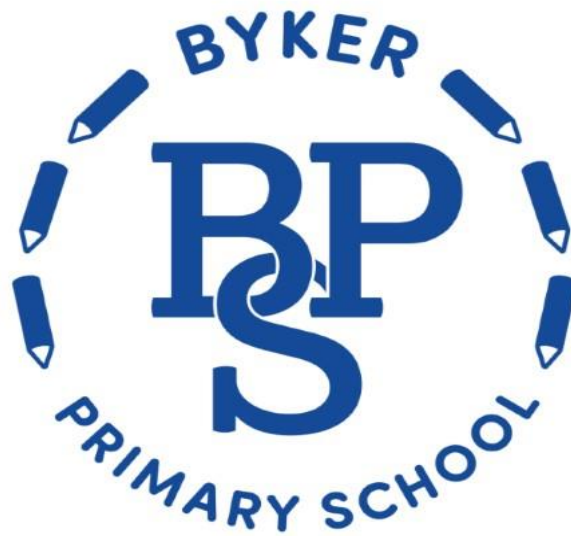


# Attendance Policy 2025-26

## Byker Primary School



Approved by:	Governing Body
Approved Date:	16.10.2025
Review frequency:	Annually
Next Review Date:	17.10.2026

## Section 1: Rationale

We want all young people at this school to be confident both academically and socially. This will ensure that they succeed in the next stage of their learning. Success at school allows young people to make more choices about their lives, have ambitions about the future, enjoy a wide range of experiences and make lifelong friends.

School isn't always easy. Most young people have days when they don't want to go. However, if they aren't in school they will feel behind in their learning when they return. That can have a big effect on their confidence. They also miss out on shared experiences with friends, which can make them feel left out. This can make school feel even harder and lead to more regular absence.

This policy represents our commitment to regular attendance in school. Most young people attend school at least 96% of the time, and this is what we aim for as a minimum expectation. The policy sets out the principles, procedures and practice we undertake to encourage attendance and to address absence.

## Policy Statement

We believe that every student has the right to a high-quality education, and that regular attendance is essential for achieving this goal. Our aim is to create a culture of attendance across all of our schools, where regular attendance is the norm and where all students are supported to achieve their full potential.

To achieve this aim, we will:

- develop a clear and consistent attendance policy that is communicated effectively to all stakeholders, including staff, students, and parents;
- regularly monitor attendance data to identify patterns and trends in attendance, and to target interventions where they are needed most;
- use positive reinforcement to encourage good attendance, such as rewards for good attendance, recognition of students who have improved their attendance and celebration of good attendance across the trust;
- provide support for students and families to help them overcome barriers to attendance, such as transport issues, financial difficulties, health problems and social and emotional difficulties;
- work in partnership with external agencies to provide additional support for students and families; and
- regularly review and evaluate our attendance strategies to ensure that they are effective, and to make changes where necessary.

Our approach to effective school attendance improvement and management is summarised in Appendix 1.

Our goal is to achieve and sustain high levels of attendance across all of our schools, so that all students can achieve their full potential and succeed in the future.

We believe that by working together, we can create a culture of attendance that enables the success of all students. We aspire for every student to have 100% attendance.

We set out the local attendance arrangements for our school to support the implementation of this policy and publish this on the school's website.

### **Vision and Values:**

#### ***Children First: Raising Standards and Transforming Lives.***

Our values are the behaviours that will enable us to achieve our shared purpose and deliver our vision and strategic aims:

- Reliance
- Respect
- Accepting
- Ambitious Learners
- Courageous

Creating a supportive and safe environment where pupils feel valued, engaged and motivated to learn supports good attendance. This helps students to achieve their full potential.

We work with parents/carers, local authorities and other organisations to remove barriers to attendance and promote a culture of regular attendance across our schools. This will grow the potential of our pupils, schools, and wider community.

Improving attendance requires constant focus and effective whole-school approaches require regular ongoing support, guidance and challenge.

