



Attendance and Punctuality Policy

<i>Review date</i>	Spring 2023
<i>Review period</i>	Annual by SLT Triennial by Trustees
<i>Next Review date</i>	Spring 2024
<i>Policy type</i>	Non legislative
<i>Other related policies</i>	Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy Behaviour Policy

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1. Aims

The Griffin Primary school is committed to maintaining high levels of attendance and punctuality throughout the school community. Good attendance and punctuality are learned behaviours, and the school recognises the importance of developing strong patterns of attendance across the school community. As such, attendance is an integral part of the school's ethos, culture and day to day life. Pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Thus poor attendance has a negative impact on academic progress. All activities, outside commitments or appointments which could give rise to unnecessary or unauthorised absence are discouraged, formally through the Home/School Agreement, and informally through comments at parents' meetings.

The school recognises that children and young people missing education can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, sexual abuse and child sexual and criminal exploitation. Attendance at school is everyone's responsibility and the school is fully committed to ensuring a culture which:

- promotes good attendance and punctuality; reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- ensures every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- means we act early to address patterns of absence
- means we work collaboratively with parents and provide appropriate support to enable parents to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly

2. Legislation and Guidance

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 parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting 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](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#) (and [2010](#), [2011](#), [2013](#), [2016](#) amendments)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [Working together to improve school attendance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)
- This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 The Trust Board

The Trust Board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the Headteacher and wider leadership team to account for the implementation of this policy.

3.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- implementation of this policy at the school
- monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to trustees
- supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

3.3 The Office Manager

The Office Manager:

- monitors attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level
- reports concerns about attendance to the Senior Leadership team
- works with the wider pastoral team to improve attendance and tackle persistent absence
- advises the Headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

3.4 Class Teachers

- Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.
- All class teachers and Pastoral staff are required to promote good attendance and to monitor their groups for patterns of non-attendance and lateness.

4. Recording Attendance

4.1 Attendance Register

The school maintains an attendance register. All pupils on roll at the school are placed upon this register.

An attendance register is taken at the start of the morning and afternoon session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- present in the morning if they are registered by 8.55 (morning registration)
- authorised 'Late' if they arrive at school after 8.50am and before 9.20am (this is marked by Code 'L')
- unauthorised Late if they arrive after 9.20 (this is marked by code 'U', and counts as an unauthorised absence for the half day)
- present in the afternoon if they are registered by the beginning of afternoon registration at 1pm
- authorised 'Late' in the afternoon if they arrive after the beginning of registration
- attending an approved off-site educational activity
- absent
- unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

See Appendix 1 for the full list of DfE attendance codes.

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

Pupils must arrive in school by 8:55am on each school day. The school operates a first-day call system. Parents/carers are required to telephone the school before 8.55am on any day when their son /daughter is absent. If the absence has to last more than one day (eg 48 hour rule for sickness or diarrhoea), the parent/carer should indicate the date of return. Parents are still

expected to inform the school on the morning of each day their child is absent and will be contacted if they fail to do this as the school needs to be certain that the pupil is safe.

Attendance of all pupils is checked by electronic registration each session (am and pm). Registration must take place in a classroom and be done by the teacher. Where classes have to take place away from the classroom, a register will be taken and names of absentees passed in to the school office to be entered into the electronic lesson monitor. Registers should never be projected onto the white board.

4.2 Unplanned Absence

Parents/carers are required to telephone the school on the first and subsequent days of a pupil's absence to the main school office; this applies to all pupils (also see section 7).

If contact has not been made by a parent or guardian for a pupil on the first day of absence, then the school office will attempt to make contact with parents and establish the reason for absence. (Please note that the school reserves the right to carry out checks to ensure the proper use of the Attendance and Punctuality Policy by requesting parents/carers provide written confirmation of a pupil's absence).

The school will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. The school will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this accordingly.

