

SEVENOAKS SCHOOL

reference	Policy – AA3
Category	A. Student and Parent Facing
Name	Attendance Policy
Purpose	The school has responsibility to proactively manage and improve attendance across the school community. This policy is intended to guide, assist and empower the school to maintain excellent levels of attendance and to meet the responsibility to provide an agreed framework within which consistent practices and procedures can be applied.
Scope	Students, Staff, Parents
Regulatory or legal requirement addressed by policy	Working together to improve school attendance (February 2024) Children missing education Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school Suspensions and exclusions, alternative provision Keeping Children Safe in Education.
Policies referred to	Safeguarding Policy Behaviour Policy
Policy owned by	Deputy Head Pastoral
Date effective from	September 2024
Published on website	Yes

1 Scope of this policy

- 1.1 The school acknowledges its continuing responsibility proactively to manage and improve attendance across the school community. Attendance is the foundation of positive outcomes for all students, and improving attendance is everyone's responsibility.
- 1.2 This policy is intended to guide, assist and empower the school to maintain excellent levels of attendance and to meet the responsibility to provide an agreed framework within which consistent practices and procedures can be applied. Parents will be directed towards this policy when their children join the school and when there are major revisions.
- 1.3 Good attendance begins with school being somewhere students want to be. Therefore, the school will strive to be a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environment where all students are keen and ready to learn.
- 1.4 Children who attend school regularly and punctually are best able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them and the vast majority of our students fall into this category; the school has excellent levels of attendance for individual students.
- 1.5 Some students find it harder than others to attend school and therefore at all stages we will work in partnership with students and parents to remove barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place.

2 Aims

- 2.1 The school will work in close partnership with parents and students to maintain excellent levels of attendance and punctuality for all students.
- 2.2 The school aims to develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance by:
 - Setting high expectations for every student in relation to punctuality and attendance.
 - Communicating these expectations clearly and consistently to students and parents, and promoting the value of high attendance in correspondence, meetings and assemblies.
 - Accurately completing attendance registers and having effective day to day processes in place to follow up absence.
 - Systematically monitoring and analysing attendance data to identify patterns and trends, target improvement efforts and put effective strategies in place.
- 2.3 The school aims to minimise persistent or severe absence of students by:
 - Building strong relationships with families, listening to them to understand barriers to attendance and working with them to remove these barriers and facilitate support.
 - Holding regular meetings with the parents of students who the school (and/or local authority) consider to be vulnerable to poor attendance, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school.
 - Identifying students who need support from wider partners as quickly as possible and making the necessary referrals.
 - Being particularly mindful of students absent from school due to mental or physical ill health or SEND, and providing them with additional support. See Appendix 4 for more details.
 - Working effectively with the local authority, other schools and other local partners where necessary to overcome barriers to attendance, including by formalising support or enforcing attendance through statutory intervention.

3 Responsibilities – the School

- 3.1 Daily registration is a legal requirement and must be done accurately. Attendance registers are legal documents.
- 3.2 The Governors are required to support, guide and challenge the school in its efforts to improve attendance, and ensure school leaders fulfil their expectations and statutory duties.

3.3 The Deputy Head Pastoral is the school's Senior Attendance Champion and is responsible for the strategic approach to attendance across the school; managing student attendance; and ensuring staff receive adequate training on attendance. Administrative responsibility is delegated to Admin staff.

3.4 The Senior Deputy Head is responsible for providing registration data for inspections. The DfE requires us to maintain and share student attendance statistics. The school reports annually to the Governing Body's Education Committee on student attendance and absence.

3.5 The school analyses attendance data to monitor attendance patterns and trends. This ensures that its efforts to improve attendance are directed, and appropriate support is provided, to those students, families and student cohorts most in need of assistance. See section 8 for further details.

3.6 Tutors, teaching staff and boarding house staff are responsible for ensuring that students have registered.

3.7 If students have failed to register in tutor period or period 5, Admin will follow up with the relevant staff and/or parents and carers to ascertain the whereabouts of the student and inform the school response to the absence.