### **Principles**

- Receiving a full-time, suitable education is a child's legal entitlement.
- Parents and carers have a legal responsibility to ensure this happens.
- Attending school regularly aids intellectual, social and emotional development and is essential if children are to benefit fully from their school life.
- Children whose attendance is low are likely to have poor outcomes, so will be treated as vulnerable.

These principles are enshrined in British law, within the Education Act 1996, the Children Act 1989, and other associated pieces of legislation.

### **Aims of the Policy**

- To ensure that all young people attend school regularly and punctually, in order to maximise their educational achievement and social development.
- To promote good attendance, thus improving the life chances of young people attending our school and preparing them to be fully contributing citizens when they reach adulthood.
- To minimise absence from school, thereby reducing levels of persistent absence.
- To carry out our duty to safeguard pupils to the best of our ability.
- To ensure that all those responsible for young people's education, including parents, carers, staff and governors, understand and accept their responsibilities in relation to attendance.

## Section 2: Roles and Responsibilities

We will use every opportunity to promote the importance of good attendance and punctuality. These will include newsletters, assemblies and sensitively applied incentives for good or significantly improving attendance. However, we believe that the foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between school, parent/carers, and the young person.

### **We expect parent/carers to:**

- ensuring their child attends the school each day it is open, dressed in full uniform;
- contacting the school if their child is unable to attend;
- providing their most up to date contact details;
- only requesting leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and well in advance;
- booking any medical appointments around the school day where possible;
- proactively engaging with the school about any support that is offered to improve attendance.
- Provide medical evidence, where possible, indicating attendance at the dentist, doctor, or optician before the arranged appointment unless an emergency situation arises. This might include an appointment note or an NHS App message. Whenever possible all appointments should be made outside of school hours.
- Ensure that your child arrives at school on time each day.
- Let the school know if their child is going to be late, e.g., if a car breaks down, if an urgent appointment has been made.
- Book family holidays during school holiday time

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is a parent/carer's legal responsibility (Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act) and permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the Head Teacher creates an offence in law.

### **We expect pupils to:**

- Attend every day unless they are ill or have an authorised absence.
- Arrive in school on time.
- Go to all their registrations and lessons on time.

### **We will do this by:**

- establish and promote a culture where all students want to attend the school;
- helping everyone understand the benefits that good attendance brings;
- ensuring that the attendance policy and local arrangements are communicated to parents/carers and published on the school website;
- establishing internal protocols and procedures that are consistent with this policy and ensuring these are applied and monitored robustly;

- identifying a dedicated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance, known as the Attendance Champion;
- ensuring everyone takes responsibility for attendance and ensuring it has a high profile within the school community;
- having robust daily processes to follow up absence;
- working with parents/carers at an early stage so they are fully aware of the attendance policy;
- supporting all students, particularly the most vulnerable, to attend regularly;
- helping to identify, overcome and remove barriers for good attendance and signpost support where needed;
- where there is a lack of engagement and/or where support is not working, work with parents/carers more formally, involving the local authority on legal intervention;
- where there are safeguarding concerns, intensify support through statutory children's social care.
- Have a key member of staff with responsibility for monitoring, analysing and improving school attendance. They will look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and provide additional and targeted support. At Byker Primary this role is fulfilled by Attendance Officer **Alistiar Dent**
- Ensure that there is a designated Senior Leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in school. In our school, this is **Michelle Donnison** (Headteacher)
- Ensure that governors maintain a strategic oversight of this policy and its impact on attendance.

### Strategies for promoting Attendance

We recognise that all staff play a vital role in improving attendance. The high visibility of staff in our schools creates a safe and vibrant environment and allows all students to attend. We take a wholeschool approach to relational and restorative practice to foster positive relationships with and between students and the wider family.