4.3 Planned Absence

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for all types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Section 5 sets out which term-time absences the school can authorise. The school encourages parents/carers 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. Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised, as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. When informing the school of pre-arranged medical appointments and all other types of planned absences, the same procedure as an unplanned absence should be adopted and the school should be notified at the earliest given opportunity; the school may request written notification of medical appointments. In cases of frequent or persistent absence, the school may require medical evidence to be provided.

Each application for a leave of absence will be considered on a case by case basis and on its own merits.

4.4 Lateness and Punctuality

A pupil who arrives after the register has been taken at 8.55am will be marked late by the classroom teacher. If this is before the register has closed they will be marked as late, using the appropriate code and if this is after the register has closed they will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.

Lateness and punctuality is monitored. If issues with lateness persist then the pupil's teacher will firstly discuss the reason for lateness with the parent/carer as appropriate and strategies will be put in place to improve punctuality.

4.5 Following up Absence

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, the school will:

- follow up on their absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason via the most appropriate channel, such as a group call, telephone call, email or letter, and where appropriate a home visit may be undertaken
- ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary
- identify whether or not the absence is approved
- identify the correct attendance code to use

All staff are required to promote good attendance and to monitor their groups for patterns of non-attendance and lateness. Pupils' attendance is regularly monitored and, particularly if their attendance falls below 95% over a prolonged period, the school will contact parents to discuss how the matter can be improved. In cases where a pupil's attendance falls below 90%, more formal measures may be required. Where attendance does not improve and is still below 90%, where a pupil is habitually late, or in circumstances of unauthorised absence, the school may refer the case to the Warwickshire Attendance Service (WAS) Team provided by Warwickshire County Council. The Warwickshire Attendance Service (WAS) is a service provided by Warwickshire County Council that supports the school in promoting attendance and, in cases of persistent absence, they will be notified as appropriate.

4.6 Reporting to Parents

Attendance and punctuality information is updated daily. Attendance information is reported to parents via the pupil's end of year school report unless there is a cause for concern as detailed in 4.5.

5. Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

5.1 Approval for Term-Time Absence

The Headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to pupils during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances' ([Government regulations issued May 2022](#)).

Parents do not have any entitlement to take their children on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must establish that there are **exceptional circumstances** and the Headteacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.

The Headteacher will determine how many school days a child may be absent from school, if leave is granted.

Applications for Leave of Absence must be made in advance (**at least 6 weeks before the proposed absence**) and failure to do so will result in the absence being unauthorised. (**A 'Leave of Absence' can only be booked after receiving written permission from the Headteacher**).

Applications for Leave of Absence which are made in advance and refused, will result in the absence being unauthorised, which may result in legal action against the parent, by Fixed Penalty Notice, if the child is absent from school during that period.

If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued and not paid within the timeframe set out in that Notice, the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council's Legal Services to consider instigating criminal prosecution proceedings under S444 of Education Act 1996.

The Headteacher has the discretion to authorise other unavoidable absences including those for the following reasons:

- illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- agreed attainment tests e.g. music grades
- compassionate grounds e.g. bereavement
- participation in elite sporting competitions or training

Each application for a leave of absence will be considered on a case by case basis and on its own merits.

5.2 Reducing Persistent Absence

The school recognises that absence is often a symptom of wider issues a family or young person is facing. Attendance at school is considered to be everyone's responsibility, and as such all staff will work collaboratively to improve attendance. Pupils with less than 90% attendance are considered to be persistently absent, and those with less than 50% attendance are considered to be 'severely absent'.