3.8 Tutors will maintain oversight of the attendance and punctuality of their tutees, applying sanctions where appropriate and escalating concerns to the Divisional Head or the Deputy Head Pastoral. This includes where an emerging pattern of lateness or absence is observed, or in the case of unexplained absence.

3.9 A student's individual circumstances are always taken into consideration when there are attendance or punctuality issues. The school's attendance procedures can be adapted to reflect the specific needs of students who face particular barriers to attending such as long term medical issues, anxiety or Emotionally Based School Avoidance.

3.10 Where there has been long term absence for any reason, a reintegration plan will be developed with the student, the parents, and the pastoral team. The school will engage with external agencies as required.

3.11 In the event of attendance that falls below 90% over the course of a half-term, the Deputy Head Pastoral will (subject to case-by-case evaluation):

- Arrange a meeting between the Tutor, Divisional Head, the parents, and the student.
- Offer specific support to parents and individual students, both in school and externally.
- Facilitate case conferences and other meetings between all involved directly in the care of the student.

3.12 The school has a duty to inform the local authority if there are reasonable grounds to believe the student will have to miss 15 consecutive school days or more for illness or the student's total number of school days missed during the current school year because of illness (whether consecutive or cumulative) will reach or exceed 15 school days.

3.13 The school seeks to build relationships with families, listen to and understand barriers to attendance and work with students and families to remove them. However, where it is not appropriate for the school to provide support (e.g. for an unauthorised holiday in term time), or there is a lack of engagement from parents, support may be formalised in conjunction with the local authority and/or sanctions will be sought.

3.14 If the school is told that a student is leaving to attend another school, the Admissions team will establish the student's new address, the name and address of the new school and the date the student will start there. Confirmation will then be sought from the receiving school.

3.15 If there are concerns about any aspect of a transfer or if a student has "disappeared" the matter will be discussed with the DSL and brought without delay to the attention of the Children Missing Education Officer in the relevant local authority.

4 Responsibilities – Parents and Carers

4.1 The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. Parents have a legal duty to ensure their child attends school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

4.2 Parents should:

- Ensure that their children arrive at school on time, properly dressed and ready to learn. Tutor period is an important first port of call and students are expected to be in their tutor room by 8.30am each morning.
- Instil in their children an appreciation of the importance of attending school regularly.
- Impress upon their children the need to observe the school's Code of Conduct. This includes the need to follow the school's registration procedures.
- Work in partnership with the school to resolve issues which may lead to non-attendance.
- Notify the school by email at the earliest opportunity, and at the latest by 8.30am, if their child is absent and also provide an explanation on the first day of any absence (and for any other subsequent day or period). If it is known that the absence will be for longer than one day, parents should specify this in their initial notification to the school.
- Avoid arranging medical/dental appointments during school hours wherever possible.
- Avoid booking holidays or arranging family events during term time; authorisation will not be granted for these absences.
- Inform the School in advance of appointments outside of school (e.g. doctor, dentist, orthodontist) by emailing the Tutor and Admin, giving approximate times of leaving and returning to school.

4.3 The school may ask parents to provide a written note explaining a child's absence from school. In most cases, this should be sufficient evidence for the school to authorise the absence. In some cases, the school may request supporting evidence, such as a prescription, appointment card or GP letter.

5 Punctuality

5.1 The School takes active steps to encourage excellent levels of punctuality. Lateness is monitored and followed up by Tutors.

5.2 School documentation clearly states the time at which each school session begins and finishes.

5.3 When a student arrives late and the register is still open, they will be marked as 'late' but counted as present for that session. If they arrive after the register has closed, they will be marked as unauthorised absent for that session.

5.4 When a student arrives late having missed registration, they should sign in at reception with Admin.

6 Authorising Absence and Approved Educational Activity

6.1 The fact that a parent has provided a note or other explanation in relation to a particular absence does not, of itself, oblige the School to accept it.

6.2 Absence will only be authorised if permission has been granted in accordance with the 'Leave of Absence of Students' guidelines – see Appendix 1. Other absences will be marked as unauthorised.

6.3 The School actively discourages parents from requesting absence during term time because it is disruptive to the education of students. This includes in the days immediately prior to and following an exeat, half term or long holiday. All students, whether day or boarding, are expected to adhere to all pre-published arrival and departure times; travel arrangements should be made accordingly.