Each school regularly reviews its curriculum to ensure that it meets the needs of all students, regardless of their ability. Our schools use a variety of strategies to support students academically, including the use of Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) for students with SEND, targeted interventions for students who are falling behind and the expertise of support staff and intervention tutors. We provide high-quality academic support to all students so they have the opportunity to achieve their full potential. We believe that good attendance, academic achievements and personal developments are closely linked.

Celebrating good and improved attendance is part of our praise culture: for example, we will regularly reward students with certificates in assemblies. Praise strategies and positions of responsibility (for example, student council) encourage good attendance

### Support for Families

We will support parents/carers to carry out their duty to ensure their children, including those of nursery age, attend regularly, and will promote and support outstanding punctuality to school and to lessons.

### **We will do this by:**

- creating a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environment where all students want to be and are keen and ready to learn;
- promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence;
- ensuring every student has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled;
- acting early to address patterns of absence;
- supporting students and families to overcome barriers to good attendance.

Regular attendance is important in safeguarding children as it enables potential risks to be identified and support provided. Research shows that there is a relationship between regular absence from school and the risk of harm within the family, peers or the community. Regular absence, particularly unexplained absence, can be an indicator of safeguarding concerns. It is therefore vital that all students are in school regularly.

At Byker Primary we hold a weekly inclusion meeting to discuss the most vulnerable students and review interventions designed to overcome barriers to learning, including poor attendance. These barriers are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates, and are often specific to individual students and families.

The school's website contains more information for parents/carers including how and who to contact in the school about attendance, as well as our strategies and resources to promote excellent attendance.

### **Section 3: Recording attendance**

#### **Understanding types of absence coding**

We must record every half-day absence as AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why we always need information about the cause of any absence. Types of absence that are likely to be authorised are illness, emergencies, medical or dental appointments that unavoidably fall in school time.

Only schools can authorise an absence. Parents/carers do not have this authority.

Consequently, **not all** absences supported by parents/carers will be classified as authorised.

#### **Unauthorised absence**

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the school.

Examples of types of absence that are not considered reasonable, and which will not be authorised under any circumstances are:

- Going shopping with parents, birthdays.
- Sibling unwell.
- Staying at home because other members in the family are unwell.
- Day trips and holidays in term time.
- Arriving at school too late to get a present mark (after the close of registration).

- Truancy.

In some cases, we may change an authorised absence to an unauthorised absence and vice versa if new information is presented. An example of this would be where a parent states a child is unwell but there is subsequent evidence they have been on holiday. We will communicate any such change to parents/carers.

### Illness

If your child has repeated periods of illness, we may ask you to provide medical evidence for each future period of illness related absence. This evidence could be a doctor's note, appointment card/letter or copy of a prescription. We may seek written permission from you to make our own enquiries.

### Lateness and punctuality

The register closes 30 minutes after it opens. The L code for late should be used for students arriving after the register has opened but before it is closed and the U code (or another absence code that is more appropriate) for students arriving after the register is closed.

Schools will actively discourage late arrival, be alert to patterns of late arrival and seek an explanation from the parent. In secondary schools, it is at the discretion of the Headteacher whether or not to utilise detentions/call backs for lateness to school.

### Section 4: School Procedures Registration and punctuality procedures

We are legally obliged to take a register twice a day. Once at the start of the school day and once at the start of the afternoon session. The registers will remain open for approximately 15 minutes. Pupils arriving before the end of the registration period will be coded L (Late before registers close) which is a present mark. We will record the number of minutes late in the register. Pupils arriving after the registers have closed will be coded U (Late after registers close) which counts as an unauthorised absence for the whole session. Ongoing and repeated lateness after the close of registration (U mark) will be subject to legal action.

**Children who arrive late after the doors close at 8.45am must be signed in by their parent/carer or appropriate adult. We will ask the reason for the lateness. If a child arrives late, but unaccompanied, we will contact you and seek a reason for the poor punctuality.**

Only the Head Teacher can authorise absence. If we don't know the reason for the absence at registration, then we will record it as unauthorised until a satisfactory reason is provided. If the reason given is not satisfactory in our view, and/or evidence of the reason cannot be provided, the absence will be coded as O (Unauthorised absence). It is reasonable for members of staff to ask questions regarding a child's attendance and punctuality and when appropriate, request evidence to support the reason for absence from school.

### First Day Absence Contact

**You must notify us before 8.45 am** if your child is unable to attend for any reason. If we don't receive notification, we will contact you as early as possible in the school day. This is because your child may have set off for school but not arrived.

## Planned Medical or dental appointments

Any absence interrupts the continuity of a student's learning and should be avoided other than in exceptional circumstances. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences is in authorised absences.

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is usually counted as an authorised absence (where the appointment could not be scheduled outside of school hours); advance notice is required for authorising these absences. Parents are encouraged to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the student should be out of the school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

## First Day Response Procedures

We will follow First Day Response (FDR) procedures by:

- Contacting you on the first day of absence by telephone/text, to try to ascertain the reason.
- If there are safeguarding concerns, making a home visit if phone calls are unanswered.
- Informing any appropriate professionals or agencies working with your child or family.

If your child is still too unwell to attend the following day, **you must contact us again before 8.45am** to inform us. If we already have concerns about your child's attendance, we may carry out a home visit even if you have given us a reason for the absence.

## Continued Absence Procedures

If after three days of absence, your child has not been seen and you have not contacted the school, we will make all reasonable enquiries to establish contact with you, including making enquiries to known friends and wider family as held on our contacts register.

If this is unsuccessful, we will make a home visit to check the safety and wellbeing of your child. We may also contact officers from the Local Authority.

If we have concerns about your child's attendance, we will invite you into school to discuss the matter. If attendance fails to improve, we will refer the matter to the Local Authority.

## Children Missing from Education (CME)

All Local Authorities have a legal responsibility to identify young people who are missing from education (CME) and those young people at risk of missing education. Where necessary, Local Authorities must return them to suitable education.

This applies to young people of compulsory school age who are not on a school roll or receiving suitable education elsewhere and have been out of any education for a substantial period, usually more than four weeks.

We have a legal duty to undertake our own checks first and will notify the Local Authority if a young person has left the school and their whereabouts are unknown.

## Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs

If your child is going to be absent for longer than 15 days due to medical reasons either consecutively or accumulatively, we will work with the Local Authority to ensure that your child will have access to relevant and appropriate education. This includes the education of siblings where your family have had to travel and stay away from the home. Such an absence would normally be accompanied by medical evidence.

### Partial Timetables

All young people of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances there may be a need for a temporary partial timetable to meet their individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a young person from attending full-time education and a partial timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package.

A partial timetable must last no longer than six weeks. After that point a young person is expected to attend full time, either at school or alternative provision. If we believe that a partial timetable is in the best interests of your child, we will discuss this with you. We will agree formal review arrangements to take place. In agreeing to a partial timetable, we agree to a young person being absent from school for part of the week or day and therefore must treat absence as authorised and code in the register as a C, which is an authorised absence.

### Persistent and Severe Absence Procedures: Attendance Below 90%

If your child misses 10% or more of their schooling across a year **for whatever reason, whether it is authorised or unauthorised, or a mixture of both**, they become a 'Persistent Absentee.' Missing 50% or more of school is defined as severe absence. At this point your child would not be receiving a suitable education and their outcomes will be affected. We will inform you if your child is moving into the category of persistent absence, and your child's attendance will be monitored. This is because young people can easily get into a habit of missing school. Without help it can rapidly get worse.

It is essential that we avoid the kind of impact that poor attendance can have on your child. If you are facing circumstances which make it difficult to ensure your child's attendance at school, you should tell us. We will meet with you and provide access to wider support services to help remove barriers to attendance.

We monitor registers to identify pupils with a pattern of absences that may lead to Persistent Absence (PA). Initially we will try to resolve the problem with you. We will agree actions to improve attendance. However, if the pattern continues, we will make a referral to the Local Authority.

### Reluctant attenders/school refusal

You should do everything possible to ensure your child attends school. However, if the reason for your child's reluctance appears to be school based, you should discuss this with us at the earliest opportunity and we will do everything possible to resolve it. Remember that issues like this are rarely solved immediately and can only be solved if you work with us to get your child in to school. Supporting your child's reluctance to attend is likely to make the matter worse.

## Applications for leave of absence in term time

If your child is taking part in activities organised outside of the school e.g. music, dance exams, regional, county, national and international events and competitions, you may seek leave of absence from school. It is down to the discretion of the school as to whether to authorise this. We will wish to discuss the nature and frequency of the absence and how learning will continue if absence occurs. Permission for your child to leave early or arrive late to attend coaching and training sessions is also at the discretion of the Head Teacher and is not likely to be approved if it is a regular event, unless the sports club or association is providing an education tutor as part of their coaching.

## Leavers

You must inform us in writing if you are planning to remove your child from this school to move to another, other than at normal leaving times. You must give us full information about your plans and reasons for moving, including date of move, new address, the new school your child will attend and start date when known. This is because we have a legal responsibility to ensure that no child goes missing from education. We also need to transfer school information.

## Elective Home Education (EHE)

If you wish to remove your child from school with a view to educating at home, we will work with other key professionals and coordinate a meeting with you if possible. This is a significant step. You should consider whether you are able to provide a suitable education for your child, how they will gain necessary qualifications and whether your provision will enable them to return to a school if your circumstances change. We will pass information about your decision to the Local Authority, which is responsible for monitoring EHE. The Local Authority will check that you are able to provide a suitable education. If at any point the Local Authority has concerns that your provision is unsuitable, it may take legal action to put your child back on a school roll.

We will inform the Local Authority of your decision to home educate before removing your child from the school roll. An online notification will be submitted via the [Services to Schools](#) website.

## Pupils who do not start school

Young people who are allocated places in a school but fail to start are also treated as Children Missing Education. If we have been unable to make contact with you during a ten-day period after the expected arrival, we will refer your child to the Local Authority for further checks.

## Section 5: Legal Sanctions

You have a legal duty to ensure the regular and full-time attendance at school of registered pupils (Education Act 1996).

We regard the use of legal sanctions as a last resort where attendance is low and has not improved despite our best efforts to work with families. However, our use of legal sanctions underlines the importance of attendance and our determination that all young people at this school receive a suitable education.

If your child's attendance drops below 95% without a suitable reason, you may receive a letter telling you that we are concerned.

If there is further unauthorised absence you will be invited to a meeting to develop a plan of support that improves attendance. If there are further unauthorised absence you will be invited to a meeting

to develop a plan of support that improves attendance. Further unauthorised absence totalling 10 or more unauthorised sessions in the next ten weeks and attendance below 90% will result in a referral to the Local Authority for consideration of legal action.

### Penalty Notices

The Local Authority may issue fixed penalty notices (fine) and prosecution to parents for poor attendance. If you don't pay a fixed penalty notices, the Local Authority will make a referral to Court.

Penalty Notices can be issued for unauthorised term-time holidays, poor attendance and poor punctuality (U mark).

If your child's attendance does not improve after we have offered support, the consequences may be one of the following:

1. **£60 fine (per pupil, per parent/carer) if paid within 21 days, or £120 if paid within 28 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice will result in prosecution in the Magistrates Court.**
2. **The Local Authority may initiate court action under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, which could lead to fines of up to £2,500, or even imprisonment.**
3. **In some cases, action may be taken under the Children Act 1989 to protect the welfare and development of your child.**

### Holidays in term time

**The school is not able to authorise any term time holidays.**

There is no entitlement in law to time off in term time. Young people who are absent from school fall behind in their learning. They miss out on school events and often there are effects on friendship groups. Many find it difficult to catch up. In addition, school staff have to divert their attention away from other young people in order to support those that have fallen behind due to a holiday related absence.

For this reason, any request for leave of absence due to holidays in term time will not be authorised.

On a few occasions a parent may request an exceptional leave of absence for a child. There is a very short list of reasons where this might be granted and evidence will be requested. The time a child is out of school must be short and with a clear return date and the school will always consider the attendance of the child over the time leading to the request, including attendance in previous years.

**Extended visits to family at home or abroad are never authorised.**

In the case of all unauthorised leave of absences, incurring 10 or more unauthorised sessions (5 days), an application for a Fixed Penalty Notice will be made to the Local Authority.

### Attendance Procedure

We believe that everyone should be clear about what our schools will do if a student's attendance falls below the standards we expect.

We consider each student's previous year's attendance before deciding when to start the relevant stage of our attendance procedures, known as the 'activation tier'.

All students are expected to attend every session but where a student’s attendance falls below our threshold of 96%, or if irregular patterns of attendance are discovered, schools will activate the attendance procedure at the relevant stage, as set out in the table below:

Attendance category	Description	Activation Tier	
		When will our attendance procedures be activated?	What stage will our attendance procedures be activated?
<b>A – Good attenders (GA)</b>  Students who attended the school well	Those with above 96% cumulative attendance the previous year	After October half-term but only if student attendance drops below our threshold of 96% attendance	<b>Stage 1</b>  Attendance Officer
<b>B – Regular attenders (RA)</b>  Students who attended the school regularly	Those with 90%-95% cumulative attendance the previous year	Immediately but only if student attendance drops below our threshold of 96% of attendance	<b>Stage 1</b>  Attendance Officer
<b>C – Persistently absent (PA)</b>  Students who were persistently absent	Those with attendance below 90% cumulative attendance for the previous year	Immediately but only if student attendance drops below our threshold of 96% attendance	<b>Stage 2</b>  Attendance Officer
<b>D – Severely absent (SA)</b>  Students who were severely absent	Those with attendance below 50% cumulative attendance for the previous year	Immediately but only if student attendance drops below our threshold of 96% attendance	<b>Stage 3</b>  Assistant Headteacher of key Stage and Attendance officer

The attendance procedure may start at stage 1, 2 or 3 depending on the student’s attendance category.

Once the procedure is activated at the relevant stage in the table above, a student will be placed on a four-week attendance monitoring plan.

**Note about category A:** For students with above 96% attendance in the previous school year the attendance procedure will not be used until after October half term, unless there are unusual patterns and/or repetitive absences.

**Note about category B:** For students who had less than 96% attendance in the previous school year, the attendance procedure is activated immediately if there is an absence in September or October.

### Stage 1:

Students in attendance category A or B will be placed on a four-week attendance monitoring plan with the school’s attendance officer. A letter will be sent home to parents/carers.

If the student attends every session within the Stage 1 monitoring period, a celebratory letter home will be sent and the attendance monitoring plan will stop. Schools will aim to telephone parents/carers to add relevant context, as well as sending a letter.

If the student does not attend every session within the Stage 1 monitoring period (unless the absence has been authorised), the school will move to Stage 2 in the procedure.

## **Stage 2:**

Students in attendance category C or students who do not attend every session under Stage 1 of the procedure will be placed on a four-week attendance support plan with the schools Attendance Officer

If the student attends every session within the Stage 2 monitoring period then their year to date attendance will normally be restored to above 96% and no further action will be taken. A celebratory letter will be sent home and the attendance support plan will stop. Schools will aim to telephone parents to add relevant context, as well as sending a letter. However, if the student's cumulative attendance subsequently drops back below 96% at any point in the near future then the student will return to a period of monitoring and begin another four-week support plan with the Attendance Officer under Stage 2.

If the student does not attend every session within the Stage 2 monitoring period (unless the absence has been authorised), the school will move to Stage 3 in the procedure.

## **Stage 3:**

Students in attendance category D or students who do not attend every session during Stage 2 of the procedure will be placed on a final four-week attendance support plan.

This will involve a formal attendance case conference with the Attendance and Welfare Officer and Assistant Headteacher.

This is the final opportunity for the student to complete four full weeks of attendance.

If the student attends every session within the Stage 3 monitoring period, a celebratory letter home will be sent and the support plan will cease. However, if the student is subsequently absent again in the near future a further four-week support plan will commence and this stage will be repeated.

If the student does not attend every session within the Stage 3 monitoring period (unless the absence has been authorised), the Attendance and Welfare Officer will make a referral to the local authority, particularly if the student's cumulative attendance is below 90%. Action could be taken which includes, but is not limited to, issuing attendance contracts issuing fixed penalty notices or pursuing prosecution towards potential educational supervision orders or other court sanctions.

**Flowcharts for primary and secondary schools setting out the attendance procedure are provided in Appendix 2.**

## **Section 6: Information for Parent/Carers – Common Questions**

- Q. Children get loads of holidays, plus there are bank holidays and teacher strikes. Why do we get fined for keeping them off?
- A. The most obvious reason is that bank holidays and strikes are permitted in law, whereas absence from school is not. However, the most important reason is that if your child is absent while the rest of their class is at school, your child will be behind when they return. No young person likes being in this situation. It can knock their confidence. School staff will help your child catch up, but this takes time and takes staff away from other pupils who need them.

- Q. I understand why it's important for older kids to attend, but why is it so important when they're younger?
- A. It's really important that children make a good start as early as possible in their school life. If they are absent a lot they will fall behind academically and socially, and this will make the move into secondary school much more difficult. If children get into the habit of thinking that it is OK to miss school, it will definitely get worse as they get older. Most parents faced with a teenager who refuses to go to school wish they had been firmer about attendance when their child was younger.
- Q. My child cries when I take her to school. What can I do?
- A. It's not uncommon for young people to feel anxious about going to school, and it is often tough for parents to take a firm line. However, it is really important for children to get into the habit of going to school right from the start. It's very rare for a young person to continue to be distressed after they have arrived in school and settled in, so don't sit worrying all day. School staff are experts at helping young people who are anxious, so if it is happening regularly, talk about it with staff.
- Q. My child always says they feel ill. How do I know it's OK to send them to school?
- A. Unless they have an obvious medical condition, it is usually worth sending your child to school. Once young people are at school, they are usually too busy to feel anxious. If your child becomes ill at school, we will get in touch.
- Q. Sometimes my child is really tired. Surely, it's better to let them sleep rather than send them in to school?
- A. The problem with doing this is that they get into a different sleep pattern, and it makes the problem worse. Many young people are tempted to play games or be on their phones late at night. It's important to help them take responsibility for being ready for school the next day. If they are tired, they will sleep better the following evening.
- Q. I'm stressed about other things. If my kid won't get out of bed there's nothing I can do, is there?
- A. It is extremely stressful if your child refuses to come to school, especially if you have other pressures in your life. However, don't be tempted to accept it. Please come and speak with staff at school. Together we may be able to find a solution. If your child isn't attending and you don't contact us, our only recourse is legal action.
- Q. My child is being bullied and doesn't want to go to school.
- A. We need to work together if you think your child is being bullied. Please read our anti-bullying policy and get in touch with us.

### Understanding absence percentages

You may wonder why a school would be concerned if your child's attendance is below 96%. This may make it easier to understand:

95% equates to half a day off every two weeks

90% equates to a day off every two weeks

85% equates to one and a half days off every two weeks

80% equates to one whole day off every week

**A secondary age child whose attendance is 80% will have missed ONE WHOLE YEAR of education by the time they leave school**

### Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the guidance [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE),

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](#)
- Children missing education: Statutory guidance for local authorities 2016
- Working together to improve school attendance, DfE guidance 2024

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