Appropriate staff will meet with parents / carers at the earliest given opportunity in order to discuss concerns relating to attendance and punctuality. Letters will be issued to parents / carers, if deemed appropriate, on a termly basis to outline concerns. Staff will work together to:

- deliver intervention in a targeted way, in response to data or intelligence
- monitor and analyse attendance data regularly to ensure that intervention is delivered quickly to address absence (register inspections, code analysis, cohort and group monitoring and punctuality)
- use staff who are skilled in supporting pupils and their families to identify and overcome barriers to attendance
- create action plans in partnership with families and other agencies that may be supporting families, for example, children's social care and Early Help services (these may commission or deliver interventions to improve attendance)
- monitor the impact of any intervention, making adjustments if necessary and using findings to inform future strategy
- identify the reasons why interventions fail to address attendance issues, and, where appropriate, change or adjust the intervention
- work together with other local partners to understand the barriers to attendance and provide support. Where that 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. The following measures outlined in [Working together to improve school attendance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/622222/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance.pdf) will be considered:
 - Parenting contracts
 - Education supervision orders
 - Attendance prosecution
 - Parenting orders
 - Fixed penalty notices

5.3 Legal Sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a Headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- the number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- one-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- if an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

6. Strategies for Promoting Attendance and Punctuality

The school recognises that improving attendance and punctuality takes a whole school approach. This approach is coordinated and overseen by the senior member of staff with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance in school. Responsibilities include offering a clear vision for attendance improvement, evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes, oversight of data analysis, and communicating key messages to pupils and parents. The following strategies are used to promote a culture of improving school attendance and punctuality:

- Ensuring all teaching and non-teaching staff know the importance of good attendance, are consistent in their communication with pupils and parents/carers, and receive the training and professional development they need.
- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils and communicating these regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels. In doing so, schools should help parents to understand what is expected of them and why attendance is important to their child's attainment, wellbeing, and wider development. It should also include clarity on the short and long term consequences of poor attendance.
- Visibly demonstrating the benefits of good attendance throughout school life. This may include in displays and assemblies. Where used sensitively and without discrimination, this may also include praising and rewarding improvements in attendance at class and individual level.

7. Pupils with Medical Conditions or Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

The school recognises that some pupils with medical conditions or special educational needs and disabilities may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include pupils who suffer from long term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities. Their right to an education is the same as any other pupil and therefore the attendance ambition for these pupils is the same as they are for any other pupil. The school will work with parents/carers to improve attendance, and will consider the barriers these pupils face and put additional support in place where necessary to help them access their full-time education. Strategies for pupils with medical conditions or special educational needs and disabilities include:

- having sensitive conversations and developing good support for pupils with physical or mental health conditions and making reasonable adjustments where appropriate
- putting in place an individual healthcare plan where needed. These will involve considering whether additional support from external partners (including the local authority or health services) would be appropriate, making referrals in a timely manner and working together with those services to deliver any subsequent support
- working with parents to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities, including where applicable, ensuring the provision outlined in the pupil's education, health and care plan is accessed
- working with other partners to encourage the scheduling of additional support interventions or medical appointments outside of the main school day

- ensuring joined up pastoral care is in place, when needed, and considering whether a time-limited phased return to school would be appropriate, for example for those affected by anxiety about school attendance

7.1 Part-Time Timetables

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package. The local authority will be notified prior to implementing a part-time timetable, and this will only be in place for the shortest time necessary as per the Local Authority's guidance on part-time timetables. Any such agreement is reviewed regularly and is time limited, by which point the pupil is expected to attend full time.

8. Attendance Monitoring

The school office monitors pupil absence on a daily basis.

A pupil's parent/carer is expected to call the school by 8.50am if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 4.2).

If a pupil's absence goes above 10 consecutive days, then the school will usually contact the parent/carer of the pupil to discuss the reasons for this.

If a pupil's absence continues to rise after contacting their parent/carer, we will consider involving an education welfare officer or liaising with other external services as appropriate.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

The severely absent threshold is 50%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 50%, the pupil will be classified as severely absent.

Pupil-level absence 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 compare attendance data, for the various pupil groups, with the national average, and share this with the Trustees.

The Griffin Primary School collects and stores data using an electronic management systems (SIMS).

This data is used for internal purposes, such as to:

- track the attendance of individual pupils
- identify whether or not there are particular groups of children (e.g. SEN, PP, EAL) whose absences may be a cause for concern
- monitor and evaluate the attendance of those individual children that are identified as being in need of support

9. Monitoring Arrangements

This Policy will be reviewed when guidance from the Local Authority or the DfE is updated, and, as a minimum, no longer than three years from the last review. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Trust Board.