7 Unauthorised Absence

7.1 In cases of unauthorised absence, the student has responsibility to catch up on any work missed. The School will not set work or mark work completed by students during an unauthorised absence or provide additional support or tuition on their return.

7.2 In the case of unauthorised absence during School examination periods, internal examinations will not be set at an alternative time.

7.3 Schools are required to inform the local authority of any students who are regularly absent from school, have irregular attendance, or have missed 10 school days or more without the school's permission. In cases where parents wilfully withhold a student from school, or persistently refuse to co-operate with efforts aimed at effecting a return to satisfactory school attendance, the DSL will seek advice from the relevant local authority.

8 Analysis of attendance and absence data

8.1 The school recognises that as poor attendance is habitual, prevention and early intervention is crucial. Alongside the work of tutors in early identification of patterns of absence and concerns, regular data analysis plays an important role in identifying and providing additional support to students or student cohorts that need it.

8.2 Data analysis also enables the school to look at historic and emerging patterns across the school and develop strategies to address them.

8.3 To achieve this the School:

- Monitors and analyses attendance patterns and trends for individual students, cohorts and year groups (including their punctuality) across the school.
- Delivers intervention and support in a targeted way to students and families, especially where student at risk of persistent or severe absence is identified.
- Provides termly attendance reports to Divisional Heads to facilitate discussions with tutors and students.
- Conducts thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full year data to identify patterns and trends.
- Provides data and reports to the Governors.

Appendix 1 – School Attendance and Absence Procedures

Registration – daily routine

- Morning registration takes place in tutor group meetings.
- Special arrangements are made if pre-school activities cut across registration; these are the responsibility of staff in charge who must send registration information to the office. The Deputy Head Pastoral and Deputy Head Co-curriculum must have approved the activity first.
 - 08.25 Warning bell.
 - 08.30 Registration by iSAMS. All students who have arrived in their tutor rooms by this time should be marked as present.
 - 08.35 Move to assemblies. On the days when tutor groups are not attending assembly meetings continue until 08.55.
 - 08.40 Assembly starts.
 - 09.00 Period 1 begins.
- Teaching staff register students every lesson on iSAMS.
- Registers may (but need not be) taken in optional club or activity sessions, whether before, during or after the school day. These are for internal purposes only.
- Afternoon registration takes place during Period 5 - whether this is lessons or activities.
 - 14.25 Registration by iSAMS.
 - 16.10 End of timetabled school day.

Registration - procedures

- The register for a morning or afternoon session will remain open for 30 minutes after the initial register is taken. Students who arrive late but within this window should be marked as late (but present), with the number of minutes late noted.
- Students who arrive outside of the 30 minute window should be registered as unauthorised absent (code 'U').
- When a student does not arrive in a given session and the reason for absence is unknown, the student should be coded as 'N' ('No reason yet provided for absence').
- Admin will follow up on students coded as 'N', by liaising with the relevant tutor and Divisional Head, as well as the Health Centre.
- If an absence remains unexplained after this process, Admin will contact parents or carers to ascertain the reason for the absence and when the student will return. The correct code will be inputted as soon as the reason is ascertained, and no later than 5 working days after the session.
- If parents or carers are unaware of the whereabouts of their child, the missing student protocol below will be enacted.

Lateness

- Tutors will monitor the punctuality of their tutees. Where a pattern of repeated lateness is identified – three times in a week or a sustained pattern – the Tutor will have a conversation with the student to ascertain the reason for the lateness and any mitigating circumstances. It is likely that a Tutor detention will be issued, with further escalation where necessary.
- In certain cases, it may be appropriate for the Divisional Head to call home to gather further information.

A missing or absconding student

Daytime Hours 08.00 - 17.00

- Seek information from Admin, the Health Centre and the student's Tutor, Divisional Head and if

applicable BHM as to the whereabouts of the student.

- Ask other students to contact the missing student.
- If a satisfactory explanation cannot be found, notify the Deputy Head Pastoral and Senior Deputy Head.
- Inform parents and carers.
- The steps taken thereafter will inevitably depend upon the following factors: the past history of the student; the nature of the disappearance and the time lapse involved; the assessed degree of risk to the student.
- If the student is assessed to be at risk the police should be informed immediately on 999.

After Hours 17.00 - 08.00

If a boarding student is missing the following action is to be taken:

- Notify the BHM immediately. They will determine what events were scheduled for that evening and decide the order of the search.
- Roommates and close friends should be questioned carefully to ascertain if there is any background knowledge which might explain the absence. The urgency and importance of the situation should be stressed, especially the fact that if they know/suspect anything it is better to say something now than later on, when the situation may have escalated.
- Call an immediate House meeting and ask for information, stressing the gravity of the situation.
- If no response, notify the Deputy Head Boarding, Deputy Head Pastoral and Senior Deputy Head, who will assess the situation and help make the decision to involve others as appropriate.
- Notify parents and educational guardians.

If kidnap is suspected or known:

- Ensure that the Senior Leadership Team have been informed; they will initiate the Critical Incident protocol.
- The information must remain confidential. If students are aware, they must understand this; they may need to be isolated.

Leave of absence of students

- When a student is unable to attend school due to illness or injury, parents should inform Admin and the tutor with as much notice as possible, and at the latest by 8.30am on each day of absence.
- If students have been given a bespoke leave of absence they should as a courtesy inform their teachers in advance.

Apart from illness or injury, leave of absence should be requested from:

Tutors for:

- Study leave; the school will publish dates of study leave for examinations. Sixth Form students may also have study leave for university admissions tests and the US universities' SATs (see Particular Points for the Sixth Form, Study Leave).
- Medical and dental appointments resulting from emergencies or which cannot be adjourned until out of school hours without genuine hardship.
- Driving tests – but not lessons, unless they fall within Private Study Periods.
- University visits (see 'Limits to attendance at Open Days' in Staff Handbook).

Divisional Heads for one day for:

- Visits, interviews or courses directly concerned with a student's future education or career.
- Important festivals e.g. weddings/funerals of near relations.

- Religious festivals of great significance.
- Participation in high level sports, music or drama events.

The Deputy Head Pastoral for all other requests. These should be made in writing with as much notice as possible. They include:

- Requests for boarders to miss a day or more before the end of term or the beginning or end of half term*. (BHM's can authorise half days.)
- Any requests for more than one day of absence.
- The provision of a temporary, time-limited part-time timetable, as part of a broader reintegration plan for a student at risk of persistent or severe absence.
- Exceptional circumstances**. Each application will be considered individually, taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

* Please note that authorisation will not typically be granted for a request to leave early for an exeat weekend; travel arrangements should be made which fit around the stated exeat window, which begins at 4.10pm on the Friday. Boarding students should stay with guardians on the Friday night if it is desirable or necessary to take a flight for the weekend and they do not wish to arrive at their destination late that night.

**As per DfE guidance, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation will not be judged an exceptional circumstance.

Contact Details

Admin	admin@sevenoaksschool.org	To notify the school of an absence, whether unexpected or planned
Tutor	Tutor's email address	To notify the school of an unexpected absence or request a short term absence
Divisional Head	Divisional Head's email address	To request a one day absence
Deputy Head Pastoral (the school's Senior Attendance Champion)	jdl@sevenoaksschool.org	To request a longer or exceptional absence, or to discuss any aspect of the school's Attendance Policy or procedures

Appendix 2 – Off-games/activities procedure

Injury

- Admin must be notified of every injury by a call or email from home, the Health Centre or matron/tutor for boarders. The tutor should always be copied into correspondence. A student may not self-diagnose an injury.
- If a student is stated as being off games or activities for a specific period of time, an email is not required for each separate instance. For extended absence, a doctor's or physio's note is required.
- Students who are confirmed as injured should attend the library during games unless parents or the Health Centre have given permission to attend fitness rehab.
- If a student is able to take part in some aspect of a training or activity session but not all, they should notify the teacher beforehand.

Illness

- Students who have been categorised as ill prior to the start of the school day (via an email from parents) will by default be at home; they should not be deemed well enough to come to lessons but not well enough to do games or activities. Equally, they should not miss lessons in the morning and then come into school to participate in sport or activities in the afternoon.
- If students present as not well enough to do games or activities having been in school for lessons, the Health Centre staff will decide whether they are well enough to register with PEAdmin/Service/etc and do the scheduled activity as normal, or they need to remain in the Health Centre for the duration of the session, for their health to be monitored. If severely unwell, day students will need to be collected by their parents. Students who are unwell should not be working in the library or elsewhere on school campus.
- Students who are unwell, have medical appointments or have a severe long-term injury such as a broken leg may be granted permission to go home in the afternoon. They must sign out at Reception in Manor House either directly after P4 or straight after lunch (this must be before 13:00 on a Saturday when Reception closes). They should return promptly home or to their Boarding House.

General principles and procedures:

- PEAdmin completes all sport registers (using SOCS CoCo) and updates isams accordingly, cross-checking absentees with the daily register and off games register. An absence report is then produced, which is sent to tutors. A similar process runs for Service and CCF.
- Tutors should seek an explanation for every absence and pass the information back to the relevant department and Admin (and the relevant Div. Head, if appropriate). Students who insist they were in fact present should be asked if they arrived late and failed to register; this is still their responsibility.
- Students who fail to follow correct procedure should receive a Tutor's Detention.
- Where supervision in the Library is inappropriate for a particular student on a particular occasion, or due to long term injury/sickness, the Health Centre/parents/BHM should approach the relevant Div Head for exemption. If exemption is granted, Admin should be informed; they will update the registration codes accordingly.
- If parents request that a student goes home at lunch time e.g. because of fatigue, permission must be granted by the Div Head, and Admin and the tutor must be informed. The same is true if parents request that a student misses games to work in the afternoon, though permission for this should only be granted in exceptional circumstances, and the Deputy Head Pastoral should be informed in each instance.
- Students who are off games for a PE lesson or CCF should attend the session (in kit where possible) as normal. Students should not simply present to the library.

Games registration procedure – weekdays

- All students register with the designated member of the PE department at 2.25pm, including those who are injured.
- Students then go to fitness rehab or the library (till 4.10pm) or stay with their team – this must be agreed with whichever member of the PE department takes the register.
- PE staff who take the register will send PEAdmin a message to confirm the above.
- PEAdmin then sends the library list to 2 x duty rota staff – one of them checks them in at the start of P5 and the other checks them out at the end of P6. Students need to study upstairs near to the duty member of staff and should seek permission to leave the library for a comfort break. The duty member of staff is responsible for ensuring that those who are on the list are signed in and remain in the library throughout.
- PEAdmin also sends the rehab list to staff in the fitness suite (and library staff), so they are accounted for. These students will do rehab during P5 and then head to the library during P6 where they will be checked in and out by the duty member of staff.

Games registration procedure – Saturday

- All students who are injured are required to register with PEAdmin at 12:30pm in the PE office. They will then be sent to fitness rehab (12:30-1:30pm) or the library (12:30-2:30pm).
- Sometimes a member of the PE department will send a message to PEAdmin asking for an off-games student to come and watch the training session. PEAdmin will register them accordingly.
- PEAdmin then liaises with library and fitness suite staff as above.

Appendix 3 – Registration Codes

Code	Description	Meaning
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Education off site (no Dual reg)	Approval Education Activity
C	Exceptional circumstance	Authorised Absence
C1	Regulated performance or regulated employment abroad	Authorised Absence
C2	Part-time timetable	Authorised Absence
D	Dual registration	Approved Education Activity
E	Suspended or Excluded	Authorised Absence
G	Family holiday (not agreed)	Unauthorised Absence
I	Illness	Authorised Absence
J1	Interview	Approved Education Activity
K	Education arranged by local authority	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised Absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence*	Unauthorised Absence
O	Unauthorised Absence	Unauthorised Absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
Q	Unable to attend due to a lack of access arrangements	Not a possible attendance
R	Religious observance	Authorised Absence
S	Study leave	Authorised Absence
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Authorised Absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised Absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Non-compulsory school age absence	Not a possible attendance
Y1	Normal school transport not available	Not a possible attendance
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Not a possible attendance

Code	Description	Meaning
Y3	Part of the school closed	Not a possible attendance
Y4	Whole school unexpectedly closed	Not a possible attendance
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Not a possible attendance
Y6	Unable to attend - public health guidance or law	Not a possible attendance
Y7	Unable to attend - any other unavoidable cause	Not a possible attendance
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Code not collected
#	Planned whole school closure	Code not collected

* Where absence is recorded as code N (reason not yet established) in the attendance register, the correct absence code should be entered as soon as the reason is ascertained, but no more than 5 school days after the session. Code N must not therefore be left on the pupil's attendance record indefinitely; if a reason for absence cannot be established within 5 school days, schools must amend the pupil's record to Code O.

Appendix 4 - Students absent from school due to mental or physical ill health or SEND*

**Taken from Working together to improve school attendance*

- Many children will experience normal but difficult emotions that make them nervous about attending school, such as worries about friendships, schoolwork, examinations or variable moods. It is important to note that these students are still expected to attend school regularly - in many instances, attendance at school may serve to help with the underlying issue as being away from school might exacerbate it, and a prolonged period of absence may heighten anxious feelings about attending in future.
- School staff play a critical role in communicating this expectation to parents. They should also work alongside families to ensure that such circumstances do not act as a barrier to regular attendance by mitigating anxious feelings in school as much as possible.
- Schools may also find it helpful to refer to DfE's non-statutory guidance on mental health issues affecting a student's attendance for case study examples.
- Some students face more complex barriers to attendance. This can include students who have long term physical or mental health conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Their right to an education is the same as any other student and therefore the attendance ambition for these students should be the same as it is for any other student but additional support may need to be provided.
- In developing this support, the usual processes relevant to any attendance case apply:
 - Understanding the individual needs of the student and family
 - Working in partnership with the student and family to put in-school support in place and working with other the local authority and other agencies where external support is needed (and available)
 - Regularly reviewing and updating the support approach to make sure it continues to meet individual needs.
- In cases of both long term physical or mental ill health, school staff are not expected to diagnose or treat physical or mental health conditions, but they are expected to work together with families and other agencies with the aim of ensuring regular attendance for every student. They should:
 - Facilitate any relevant pastoral support with the clear aim of improving attendance as much as possible whilst supporting the underlying health issue.
 - Consider adjustments to practice and policies to help meet the needs of students who are struggling to attend school, as well as making formal reasonable adjustments under section 20 of the Equality Act 2010 where a student has a disability. Any adjustments should be agreed by, and regularly reviewed with the student and their parents.
 - Ensure joined up pastoral care is in place where needed and consider whether a time-limited phased return to school would be appropriate, for example for those affected by anxious feelings about school attendance.
 - Make a sickness return to the local authority if a student is recorded in the attendance register as absent using code I (unable to attend because of sickness) and there are reasonable grounds to believe the student will have to miss 15 consecutive school days or more for illness or the student's total number of school days missed during the current school year because of illness (whether consecutive or cumulative) will reach or exceed 15 school days.
- For students with special educational needs and disabilities, schools are expected to:
 - Work in partnership with parents to develop specific support approaches for attendance for students with special educational needs and disabilities, including, where applicable, ensuring the provision outlined in the student's education, health and care plan is accessed.
 - Work in partnership with families to help support routines where school transport is regularly being missed and work with other partners to encourage the scheduling of additional support interventions or medical appointments outside of the main school day.

- Establish strategies for removing the in-school barriers these students face, including considering support or reasonable adjustments for uniform, transport, routines, access to support in school and lunchtime arrangements.
- Consider adjustments to practice and policies to help meet the needs of students who are struggling to attend school, as well as making formal reasonable adjustments under section 20 of the Equality Act 2010 where a student has a disability. Any adjustments should be agreed by, and regularly reviewed with the student and their parents.
- Ensure joined up pastoral care is in place where needed and consider whether a time-limited phased return to school would be appropriate.
- Attendance is everyone's business so in many of these cases school will not be able to fully support a student without the assistance of a range of other agencies. School should:
 - Make use of school nursing services and mental health support teams where they are available.
 - Consider whether additional support from other external partners (including the local authority, children and young people's mental health services, GPs or other health services) would be appropriate and make referrals.
 - Where external support is provided work together with those services to deliver any subsequent support.
- If the child has an education health and care plan, school staff should:
 - Communicate with the local authority where a student's attendance falls or they become aware of barriers to attendance that relate to the student's needs.
 - Where possible agree adjustments to its policies and practices that are consistent with the special educational provision set out in the education health and care plan in collaboration with parents.
 - Where needed work with the local authority to review and amend the education health and care plan to incorporate the additional or different attendance support identified.
- Medical evidence for recording absences should only be needed in a minority of cases. Where a student's health need means they need reasonable adjustments or support because it is complex or long term, schools can seek medical evidence to better understand the needs of the student and identify the most suitable provision in line with the statutory guidance in 'supporting students at school with medical conditions' or 'arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs'.
- Where parents do not engage in support, schools should work with the local authority or other local partners to formalise that support and as a last resort, enforce attendance through legal intervention.
- Schools should ensure data is regularly monitored for students with long term illnesses and or special educational needs or disabilities including at board and governing body meetings and in Targeting Support Meetings with the local authority so that additional support from other partners is accessed where necessary.
- In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a student's best interests, there may be a need for a school to provide a student of compulsory school age with less than full-time education through a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a student from attending school or another setting full-time and a part-time timetable is used to help the student access as much education as possible. A part-time timetable should not be used to manage a student's behaviour.
- A part-time timetable should:
 - Have the agreement of both the school and the parent the student normally lives with.
 - Have a clear ambition and be part of the student's wider support, health care or reintegration plan.
 - Have regular review dates which include the student and their parents to ensure it is only in place for the shortest time necessary.
 - Have a proposed end date that takes into account the circumstances of the student, after which the student is expected to attend full-time, either at school or alternative provision. It can,

however, be extended as part of the regular review process. In some limited cases, a student with a long-term health condition may require a parttime timetable for a prolonged period.

- Where the student has a social worker, the school is expected to keep them informed and involved in the process.
- If the student has an education health and care plan, the school should discuss the part-time timetable with the local authority so that any support package that is in place can be reviewed as swiftly as possible.
- In agreeing to a part-time timetable, a school has agreed to a student being absent from school for part of the week or day and therefore must record the absence accordingly (normally using code X or C2).

Appendix 5 – Persistent and Severe Absence*

*Taken from *Working together to improve school attendance*

- Where absence escalates and students miss 10% or more of school (equivalent to 1 day or more a fortnight across a full school year), schools and local authorities are expected to work together to put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers to attendance and reengage these students. In doing so, schools should sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence and understand the importance of school as a place of safety and support for children who might be facing difficulties, rather than reaching immediately for punitive approaches.
- Particular focus should be given by all partners to students who are absent from school more than they are present (those missing 50% or more of school). These severely absent students may find it more difficult to be in school or face bigger barriers to their regular attendance and as such are likely to need more intensive support across a range of partners. A concerted effort is therefore needed across all relevant services to prioritise them. All partners should work together to make this group the top priority for support – this may include specific support with attendance or a whole family plan, but it may also include consideration for an education, health and care plan or an alternative form of educational provision where necessary to overcome the barriers to being in school.
- If all avenues of support have been facilitated by schools, local authorities, and other partners, and the appropriate educational support or placements (e.g. an education, health and care plan) have been provided but severe absence for unauthorised reasons continues, it is likely to constitute neglect. Schools and local authorities should be especially conscious of any potential safeguarding issues in these cases and where these remain, conduct a full children’s social care assessment. Further information is available in the statutory guidance on Keeping Children Safe in Education.
- In all cases, schools and local authorities are expected to make patterns of both persistent and severe absence a focus of their regular data monitoring and identify students and cohorts who need targeted attendance support as quickly as possible. Both persistent and severe absence should also be central to school, trust, and local authority level strategies for improving attendance.

Effective school attendance improvement and management

