventions**
   Each band can be linked to **specific strategies or actions**:
   - Band 3: Parent contact, light-touch support if needed.
   - Band 4: Parent Meetings/Pastoral Support.

- Band 5: Attendance contracts, mentoring.
- Band 6: Intensive support, referrals to external agencies.

3. Regular Monitoring

The bands allow **daily, weekly, or termly tracking**, so schools can see if pupils are moving up (improving) or down (declining) and act accordingly.

4. Visual & Accessible

The color-coded format is simple and helps teachers, parents, and pupils understand where they stand.

5. Whole School Culture

Encourages **supportive attendance practices**. We have embedded it in school improvement plans, reward systems, and parental communication.

Examples of interventions by band - please see the full graduated approach for exact interventions.

Band	Intervention Type	Examples of Actions
Band 1	Expect	Form tutor check-ins with parents/carers, general encouragement
Band 2	Monitor	Form tutor check-ins with parents/carers, general encouragement
Band 3	Early Intervention	Phone call home, informal parent meeting – attendance improvement support plan, pupil conversation, tutor mentoring
Band 4	Facilitate Support	Pastoral phone call home, formal parent meeting, pupil conversation, pastoral mentoring
Band 5	Formalise Support	Formal meeting, attendance improvement plan, led by pastoral support
Band 6	Enforce	Local Authority referral, safeguarding review, multi-agency support, formal attendance contract

Monitor your school attendance: how to use the absence bandings report - GOV.UK

School attendance is subject to various education laws (refer to section 2) and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education.

Each year OLP will examine its attendance figures and set attendance/absence targets. These will reflect both national and local attendance targets. OLP will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals, working with Local Authorities and other stakeholders to ensure that it is achieving its set goals.

Our Attendance Policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is a strand that runs through all aspects of school improvement, supported by our policies on safeguarding, bullying, behaviour and SEN.

For the purpose of this policy;

- Expected school attendance is above 97% for everyone
- Safeguarding is defined as:

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

(KCSIE 2026)

Children Missing Education is defined as:

Children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school.

CME includes children who:

- are in the process of applying for a school place
- have been offered a school place for a future date but have not yet started
- are receiving elective home education (EHE) that has been assessed as unsuitable
- have been recorded as CME for an extended period, for example where their whereabouts is unclear or unknown

(Children missing education: statutory guidance for local authorities and schools Sept 2025/CME OLP Trust Policy)

1.1 Principles

OLP Schools will ensure that:

- All staff are aware of the registration procedures when necessary and receive in-service training about attendance and punctuality regulations and education law.
- Staff complete registers accurately, at the beginning of each morning and during the afternoon session.
- We communicate to parents/carers the importance of contacting staff early on the first and any subsequent days of absence.
- We display attendance rates in our newsletter and reward good or improved behaviour for pupils.
- We promote positive staff attitudes to pupils returning after absence.
  We consult with all members of the school's community and the Attendance Officer/Pastoral Team in developing and maintaining the whole school attendance policy.
- We ensure regular evaluation of attendance procedures by senior leaders, who will report to school governors.
- We work towards ensuring that all pupils feel supported and valued. We will send a clear message that, if a pupil is absent, they will be missed.
- We monitor and investigate any patterns of lateness or absence.
- We celebrate excellent and improved school attendance.
- We work collaboratively with the LA Attendance support officer

2.Legislation, guidance and linked policies

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) 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 3 of the Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006
- School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance (Department for Education, July 2026)
- Children Missing Education: Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities and Schools
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
- School Census Guidance
- Mental Health Issues Affecting a Pupil's Attendance: Guidance for Schools
- Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions
- Arranging Education for Children Who Cannot Attend School Because of Health Needs
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026
- Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from Maintained Schools, Academies and Pupil Referral Units in England, Including Pupil Movement (DfE statutory guidance)
- UK GDPR
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Data (Use and Access) Act 2025
- Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Children Missing Education Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour for Learning Policy
- Medical Conditions Policy
- Alternative Provision Policy inc. Part time timetables.
- Allergies and Anaphylaxis Policy
- Privacy notices (Pupils and Parents)

Data Protection and Information Sharing

The Trust and its schools will collect, process, store and share attendance information in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018, Data (Use and Access) Act 2025, and relevant statutory requirements and DfE guidance.

Personal information relating to attendance will be processed lawfully, fairly and transparently and only for legitimate purposes, including the management and improvement of attendance, fulfilment of the Trust's and schools' statutory duties, and the safeguarding and welfare of children.

Attendance information may be shared with the Department for Education, local authorities and other relevant agencies where there is a lawful basis to do so. Where attendance information includes special-category personal data, the appropriate lawful basis and additional condition for processing will be identified and applied.

Attendance information will be managed securely and in accordance with the Trust's data protection, information security, privacy and records-retention arrangements.

3.Roles and responsibilities

Improved school attendance can only be achieved if it is viewed as a shared responsibility of all staff, governors, parents / carers, pupils and the wider school community.

3.1 The Trustees, Executive Leadership Team and Local Governance Committee (LGC) will:

- Monitor the implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures.
- Ensure that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- Handle complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the Complaints Procedures Policy.
- Have regard to 'Keeping children safe in education 2025 (KCSIE)' when deciding to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Ensuring there is a Children Missing Education Policy in place and that this is regularly reviewed and updated.

3.2 The Headteacher will:

- Oversee the day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures.
- Ensure all parents are aware of attendance expectations and procedures.
- Ensure that every pupil has access to full-time education and will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence.
- Ensure that there is a named senior leader to lead on attendance and allocate sufficient time and resource.

3.3 The Headteacher will (or may delegate these responsibilities to a senior leader):

Promote excellent attendance and punctuality for our pupils by:

- Agreeing school attendance targets.
- Developing and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance.
- Monitoring attendance and related issues through timely reporting at LGC Meetings.

- Ensuring that attendance data is reported to the Local Authority or Department for Education as required.
- Ensuring that the school has clear systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site.
- Ensuring that attendance registers are accurately completed by teaching staff.
- Ensuring that there are procedures for collecting and analysing attendance data frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence.
- Ensuring that data is understood and used to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.
- Ensuring that there is a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance. For example, good teaching and learning experiences that encourage pupils to attend and achieve.
- Monitoring the implementation of the Attendance Policy and ensure that the policy is reviewed regularly.
- Ensuring that staff are aware of the Attendance Policy and are able to address attendance issues in a knowledge and confident manner.
- Ensuring that the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and other attendance related legislation is complied with.
- Ensuring that all the above priorities are shared with and reinforced by all relevant school staff.
- Developing a multi-agency response to improve attendance and support pupils and their families.
- Using the standard documents to support a move to legal proceedings should that be necessary.
- Ensuring that systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site are implemented.
- Ensuring that daily attendance data is shared with the DFE under the guidance set out in DFE (2024) https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2024/208 Effective from 19th August 2024.
- Ensuring each school will have a designated senior leader responsible for attendance outlined in their Operational Attendance Strategy.
- Ensuring that any part-time timetables are thoughtfully considered, risk assessed and reviewed with parents and carers, at least 6 weekly in line with Alternative Provision Policy.
- Ensuring, where possible, child voice is considered when reviewing part-time timetables.
- Ensuring that there are clear expectations on the daily reporting of attendance between any alternative provisions and the school attendance team aligning with school registration periods.

3.4 The Attendance Officer/Pastoral Leaders will:

- Monitor Attendance Data within the school and individual pupil level.
- Assist in meeting agreed targets and outcomes as defined by the school.
- Identify those children in need of support by reason of their absence from school.
- Assist in safeguarding pupils through working in partnership with other agencies.
- Arrange and attend meetings as appropriate.
- Assess need, plan interventions and implement effective actions to support pupils and their parents/carers to improve pupil attendance to the school.

- Undertake home visits as part of ongoing work to engage parents/carers working together to support pupils.
- Attend and contribute to inclusion and attendance meetings and develop plans to support pupils with attendance related difficulties.
- Prepare reports and appropriate evidence as required, acting as a witness in the magistrate's court if required.
- Monitor Attendance Data within the school and individual pupil level.
- Ensure that social workers of children subject to a child protection plan and those with a youth worker are informed of daily absences.
- Work with the DSL to ensure that attendance data is shared at children's multi-agency meetings and EHCP reviews so that effective multi-agency support can be considered.
- Work with the Virtual School to address and monitor attendance of out of borough children that are looked after to collaborate a quick resolution to maintain 'eyes on' or move 'home' authority.
- Report concerns about attendance to the Head teacher/Senior Leader in charge.
- Work with senior leaders to tackle persistent absence
- Arrange calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues as identified by senior leaders.
- Advise the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices in conjunction with the senior leaders in charge of attendance.
- Conduct daily processes to follow up absence.
- The school is responsible for informing the LA of any pupil being deleted from the admission and attendance registers if they:

    - Are electively home educated*
    - No longer live within a reasonable distance of the registered school.
    - Have an authorised medical note.
    - Are in custody for a period of more than four months and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning.
    - Have been permanently excluded.
    - Have moved to another school.

* **Elective Home Education (EHE)**

Where a parent notifies the school that they intend to withdraw their child from school for the purpose of elective home education, the school will notify the local authority in whose area the school is located and, where different, the local authority responsible for the child, in accordance with the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026.

Where the child meets the statutory definition of a "relevant child", including certain children placed at special schools through local authority arrangements and children in specified safeguarding circumstances, the parent must obtain the consent of the relevant local authority before withdrawing the child for elective home education.

3.6 The Pastoral Team will:

Pastoral Teams have the overview of the attendance for their cohorts and work with families where attendance and punctuality are an issue, and they need support. Pastoral Teams work in partnership with the Form Tutor to track attendance. They will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents / carers.
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents.
- Work with each identified pupil and their parents to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in school barriers to attendance.
- Invite families for meeting or where necessary conduct a home visit to discuss attendance or punctuality.
- Ensure that attendance data is collected and analysed frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence.
- Interpret the data to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.

3.7 Form Tutors will:

- Record attendance daily, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the schools MIS and attendance office when appropriate.
- Be responsible for monitoring the daily attendance of their form.
- Reward and promote good attendance.
- Be tenacious in promoting their form class's attendance including pursuit of reasons for absence and understanding patterns of absence, working with Pupils, families, pastoral teams and senior leaders.
- Raising concerns with the DSL/DDSL if they are concerned that a child's low attendance or absence is an indicator of a safeguarding concern.

3.8 All Staff will:

- Follow this policy and ensure pupils do so too.
- Ensure this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Model good attendance behaviour.
- Use their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.
- Where designated, take the attendance register at the relevant times during the day.
- Make pupils feel welcome on the return from absence. This should include ensuring that the pupil is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other pupils.
- Be alert to the potential need to implement early help for a pupil who is frequently missing/goes missing from care or home.
- Will be aware of unauthorised absence and children missing from education procedures.
- Any concerns that a child may be missing education, should be reported to the DSL without delay.

3.9 Parents and Carers will be asked to:

- Talk to their child about school and education.
- Take a positive interest in their child's work and educational progress.
- Instil the value of education and regular school attendance within the home environment.
- Encourage their child to look to the future, plan ahead and aspire to be the best they can be.

- Be open and honest about issues affecting their child's attendance to enable the school to offer the correct support.
- Understand that headteachers must follow the statutory guidance in addressing attendance concerns.

3.10 Parents are responsible for:

- Contacting school by 8.40am but before the start of the school day if their child is absent to let them know the reason why and the expected date of return.
- Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.
- Providing school with more than one emergency contact number.
- Updating school if their details change.
- The attendance of their children at school.
- Promoting good attendance with their children.
- Avoiding unnecessary absences.
- Wherever possible making appointments for the doctors, dentists etc. outside of school hours.
- Asking school for help if their child is experiencing difficulties, as soon as you realise there may be an issue.
- Informing school of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance.
- Encouraging routine at home, for example, bedtimes, homework, preparing school bag and uniform the evening before.
- Not keeping their child off school to go shopping, to help at home or to look after other members of the family.
- Avoiding taking their child out of school during term-time, where this is unavoidable, and only in exceptional circumstances send a written leave request to the Headteacher in good time.

3.11 Pupils are responsible for:

- Attending their lessons and any agreed activities when at school.
- Arriving punctually to lessons when at school.
- Pupils will be expected to attend school every day they are required to be at school.
- Schools will also expect all pupils to attend lessons punctually.
- Communicating any concerns related to attendance and absence as soon as possible to the relevant member of staff.

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

Staff will take the attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. All staff must register classes/individuals whilst logged into their individual log in. They 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 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
- 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 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

4.2 School Timings

- The register for the first session will be taken from **8.50am** in form time.
- Pupils arriving after **9am** will be marked as present but arriving **late (L) unless there is a reasonable adjustment in place.**
- School registers will close at ***9.30am** and pupils arriving after the close of register will be recorded as **late (U).** This will not be authorised and will count as an absence for that school session and statutory action may be taken where appropriate.
- On arrival after the close of register, pupils must immediately report to their allocated member of staff who will ensure they are signed in to ensure that we can be responsible for them whilst they are in school.
- The absence will only be authorised if a satisfactory explanation for the late arrival can be provided, for example, attendance at a medical appointment or it is a reasonable adjustment to their timetable. The absence will be recorded as unauthorised if the pupil has arrived late without justifiable cause.
- The register for the second session will be taken in first afternoon lesson and **will be kept open 30 minutes after that time.** The absence will be recorded as unauthorised if the pupil has arrived late without justifiable cause.

* See schools' First Day Absence Protocols for school specific times **Appendix 2.** Also referring to **Appendix 9-12 Band 2 interventions where relevant.**

4.3 Unplanned absence

Parents or carers should notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence, for example where their child is unable to attend due to ill health. Notification should be provided

by 8.40am, or before the start of the school day, using the school's agreed absence-reporting arrangements.

Parents or carers may contact the school by telephoning Main Reception or by calling or emailing the Pastoral Team. Where an absence notification is received by email, the Pastoral Team may contact the parent or carer to verify the information provided.

Where information about an absence is received indirectly, for example through the school or college transport team or another pupil, the school will contact the parent or carer directly to confirm the reason for absence.

Absence due to physical or mental ill health will normally be authorised. The school will not routinely request medical evidence. However, where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of an illness, or where a pupil has prolonged or repeated absences due to ill health and further information would assist the school in understanding and supporting their needs, the school may seek reasonable evidence from the parent or carer.

Any evidence requested will be reasonable and proportionate to the individual circumstances. The school will consider the information available and will not place unnecessary demands on families to obtain medical evidence, however, headteachers reserve the right to request reasonable medical evidence where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of an illness, or where a pupil is experiencing prolonged or repeated absence due to ill health and further information would assist the school in understanding the pupil's needs, identifying appropriate support and considering any reasonable adjustments that may be required.

Where a pupil experiences attendance difficulties associated with physical or mental ill health, SEND or disability, the school will work with the pupil, parents or carers and, where appropriate, relevant professionals to understand the barriers to attendance and identify appropriate support. The school will have due regard to its duties under the Equality Act 2010, including the Public Sector Equality Duty and the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils.

Where the school has genuine and reasonable grounds to doubt that an absence was due to illness and is not satisfied by the information or evidence provided, the absence may be recorded as unauthorised. Any decision will take account of the individual circumstances of the pupil, including any known medical needs, disability, SEND or mental health needs, and the school will consider whether additional support or reasonable adjustments are required. Parents or carers should be informed where attendance is being recorded as unauthorised. The school reserves the right to undertake welfare home visits for illness/medical absences.

4.4 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil’s parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment. This should be done by contacting the school Pastoral Team.

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

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

Where the absence exceeds 5 days such as following a medical procedure, it is usual practice for the school to arrange regular home visits to conduct a welfare check and to identify if there are any educational or other support needs which will assist the pupils' reintegration. In exceptional circumstances this may be conducted virtually.

4.5 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.

The Pastoral Team will monitor number of lates to school and will report this number to Pastoral Leaders weekly.

Follow up parental phone calls, meetings and punctuality reports may be put in place to support pupils with continued punctuality issues.

4.6. Absconding/Missing from lessons

Pupils will not be permitted to leave school premises during the day unless they have permission from the school and parents. The following procedures will be taken in the event of a pupil going missing whilst at school:

- The member of staff who has noticed the missing pupil will inform the Headteacher (or Deputy Headteacher in their absence) immediately.
- The office staff will also be informed as they will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search.
- A member of staff will stay with the rest of the class, and all other available members of staff will conduct a thorough search of the school premises as directed by the headteacher. Radios may be used to aid communication, though should be used discreetly.
- The following areas will be systematically searched:
    - All classrooms/learning spaces
    - All toilets
    - Changing rooms
      Any outbuildings
    - The school grounds
- Available staff will begin a search of the area immediately outside of the school premises and will take a mobile phone with them so they can be contacted. CCTV may be checked.
- Staff should not go beyond the community boundary if the child is not in sight. **Each headteacher will communicate to their staff team where the community boundary is.**

- If the pupil has not been found after **30 minutes**, then the parents of the pupil will be notified.
- The school will attempt to contact parents using the emergency contact numbers provided.
- If the parents have had no contact from the pupil, and the emergency contacts list has been exhausted, the police will be contacted.
- If the child is located outside of the school, staff MUST NOT give chase to any pupil as this is likely to increase the likelihood of an accident or injury to the child, member of staff or members of the public.
- If the missing pupil has an allocated social worker, is a looked-after child, or has any SEND, then the appropriate personnel will be informed.
- When the pupil has been located, members of staff will care for and talk to the pupil to ensure they are safe and well.
- Parents and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the pupil has been located.
- A record of the missing episode will be made on CPOMS. A significant incident de-brief will take place to review the circumstances of the missing episode, any contributing factors, and any actions which may need to follow such as additional support, sanction or a change of procedures.
- The headteacher or delegated senior leader will chair the de-brief. A written report will be produced, and policies and procedures will be reviewed in accordance with the outcome where necessary. De-brief reports will be shared with the parent/carer and may be shared with social worker if relevant.
- The headteacher will take the appropriate action to ensure that pupils understand they must not leave the premises, and sanctions will be issued if deemed necessary. Appropriate disciplinary procedures will be followed in accordance with the Behaviour for Learning Policy.

4.7 Following up on 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 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, the school will send an automated text message. All pupils will receive a home visit on first day of an unexplained absence and social worker (if applicable) will be informed via telephone, email or text message, if no contact can be made.
- 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 on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving the LA's Attendance Officer.
- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the pupil's Youth Offending Team officer.

- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance.
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals and inform agencies involved who may be able to support in addressing barriers to attendance.
- Request police welfare check where there are safeguarding concerns or additional vulnerabilities e.g. the child has significant SEND barriers and may not be able to seek help in the absence of a parent/carer, where there is a history of child protection concerns such as domestic abuse.
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with the school may issue a notice to improve, penalty notice, or other legal intervention (see 6.3 below), as appropriate.
- Where CME is suspected, follow the CME OLP Trust Policy.

4.8 Reporting to parents

The Trust expect each of our schools to report attendance to parents' weekly, termly and annually.

4.9 Deletions from the Register

In accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, pupils can be deleted from the register when one of the following circumstances applies:

- The pupil has ceased to be of compulsory school age.
- Permanent exclusion has occurred, and procedures have been completed.
- Transfer between schools.
- Pupil withdrawn to be educated outside the school system.
- Failure to return from an extended holiday after the school has tried to locate the pupil.
- A medical condition prevents attendance and returns to school before ending compulsory school-age.
- In custody for more than four months.
- 20 days continuous unauthorised absence and the school has tried to locate the pupil.
- Left the school but not known where he/she has gone after the school has tried to locate the pupil.
- Death of a pupil

5. Attendance Monitoring

5.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) daily through analysis of daily, 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 on request.

The school has granted the DFE access to its management information system so the data can be accessed regularly and securely.

Data will be collected each term and published 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 the governing board.

5.2 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.

5.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school 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. See **Appendix 3 and 4** Oak LP Graduated Approach/Checklists
- Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severed absence, and their families (see section 5.4 below).
- Provide regular attendance reports to form tutors, Pastoral teams and SLT, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinator, designated safeguarding lead and pupil premium lead).
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place 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.

5.4 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 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 6.3 above).

5.5 Attendance Meetings

A – Attendance Triage Meetings:

These meetings happen daily with SLT and/or Pastoral Team members to cross reference daily attendance figures for all school and different pathways, alongside which Pupils are not present. Pupils who are receiving a home visit will be prioritised within this meeting based on their level of vulnerability, safeguarding information and previous communication with the family/last time professionals saw the child.
Appendix 6a Attendance Triage Meeting template

B – Attendance Focus Meetings - Leadership conversations:

These meetings happen on a weekly basis either separately or within a Pastoral Meeting. These meetings are split into KS3/KS4/KS5 where appropriate and focus on the fine data at pupil level. It is about Pastoral leaders knowing the data and planning a proactive response.

The meeting will focus on the banding data and plan impactful interventions in line with the graduated response at a Pupil level.

The agenda for the meeting will be as follows;

Band	Analysis of:	Interventions Planned and Documented:
Band 2	Monitor	Form tutor check-ins with parents/carers, general encouragement
Band 3	Early Intervention	Phone call home, letters home, informal parent meeting – attendance improvement support plan, pupil conversation, tutor mentoring
Band 4	Facilitate Support	Pastoral phone call home, formal parent meeting, pupil conversation, pastoral mentoring
Band 5	Formalise Support	Formal meeting, attendance improvement plan, led by pastoral support

Band 6	Enforce	EWO referral, safeguarding review, multi-agency support, formal attendance contract

It is important that the meeting focuses on the band where most attendance issues sit. The meeting should use the trust's **Appendix 6b 'Attendance Tracker'** for these meetings. Meetings should be attended by the HT and/or Senior Leader for Attendance, and relevant Pastoral Team Members.

C - NIFTE (Not in Full Time Education) Meetings – Leadership conversations:

These meetings happen on a *weekly/monthly* basis.* These meetings are split into KS3/KS4/KS5 where appropriate and focus on the fine data at Pupil level. It is about Senior Leaders and Pastoral leaders knowing the data and planning a proactive response.

The Meeting should use the trust's **Appendix 16 'NIFTE Tracker'** and **'NIFTE focus sheet'** for these meetings. Meetings should be attended by the HT, Senior Leader for Attendance, and relevant Pastoral Team Members. Parents of pupils within this category will be invited for an Attendance Contracting meeting – **Appendix 15.** Schools will be expected to utilise **Appendix 18 Part time timetable and AP Resources.**

6. Authorised and Unauthorised absence

6.1 Granting approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings.

The headteacher 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.
- Study leave.
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable.
- Exceptional circumstances.

A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for, and appropriate codes will be used.

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

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is highly unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

6.2 Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences along with written evidence may be requested.

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary. Families must show the appointment card to school and make every effort to return the child to school following the appointment.

Please send in a note to inform us that your child has a medical appointment the day before the absence, where possible, with the time they will be arriving at school, or the time they will be leaving school the next day. This note must be given to the form tutor, who will pass it to the Pastoral Team. The school office should be notified by the form tutor of any such appointments.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance.

Any request should be submitted in writing as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 2 weeks before the absence. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

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

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.
- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision.
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made).

Other reasons the school may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, 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.

The Headteacher may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances', these will be determined on an individual

basis by the Headteacher, considering the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request following the submission of a written request, which can be via email to the Headteacher. A meeting may be arranged with a senior or middle leader to discuss the request.

Parents may be asked to provide evidence of the reason for the planned absence, and of the anticipated return date. This may include medical evidence or travel documents. If the leave of absence includes travel abroad, Headteachers will take into account government advice on the safety of destinations when considering whether to approve the leave of absence and may take advice from safeguarding partners on this. They will also consider if there are any other risks or safeguarding concerns based on indicators such as the destination and it's known associated risks (e.g. areas with high prevalence of Female Genital Mutilation).

Headteachers or delegated staff may speak with children about the leave of absence request and their understanding of the reasons for the absence. **Appendix 5 'LOA Form'.** Headteachers may also consult safeguarding partners about this.

Where leave is granted, or where parents/carers decide to remove their child for unauthorised leave, the school may seek to agree a weekly contact arrangement such as a phone or video call with the child.

6.3 Sanctions

Our schools will make use of the full range of 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, but aligned with statutory guidance.

Penalty notices

The headteacher (or someone authorised by them), local authority or the police can fine parents 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 issues a penalty notice, it will check with the local authority before doing so and send it a copy of any penalty notice issued.

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.

A penalty notice may also be issued where a parent allows their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first five school days of a suspension or exclusion, where the parent has been notified by the school that the child must not be present in a public place on that day.

Each parent who is liable for the offence may be issued with a penalty notice. In most cases, this will be the parent or parents responsible for the unauthorised absence.

Payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of which authorised officer issued the notice. If payment is not made within 28 days, the local authority will consider whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

If issued with a first penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 if paid within 21 days, rising to £160 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days.

If a second penalty notice is issued to the same parent for the same child within a three-year period, the parent must pay £160 within 28 days. There is no opportunity to pay at the lower rate.

A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent for the same child within three years of the first penalty notice. Where the threshold is met for a third time within that period, alternative legal action should be considered.

Notices to improve

Where the national threshold has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling period of 10 school weeks), a Notice to Improve may be issued where support is considered appropriate and has either not been engaged with or has not secured sufficient improvement.

Notices to Improve should be issued in accordance with the local authority's code of conduct and should include:

Details of the pupil's attendance record and the attendance offence.

A reminder of the benefits of regular school attendance and the parental duty under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996.

- Details of support already provided.
- Opportunities to access further support.
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance does not improve during the improvement period.
- Details of what improvement is expected.
- A clear improvement period of between 3 and 6 weeks.
- The circumstances in which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period.

The decision to issue a Notice to Improve or a Penalty Notice will be made in accordance with the local authority's Code of Conduct and the principles set out in the Department for Education's Working Together to Improve School Attendance statutory guidance.

7. Strategies for promoting attendance

7.1 The Trust expect each school to have an Attendance Strategy that outlines personalised rewards and incentives for rewarding appropriate attendance. Please see the school's reward strategy in **Appendix 7 School Rewards** for this.

- Make regular calls and check ins to parents/carers
- Send weekly text messages to update parents/carers of weekly attendance percentages for their child
- Provide half termly update letters **(see Appendix 8 School Half Termly Letters)**
- Provide letters to notify parents and carers when attendance falls below 94.9%
- Meetings to formalise early support plans with parents and carers **(Folders Appendix 13 and Appendix 14)**

8. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

8.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

Our school's approach to attendance of pupils with complex barriers is based on the principles of prevention, early intervention, and targeted support. At all stages we aim to work in partnership with parents/carers to address any barriers to attendance and/or punctuality together. Where support is not successful, or is not engaged with, the law protects pupils' right to an education and provides a range of legal interventions to formalise attendance improvement efforts, and where all other avenues have been exhausted, enforce it through prosecuting parents. Where Section 19 criteria are established, the school will refer into the LA Section 19 department using the referral form in **Appendix 17**.

Voluntary support, formal support and statutory action

We will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance and to support pupils re-integrating back into school. These may include:

- A recognised whole school approach that celebrates achievement in school.
- Reward systems for positive behaviour and attendance.
- Discussion with parents and pupils.
- Trauma-informed approaches.
- Early-Help referral options.
- Family learning.
- Time limited part-time timetables.
- Additional learning support.
- Behaviour support.
- Inclusion of resources.
- Reintegration support packages.
- Discussion with the Virtual School where the child is looked after and/or has a social worker.
- Working with attendance professionals, internal and/ or external to the school.
- Emotional based school avoidance strategies (EBSA).

Support offered to families, both internally and externally, will be child-centered, trauma informed and inclusive; planned in discussion and agreement with both parents and pupils.

8.2 Pupils absent due to mental or physical ill health or SEND

Where a pupil has an education health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that related to the pupil's needs, the school will inform the local authority.

Pupils with Additional Health Needs

OLP aims to support the LA and ensure that all pupils who are unable to attend school due to medical needs, and who would not receive suitable education without such provision, continue to have access to as much education as their medical condition allows, to enable them to reach their full potential.

Due to the nature of their health needs, some pupils may be admitted to hospital or placed in alternative forms of education provision. We recognise that, whenever possible, pupils should receive their education within their school, and the aim of the provision will be to reintegrate pupils back into school as soon as they are well enough.

We understand that we have a continuing role in a pupil's education whilst they are not attending the school and will work with the LA, healthcare partners and families to ensure that all pupils with medical needs receive the right level of support to enable them to maintain links with their education.

Support for pupils

Where a pupil has a complex or long-term health issue, the school will discuss the pupil's needs and how these may be best met with the LA, relevant medical professionals, parents and, where appropriate, the pupil.

The LA expects the school to support pupils with additional health needs to attend full-time education wherever possible, or for the school to make reasonable adjustments to pupils' programmes of study where medical evidence supports the need for those adjustments.

The school will make reasonable adjustments in accordance with the Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy.

Pupils admitted to hospital will receive education as determined appropriate by the medical professionals and hospital tuition team at the hospital concerned.

During a period of absence, the school will work with the provider of the pupil's education to establish and maintain regular communication and effective outcomes.

Whilst a pupil is away from school, the school will work with the LA to ensure the pupil can successfully remain in touch with their school using the following methods:

- School newsletters
- Emails
- Invitations to school events
- Cards or letters from peers and staff

Where appropriate, the school will provide the pupil's education provider with relevant information, curriculum materials and resources.

To help ensure a pupil with additional health needs is able to attend school following an extended period of absence, the following adaptations will be considered:

- A personalised or part-time timetable, drafted in consultation with the named staff member; reported to the Local Authority and reviewed regularly.
- Access to additional support in school.
- Online access to the curriculum from home.
- Movement of lessons to more accessible rooms.
- Places to rest at school.
- Special exam arrangements to manage anxiety or fatigue.

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

The school will support all pupils to return following a lengthy absence by offering a re-integration individual support plan. Pupils may be offered one or more of the following:

- A risk assessment (if physical or mental health related)
- A part time timetable
- One to one/ small group pastoral support
- Curriculum review

9. Policy Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DFE is updated, and every two years by the Trust's Director of Safeguarding, Executive Director of Education and Headteachers. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board and Trustees.

10. Appendices – see online folders