Attendance Codes
(taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance)

Code	Definition	Scenario
Registration codes		
/	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	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

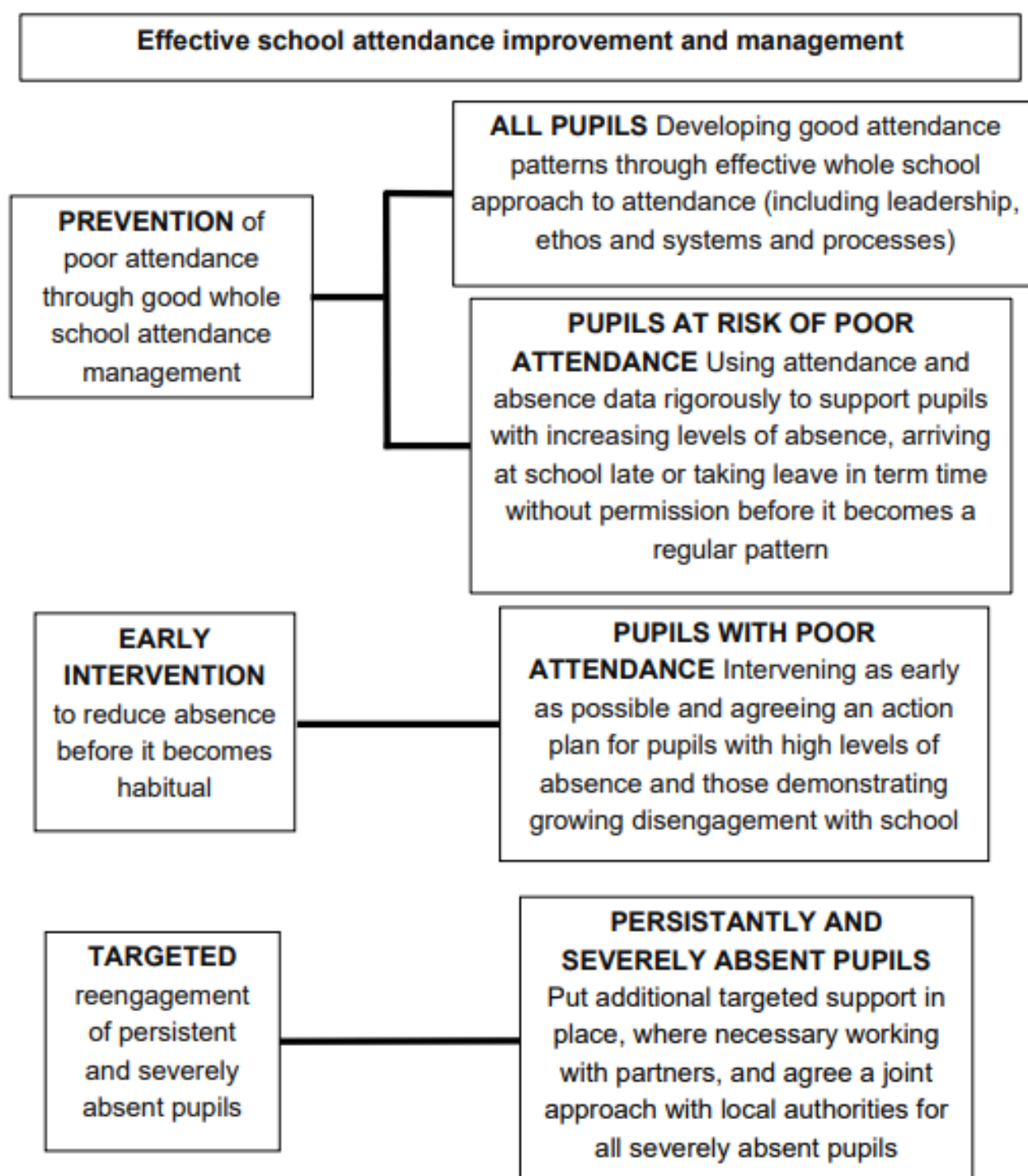
Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence codes		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence codes		
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school

