



**Cleethorpes Academy**

## Attendance Policy

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<b>Approved by:</b>	<b>LGB</b>	<b>TBC</b>
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***For Office Use Only:***

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**Lincolnshire Gateway**  
Academies Trust

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## 1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

## 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) and [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of the [Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of the [Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment](#)

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

## 3. Roles and responsibilities

### 3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the Principal to account for the implementation of this policy

### 3.2 The Principal

The Principal is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

### **3.3 The designated senior leaders responsible for attendance**

The designated senior leaders are responsible for:

- leading attendance across the school
- offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- having an oversight of data analysis
- devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leaders responsible for attendance are Mr Ritchie and Miss Watts, supported by Miss Dixon and Mrs Staff. These members of staff can be contacted via the Academy office.

### **3.4 The attendance team**

The school attendance team are responsible for:

- monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- reporting concerns about attendance to a designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the Principal
- working with the Local Authority Education Welfare Officers (EWO) and the Academy's pastoral team to tackle persistent absence
- advising the Principal when to issue fixed-penalty notices

### **3.5 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 promptly at the start of each lesson using Brom Com.

### **3.6 School administration staff**

School administration attendance staff will:

- take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- make calls and send messages to chase absence on a daily basis

### **3.7 Parents/carers**

Parents/carers are expected to:

- make sure their child attends every day on time
- call the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

### **3.8 Pupils**

Pupils are expected to:

- attend school every day on time and attend every lesson on their timetable

## **4. Recording attendance**

### **4.1 Attendance register**

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register. We will take our attendance register at the start of the tutor period and every lesson of the day. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- the original entry
- the amended entry
- the reason for the amendment
- the name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- whether the absence is authorised or not
- the nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- the nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8:40am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8:45am and will be kept open until 9:30am. The register for the afternoon session will be taken at 12.25pm.

### **4.2 Unplanned absence**

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9:00am or as soon as practically possible by calling the Academy admin staff (see also section 7).

We 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 Academy 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. We 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.

### **4.3 Planned absence**

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. Parent/Carer must complete a Leave of Absence form giving at least two full weeks' notice.

The Academy will check legislation and guidance, including what constitutes 'special circumstances' and what constitutes 'exceptional circumstances', and reasons for authorising/not authorising Leave of Absence.

The Academy may telephone the parent/carer if insufficient information is submitted. The Principal may grant or deny the request.

The Academy will complete the 'Reasons for Refusal' on Leave of Absence form. The Academy will return the form to the parent, files copies of all paperwork as evidence, copy retained for the Education Welfare Service and the attendance team.

The Academy will monitor attendance/absence over the appropriate period.

The Academy will inform the Education Welfare Service of related unauthorised absence. The Academy and Education Welfare Service liaise to determine the course of action which may include Referral, action towards Penalty Notice, Fast Track to Improving Attendance (up to and including Prosecution).

Please note: All requests for Leave of Absence must be submitted prior to a student's absence, as permission cannot be given retrospectively.

We encourage all 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.

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

#### **4.4 Lateness and punctuality**

##### **What time will the gates be opened in the morning?**

- Staff will open the gates at approximately 8.15am when breakfast club opens in the hall.
- Staff will greet the children at the gates.

##### **What happens at 8:40am?**

- All students must enter the school and report to their designated tutor groups.
- A custodian will begin locking the gates.

##### **What happens if a child arrives after 8:45am?**

- If a child is late, they will need to enter via the side reception entrance until 9.15. After 9.15 they should report to main reception as all other gates will be closed.
- Any child who is late will be recorded as such, and will receive a C2, a half hour lunchtime detention.

##### **When must registers be completed by teachers?**

- Registers should be taken in silence to ensure accuracy (and for good behaviour), and staff should complete a head count upon completion to check the number of students present in the room corresponds to the number marked present on the register.
- They must be taken and submitted in the first 5 minutes of each lesson.
- The register marks must reflect the children in the class at that time (obviously, this might, on occasions, include a child who has arrived but is out of the classroom for any reason when the register is taken).

## **How should registers be marked for any child who is not present?**

- An 'N' mark must always be entered for any child who is not present when the class teacher takes the register. If any reason for absence has been provided, the mark will be edited by a member of the administration team.
- If a child arrives late, the teacher must edit the mark directly to reflect this.
- This includes any absence we have been notified about in advance.

## **What procedures are in place for children who are persistently late?**

- If a child is persistently late, the office will notify the child's Head of Year. The Head of Year will contact home for the child to discuss the child's lateness with a parent/carer, to ascertain why they have been late, to ensure parents/carers are aware of the persistent lateness, and to outline the importance of good punctuality. They will also escalate the consequence for the behaviour in line with the school's behaviour policy.
- If there is no improvement over an agreed period of time, the Head of year will consider next steps which may include involvement from the attendance team, a formal letter or a meeting with parents/carers.

### **4.5 Following up unexplained absence**

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the Academy will:

- Send a text message to the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the text is not answered, we will follow up with a phone call to give parents a further opportunity to respond. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may ask the pastoral support assistants or the attendance team to visit, or call the police.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained.
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving the attendance team.

### **4.6 Reporting to parents/carers**

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels using the Brom Com app. Parents can access up to date information regarding their child's attendance.

## **5. Authorised and unauthorised absence**

### **5.1 Approval for term-time absence**

The Principal will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the Principal's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

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

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 2 full weeks' notice before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the academy office. The Principal may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- 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
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

## 5.2 Legal sanctions

From August 2024, under the new national framework, all schools are required to consider a fine when a child of compulsory school age has missed 10 or more sessions (5 days) for unauthorised reasons, in a rolling period of 10 school weeks. The period of 10 weeks can span different terms or school years. The threshold can be met with any combination of unauthorised absence.

The local authority retains the discretion to issue a fine before the threshold is met. If issued with a fine or penalty notice, each parent is fined £80, which rises to £160 each if not paid within 21 days. In the case of repeated fines, if a parent receives a second fine for the same child within any three-year period, this will be charged at the higher rate of £160. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Fines per parent will be capped to two fines within any three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action like a parenting order or prosecution will be considered. If a parent is prosecuted and attends court because their child hasn't been attending the Academy, they can be fined up to £2,500.

Penalty notices can be issued by the Principal, 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
- Where 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.

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during academy hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the academy has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day). These penalty notices are not included in the National Framework, not subject to the same considerations about support being provided, and do not count towards the limit as part of the escalation process.

In these cases, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160.

## 5.3 Absence related to a mental health issue

School staff are not expected to diagnose mental health conditions or perform mental health interventions, but they are expected to work to ensure regular attendance for every child by ensuring that the school is a calm, safe and supportive environment. The school has a duty of care to promote children's mental health and wellbeing, and embed this into the whole-school ethos and policies. As part of curriculum coverage, the school has a legal

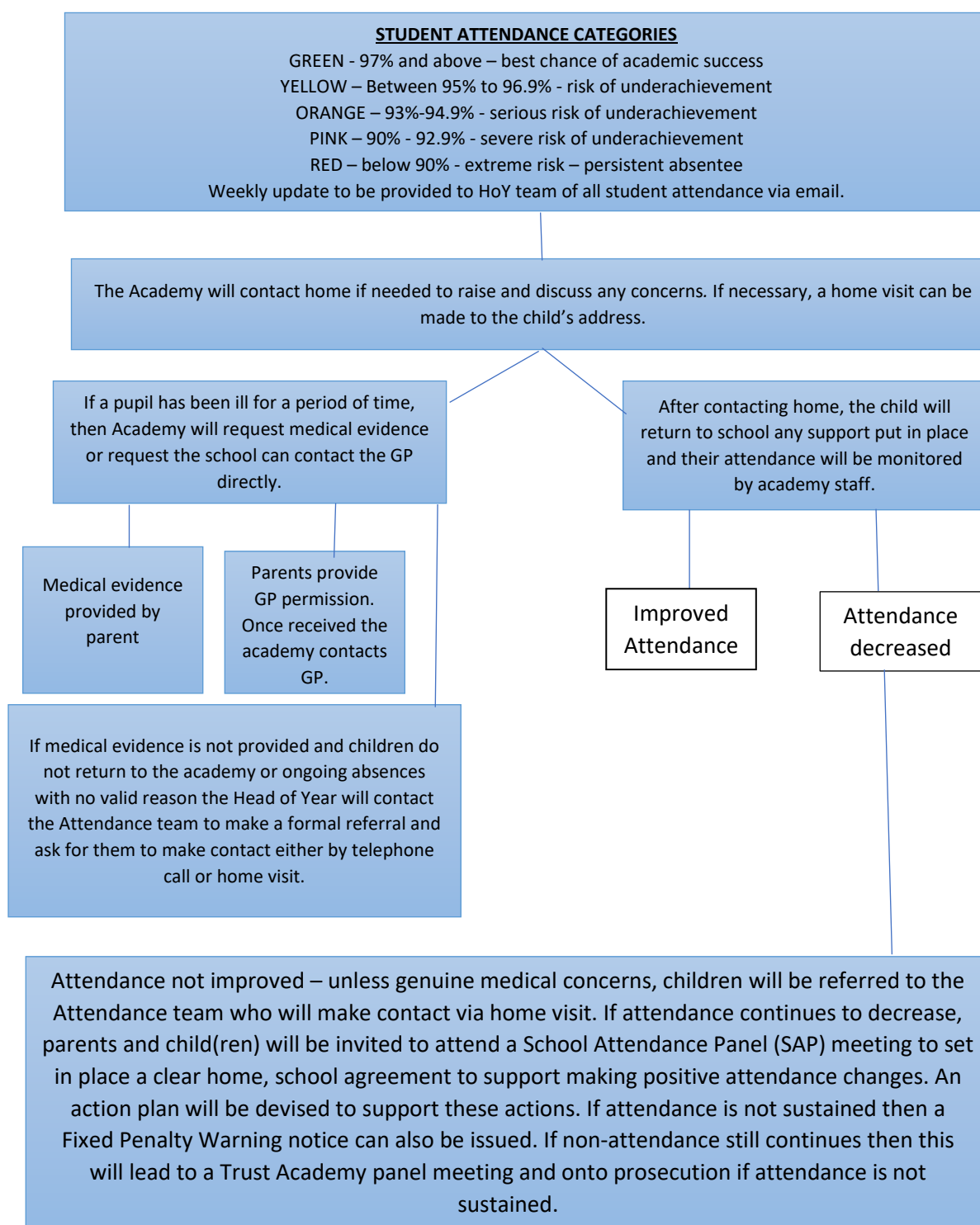
responsibility to teach pupils through a high quality, evidence-based and age-appropriate curriculum about respectful relationships; emotional wellbeing; mental health. This is in addition to supporting each individual's social and emotional development.

The school maintains high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of pupils who are anxious about attending school and recognise that, in many instances, attendance at school may serve to help with the underlying issue. The school recognises that there can be attendance challenges where a child has an SEMH issue, particularly a severe issue for which the child is receiving clinical treatment. Parents should notify school on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness, and any absences will be recorded as authorised where it is not possible for a pupil to attend due to illness, both physical and mental. Many children will experience normal but difficult emotions that make them nervous about attending school, such as worries about friendships, schoolwork, exams, or variable moods/ It is important to note that these pupils are still expected to attend school regularly. Any associated anxieties about attending school should be mitigated as much as possible by creating a plan to implement reasonable adjustments to alleviate specific barriers to attendance. These adjustments should be agreed by and regularly reviewed with all parties, including parents/carers.

## **6. Strategies for promoting attendance**

- We have a weekly attendance for students who attend 100% for the week. They receive a front of the queue pass if they are selected.
- We have half termly prize draws for attendance – students can win a £20 cinema voucher, a chocolate or a high street store £20 voucher.
- We hold large termly events in the academy which promote and reward excellent attendance.
- We hold termly discos which are free for students with 100% attendance to attend.
- The attendance team promote improved attendance by tracker cards, the students can submit to go into a prize draw.
- The attendance team visit absent students every 3 days but where possible will visit on day 1 or 2 to support the student and advocate the importance of attendance.
- Assemblies are held to encourage attendance and ensure the link between progress is known.
- Regular meetings and communication with home is prioritised when a student's attendance becomes a concern to ensure barriers are known and support is put in place.
- All form tutors contact home on the day of absence to check in with the family.
- The pastoral team work with the senior leadership team to identify any emerging patterns and ensure targeted intervention takes place.

## 7. Attendance monitoring



The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data weekly, half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern
- Parents will receive letters of concern where student attendance repeatedly falls. They may be invited into the academy to attend meetings with the attendance team.

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 to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

## 7.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

## 7.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to heads of year and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

## 7.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- Send letters to notify parents that their child has fallen into persistent absence at the end of each half term
- Add students to a daily 'watchlist' so that their attendance can be closely monitored
- Where possible a Home Visit will be made where children are absent for 3 days. If the Academy attendance team are able then this visit may be on the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> day of absence.

## 8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the SLT. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Principal.

## 9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

## 10. Daily Response to Absence

**First day absence** – Text message in the morning and followed up by a phone call. If the student is on the Safeguarding list or attendance list a visit takes place.

**Second and Third day absence** - Where possible the attendance team will visit all students on the first or second day of absence. All students will have received a visit by the third day of absence.

## Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
<b>Attending a place other than the school</b>		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
<b>Absent – leave of absence</b>		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment

<b>S</b>	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>C2</b>	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
<b>C</b>	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
<b>Absent – other authorised reasons</b>		
<b>T</b>	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>I</b>	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
<b>E</b>	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
<b>Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause</b>		
<b>Q</b>	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
<b>Y1</b>	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
<b>Y2</b>	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
<b>Y3</b>	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open

## Appendix 2 – School penalty notice fines

### School penalty notice fines for attendance changes from 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024

#### First offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for term time leave or low attendance the amount will be:

£80 per parent per child if paid within 21 days.

£160 per parent per child when paid within 28 days.

#### Second offence

**(within a rolling 3-year period)**

£160 per parent per child to be paid within 28 days.

#### **Third offence (and any further offences within rolling 3 years)**

The 3<sup>rd</sup> time a Penalty Notice is issued the case will be presented straight to the Magistrates Court. Fines of up to £2500 per parent per child can be issued.

**Note:** Cases found guilty in Magistrates Court can show up on parents future DBS certificates as a failure to safeguard a child's education

#### **5 consecutive days of term time leave**

Penalty Notice Fines will be issued for term time leave of 5 or more consecutive days.

The LA can issue fines for less than 5 days, under certain circumstances.

#### **10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10 - week period**

Penalty Notice Fines will be considered when there have been 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10-week period. This can go over school holidays.

#### **Per parent per child**

Penalty notice fines will be issued to each parent (including step parents) for each absent child.

For example, 3 siblings absent for leave during term time will result in each parent receiving three separate fines.