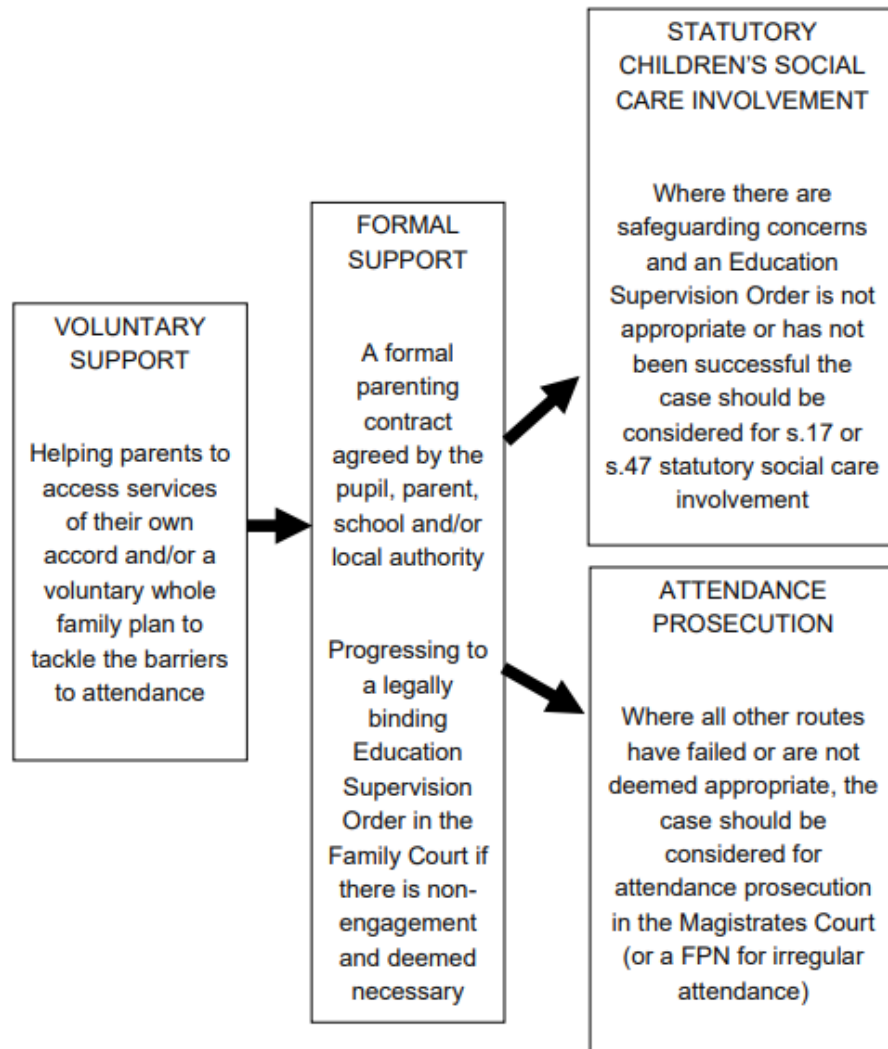
Code	Definition	Scenario
Unauthorised absence codes		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
Other registration codes		
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

Effective School Attendance Improvement and Management –
[Working together to improve school attendance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk) (page 33)



Strategies for Working Together to Improve School Attendance –
[Working together to improve school attendance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/671412/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance.pdf) (page 8)



Working Collaboratively with Families to Improve Attendance –
[Working together to improve school attendance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk) (page 8)

Working together to improve attendance

13. Successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance, at home, in school or more broadly requires schools and local partners to work collaboratively with, not against families. All partners should work together to:

