



Happisburgh CE VA Primary & Early Years School

*Learning for Life To be the best you can be
"Let your light shine" Matthew 5:16*



ATTENDANCE POLICY

Formally adopted by the Governing Board	
On:	18/01/21
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Chair of Governors: Amanda Sands	
Head teacher: Kathryn Jackson	

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1. Rationale

Happisburgh CE VA Primary & Early Years School is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all. We will endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance. School attendance is subject to various education laws and this school

attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education

Each year the school will set attendance/absence targets. The school will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals.

This policy will contain within it, the procedures that the school will use to meet its attendance targets.

2. Introduction/Aim

- a. Regular school attendance is essential if children are to achieve their full potential. [Research](#) commissioned by the Department for Education shows missing school for even a day can mean a child is less likely to achieve good grades, which can have a damaging effect on their life chances.
- b. At Happisburgh we believe that regular school attendance enables children both to maximise the educational opportunities available to them and to become responsible, organised and motivated adults. We value all pupils. As set out in this policy, we will work with families to identify the reasons for poor attendance and try to resolve any difficulties. We recognise that attendance is a matter for the whole school community. Our Attendance Policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is a strand that runs through all aspects of school improvement, supported by our policies on safeguarding, prevention of bullying, behaviour and inclusive learning. This policy also takes into account the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 and other relevant legislation.

3. Legal Framework

- 3.1 Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. A child is of Compulsory School Age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday. A child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they reach the age of 16.
- 3.2 Under the Education Act 1996, the Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that parents secure education for children of compulsory school age and where necessary, use legal enforcement.
- 3.3 The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended by 2016 regulations, require schools to take an attendance register twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and then again during the afternoon session. The register must record whether the pupil was:
 - Present;
 - Absent;
 - Present at approved educational activity; or
 - Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

4. Definitions

4.1 For the purpose of this policy, the school defines:

“Absence” as:

- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Not attending school for any reason

Regular attendance as:

- Attendance at a minimum of 96% of sessions the school is open to pupils unless their absence has been authorised

An “authorised absence” as:

- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave
- An absence due to a family emergency or unavoidable cause

An “unauthorised absence” as:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed
- Leaving school for no reason during the day

“Persistent absenteeism” (PA) as:

- Missing 10% or more of schooling across the year for any reason

“Parent” as

- Any natural parent, whether married or not
- Any parent who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility as defined in the Children Act (1989) for a child or young person
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person

5. Categorising Absence and Attendance

5.1 The table below shows the national codes which enable all schools to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way, and comply with the regulations.

Absence and Attendance Codes	
Present at School	
/ \	Registration code / \ : present in school / = am \ =pm
L	Late arrival before the register has closed. At Happisburgh the register is officially closed at 9:00. A register has closed will be marked absent with code L (until 9:15am).
Attendance codes for when pupils are present at approved off-site educational activity	
B	Off-site educational activity. This code is used when pupils are present at an off-site educational activity approved by the school. The school continues to be responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of

	and certifies that the education is supervised and measures have been taken to safeguard pupils. The provider of any unsupervised educational activity or where a pupil is at home doing school work. The provider of the activity will notify the school of any absences by individual pupils. The school will record the pupil's absence using the appropriate absence code.
D	Dual Registered – at another educational establishment. This code is not counted as a possible attendance for the Census. The law allows for dual registration of pupils at more than one school. This code is used to record a pupil who was not expected to attend the session in question because they were scheduled to attend the other session. Pupils who are registered. Dual registration can occur when pupils are attending a pupil referral unit, a hospital school or a school on a temporary basis. It can also be used when the pupil is known to be registered at another school for the session in question. Only the pupil's attendance and absence for those sessions that the pupil is scheduled to attend at Happisburgh will be recorded. Unexplained or unexpected absence is followed up in a timely manner.
P	Participating in a supervised sporting activity. This code is used to record the sessions when a pupil is participating in a sporting activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school.
V	Educational visit or trip. This code is used for attendance at an organised trip or visit, including residential visits, to the school, or attendance at a supervised trip of a strictly educational nature arranged by an organisation or the school.
Absence codes when pupils are not present in school	
C	Leave of absence authorised by the school. Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. Any application will be individually considered, taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and the background context behind the request.
E	Excluded but no alternative provision made. If no alternative provision is made for a pupil to continue their education while they are excluded but still on the admission register, they will be marked absent in the attendance register. Alternative provision will be arranged for each excluded pupil from the sixth consecutive day of any fixed term exclusion or permanent exclusion. Where alternative provision is made they will be marked using the appropriate code.
H	Holiday authorised by the school. Leave of absence will only be granted if there are exceptional circumstances. An application must be made in advance and the head teacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case which warrant the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted the head teacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence will be marked at the head teacher's discretion.
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointments). Parents must notify the school on the first day the child is absent due to illness. Absences due to illness will be authorised unless there is genuine cause for concern about the child's illness. If the authenticity of illness is in doubt, parents may be asked to provide medical evidence to support the claim. The absence will become unauthorised if authenticity of the illness is not satisfied and parents do not provide evidence of intention. Medical evidence will not be requested unnecessarily. Medical evidence can take the form of a letter, appointment cards, etc. rather than doctors' notes.
M	Medical or dental appointments. Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence. Parents are encouraged to make appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible the pupil may only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.
R	Religious observance. Absence is treated as authorised when it is due to religious observance. The school must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong. Where a leave of absence is requested the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance.
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence. A number of different groups are covered by the generic term 'Gypsy, Roma and Traveller'. English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. This code will be used when Traveller families are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and are in contact with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision. It should not be used to mark types of absence by these groups. To help ensure continuity of education for Traveller children it is expected that the child should attend school when their family is travelling and be dual registered at that school and the main school. Children from Traveller families do not travel are expected to register at a school and attend as normal. They are subject to the same requirements as other children in terms of the requirement to attend school regularly once registered at a school.
Unauthorised Absence from School	
G	Holiday not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the head teacher. If a pupil is absent for more than 10 days in a year without a valid reason, the school will consider the absence as unauthorised.

	authorise a leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday but the parents still take the child out of school away for longer than was agreed, the absence is unauthorised. The regulations do not allow the school retrospective approval. If the parents did not apply for leave of absence in advance, the absence must be unauthorised.
N	Reason for absence not yet provided. All unexplained and unexpected absences will be followed up. Every effort will be made to establish the reason for a pupil's absence. When the reason for the pupil's absence is established the register will be amended. This code will not be left on a pupil's attendance record indefinitely. If a reason for absence is provided after a reasonable amount of time it should be replaced with code O (absent with authorisation).
O	Absent from school without authorisation. If the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence it will be recorded as unauthorised.
U	Arrived in school after 9.15am. Late arrival is actively discouraged and the school will be alert to parents to seek an explanation from the parent.
Administrative Codes	
X	Not required to be in school. This code is used to record sessions that non-compulsory school age children are expected to attend.
Y	<p>Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances. This code can be used where a pupil is unable to attend because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school site, or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause; or • The transport provided by the school or a local authority is not available and where the pupil's home is a significant distance; or • A local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the pupil from attending school. <p>This code can also be used where a pupil is unable to attend because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The pupil is in custody; detained for a period of less than four months. If the school has evidence from the custody that the pupil is attending educational activities then they can record those sessions as code O (absent with approved educational activity). <p>This code is collected in the School Census for statistical purposes.</p>
Z	Pupil not on admission register. This code is available to enable the school to set up registers in advance of the school to ease administration burdens. Pupils will be put on the admission register from the first day they are agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school.
#	Planned whole or partial school closure. This code will be used for whole or partial school closures that are planned in advance such as: between terms; half terms; occasional days (for example, bank holidays); up to five non-educational days to be used for school planning/training; and use of schools as polling stations.

5.2 Leave of Absence

5.2.1 Since September 2013, changes to Government regulations and guidance means that Head teachers can no longer authorise leave of absence for the sole purpose of a holiday (unless in exceptional circumstances). All absences associated with a holiday (without exceptional circumstance) during term time will be marked as unauthorised within the register. Any parents known to have removed their child from school for the sole purpose of a holiday for 5 days or more will be referred to the Local Authority and be issued with a penalty notice fine or referred to the Local Authority to consider prosecution.

5.2.2 We believe that children need to be in school for all sessions so that they can make the most progress possible. However, we do understand that there are times where a parent may legitimately request leave of absence for child due to 'exceptional circumstances.' At Happisburgh, leave of absence shall not be granted unless there are 'exceptional circumstances'. This may only

be granted at the discretion of the Head teacher. The school will respond to all applications for leave of absence in writing.

5.2.3 Parents wishing to apply for leave of absence during term time must apply in writing to the Head teacher at least a month before the planned leave. If a written request for leave of absence is not completed and the leave is taken without a request being submitted, the leave will not be considered by the Head teacher and it will be marked as unauthorised. Happisburgh will treat each application individually and discuss the circumstances of the application before a decision is made. Retrospective requests will not be considered and therefore will result in the absence being categorised as **unauthorised**. In such cases the school may make a referral to the Local Authority to request that a penalty notice fine is issued or consider prosecution.

5.2.4 A penalty notice request or a referral for prosecution may be submitted to the Local Authority should:-

- The parent fail to submit a leave of absence request in advance of taking the leave
- An application for a leave of absence is not agreed by the Head teacher but is still taken.
- A longer period of time is taken in excess of the agreed number of days.

5.2.5 When absence is granted by the Head teacher, the parents will need to agree a date of return. If a pupil fails to return on the expected date and contact is not received from, or made with the parents, school will seek advice from the Local Authority. This could result in possible children missing from education procedures being instigated.

5.3 Pupil Absence for the purposes of Religious Observance

Happisburgh acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that, on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside school holiday periods or weekends and is recognised as such by a relevant religious authority. Where this occurs, the school will consider either authorising the pupil absence or making special leave for religious observance. Parents are requested to give advance notice to the school.

5.4 Traveller Absence

1. The aim for the attendance of Traveller children, in common with all other children, is to attend school as regularly and as frequently as possible.
2. To protect Traveller parents from unreasonable prosecution for non-attendance, s. 86 of The Education Act 1944 states that a Traveller parent shall be entitled to be acquitted if his or her child accrues 200 attendances (i.e. 200 half days) during the period of twelve months ending with the date on which the proceedings were instituted, if the family are of no fixed abode.
3. However, it should be noted that this provision applies only when the family are engaged in a trade or business that requires them to travel and when the child is attending school as regularly as that trade permits. It does not mean that part-time education for Traveller children is legally acceptable, nor does it relieve parents of their duties to ensure that their children are receiving suitable education when not at school.

4. When trading or otherwise conducting their business in or around Norfolk, if a family can reasonably travel back to Happisburgh then the expectation is that their child will attend full-time.
5. Happisburgh will be regarded as the base school if it is the school where the child normally attends when he or she is not travelling. However, the pupil must have attended this school in the last 18 months. Traveller children can register at other schools temporarily while away from Happisburgh; in such cases, the pupil's school place at Happisburgh will be kept open for them whilst travelling. This is to protect them from unfairly losing their place at this school of usual attendance.
6. Happisburgh can only effectively operate as the child's base school if it is engaged in on-going dialogue with Traveller families. This means that parents must:
 - Advise the school of their forthcoming travelling patterns as soon as these are known and before they happen; and
 - Inform the school regarding proposed return dates
7. Traveller children will be recorded as attending an approved educational activity when:
 - The child is on roll and attending another visited school
 - Undertaking supervised educational activity under the jurisdiction of another Local Authority's Traveller Education Service
8. Where Traveller children are registered pupils at a school and are known to be present either at a site (official or otherwise) or in a house and are not attending school, the absence will be investigated in the same way as that for any pupil.

5.5 Unauthorised Absence

Absence will not be authorised unless parents have provided a satisfactory explanation and that it has been accepted as such by the school. That decision is at the discretion of the Headteacher. Examples of unsatisfactory explanations include but are not limited to:

- A pupil's/family member's birthday
- Shopping for uniforms
- Arrangements or appointments for cutting the pupil's hair
- Closure of a sibling's school for INSET (or other) purposes
- An unwillingness to attend school, or inability to attend owing to inadequate personal/family organisation
- A refusal to attend school on health grounds but where the pupil is actually considered well enough to attend
- Holidays taken without the authorisation of the school

5.6 Persistent Absence

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' (PA) when their attendance drops to 90% and below for any reason. Over a full academic year this would be 38 sessions (19 days). Absence at this level is causing considerable damage to a child's educational prospects.

The attendance of all pupils at our school are monitored to identify children who are PA, or are on track to becoming PA. Where emerging concerns are identified we will instigate appropriate and timely interventions. Referrals may also be made to external agencies for targeted support.

If parents fail to engage with support and their child continues to have unsatisfactory attendance/punctuality, a request may be made to the Local Authority to pursue legal proceedings either through a penalty notice or full prosecution in the Magistrates' Court.

Parents found guilty in a Magistrates' Court of failing to secure their child's regular attendance at school under the provisions of the Education Act 1996, will receive a criminal record and a

maximum penalty of a £1000 fine under a Section 444 (1) offence or a £2500 fine or up to a 3 month prison sentence, under a Section 444 (1a) offence.

5.7 Late Arrival at School

At Happisburgh all pupils are expected to arrive on time for every day of the school year.

The school day begins at 8.50. We advise all parents to ensure their child is on site prior to this (the school gates open at 8.40.) The school register will be taken at 8.50. All pupils arriving after this time are required to report to the main office with their parents, who will be expected to provide a reason for their absence. If their arrival is before 9.15 it will be recorded as late - L code.

All pupils arriving on or after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence for the morning session - U code. This is categorised as an unauthorised absence for the session. Parents will be contacted to discuss any patterns of late arrival. Repeated arrival after the close of registration will result in appropriate interventions being instigated and may also result in a penalty notice being issued or prosecution.

Please note: L or U codes will be used if a pupil arrives after the close of the afternoon register for the PM session.

6. Deletions from the Register

6.1 In accordance with the Regulations, pupils will only be deleted from the register when one of the following circumstances applies:

A	Where the pupil is registered at the school in accordance with the requirements of a school attendance order and the school is substituted by the local authority for that named in the order or the order is revoked by the local authority on the ground that arrangements have been made for the child to receive efficient full-time education suitable to his or her aptitude otherwise than at school.
B	Change of school Except where it has been agreed by the proprietor that the pupil should be registered at more than one school, that he has been registered as a pupil at another school, or that he is registered at another school, falling within sub-paragraph (a) or regulation 9, that he has been registered as a pupil at another school.
C	Where a pupil is registered at more than one school, and in a case not falling within sub-paragraph (a) or regulation 9, that he has ceased to attend the school and the proprietor of any other school at which he is registered has agreed the deletion.
D	Home education In a case not falling within sub-paragraph (a) of this paragraph, that he has ceased to attend the school and has received written notification from the parent that the pupil is receiving education otherwise than at school.
E	Moved away Except in the case of a boarder that he has ceased to attend the school and no longer ordinarily resides within a reasonable distance from the school at which he is registered.

F	In the case of a pupil granted leave of absence in accordance with regulation 7(1A), that — (i) the pupil has failed to attend the school within the ten school days immediately following the expiry of such leave was granted; (ii) the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend the school because of sickness or any unavoidable cause; and (iii) the proprietor and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to ascertain where the pupil is.
G	That he is certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school because of compulsory school age, and neither he nor his parent has indicated to the school the intention to return to school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.
H	That he has been continuously absent from the school for a period of not less than twenty school days and— (i) at no time was his absence during that period authorised by the proprietor in accordance with regulation 7(1A); (ii) the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend the school because of sickness or any unavoidable cause; and (iii) The proprietor of the school and the Local Authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to ascertain where the pupil is.
I	That he is detained in pursuance of a final order made by a court or of an order of recall made by a court in the State, that order being for a period of not less than four months, and the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will return to the school at the end of that period.
J	That the pupil has died.
K	That the pupil will cease to be of compulsory school age before the school next meets and— (i) the relevant person has indicated that the pupil will cease to attend the school; or (ii) The pupil does not meet the academic entry requirements for admission to the school's sixth form.
L	In the case of a pupil at a school other than a maintained school, an Academy, a city technology college or a college of the technology of the arts, that he has ceased to be a pupil of the school.
M	Permanent exclusion. That he has been permanently excluded from the school.
N	Where the pupil has been admitted to the school to receive nursery education, which he has not on completion of that education transferred to a reception, or higher, class at the school.
O	Where— (i) the pupil is a boarder at a maintained school or an Academy; (ii) charges for board and lodging are payable by the parent of the pupil; and (iii) Those charges remain unpaid by the pupil's parent at the end of the school term to which they relate.

Happisburgh will follow Norfolk County Council's Children Missing Education procedures when a pupil's whereabouts is unknown and the school will carry out joint enquiries with Norfolk County Council to establish the whereabouts of the child.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

At Happisburgh, we believe that improved school attendance is a responsibility shared by governors, school staff, parents, pupils and the wider school community.

The Governors of Happisburgh will:

- Ensure that the importance and value of good attendance is promoted to pupils and their parents
- Annually review the school's Attendance Policy and ensure the required resources are available to fully implement the policy
- Identify a member of the governing body to lead on attendance matters
- Ensure that the Regulations and other relevant legislation are complied with

- Agree school attendance targets and submit these to the Local Authority within the agreed timescale each year and where appropriate link these to the Performance Management of Senior Leadership within the school
- Monitor the school's attendance and related issues through termly reporting at Governors' meetings
- Ensure that attendance data is reported to the Local Authority or Department for Education as required and on time
- Ensure that there is a named senior manager to lead on attendance
- Ensure that the school has clear systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site
- Ensure that there are procedures for collecting and analysing attendance data frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence
- Ensure that data is understood and used to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions

The Headteacher will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents
- Ensure that there is a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance, with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve
- Monitor the implementation of the Attendance Policy and ensure that the policy is reviewed annually
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the Attendance Policy and adequately trained to address attendance issues
- Deliver whole school initiatives such as awards assemblies and reward schemes
- Ensure that the Regulations and other relevant legislation are complied with
- Allocate sufficient time and resources to the management of attendance
- Return school attendance data to the Local Authority and the Department for Education as required and on time
- Report the school's attendance and related issues through termly reporting to the Governors and on a half termly basis to the lead governor for attendance
- Ensure that systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site are implemented
- Ensure that attendance data is collected and analysed frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence
- Interpret the data to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions
- Develop a multi-agency response to improve attendance and support pupils and their families
- Document interventions used to a standard required by the local authority should legal proceedings be instigated
- Set out how Pupil Premium will be used to support pupils with irregular attendance
- Make referrals to appropriate external agencies

All staff at Happisburgh will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents
- Contribute to a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve
- Comply with the Regulations and other relevant legislation
- Implement systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site.
- Ensure that registers are recorded accurately and in a timely manner.
- Contribute to the evaluation of school strategies and interventions
- Work with other agencies to improve attendance and support pupils and their families

Pupils will:

- Be aware of the school's attendance policy and when and what they are required to attend. This will be communicated to them through the school staff, parents, and the school timetable
- Speak to their class teacher or another member of staff if they are experiencing difficulties at school or at home which may impact on their attendance
- Attend all lessons ready to learn, with the appropriate learning tools requested and on time for the class
- Bring a note of explanation from their parents or parents to explain an absence that has happened or is foreseen
- Follow the correct set school procedure if they arrive late. This will help the school to monitor attendance and keep accurate records for the child's individual attendance. This is also vital for health and safety in the event of a school evacuation

Happisburgh requests that parents will:

- Take a positive interest in their child's work and educational progress
- Ensure their child has regular attendance at school
- Instil the value of education and regular school attendance within the home environment
- Contact the school if their child is absent to let them know the reason why and the expected date of return, following this with a note wherever possible
- Avoid unnecessary absences; for example, by making medical and dental appointments for outside of school hours
- Ask the school for help if their child is experiencing difficulties with any aspect of their school work or home and family life
- Inform the school of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance
- Support the school by becoming involved in their child's education, forming a positive relationship with school and acknowledging the importance of children receiving the same messages from both school and home
- Maintain effective routines at home to support good attendance
- Attend all meetings requested to discuss attendance issues

8. Attendance Protocols

If a child is absent, the following will be initiated by the school:

- The first day calling procedures will be activated for all pupils who are not in school after close of register at 9.30 and where no reason for absence is known
- If there is still no contact made from the pupil's parents, a further telephone call home will be made again that morning. If no response can be gained, the child's named emergency contact will be telephoned
- If school cannot make contact with a parent and are concerned about a pupil, a home visit may be carried out
- School will telephone home if a pupil leaves the school without permission

In certain circumstances the School may also:

- Visit the home of the pupil or request a welfare check to be made by the police
- Write to the parents of a pupil to highlight attendance or punctuality issues
- Invite parents to discuss how school can support the family to make improvement
- Refer to an external agency/ support service to offer support, guidance and advice
- Refer to the Local Authority for joint enquiries to be made to establish the whereabouts of the child through Children Missing Education procedures
- Refer to the Local Authority to consider issuing a penalty notice or to consider prosecution when all other interventions have failed, or an unauthorised leave of absence has been taken
- Refer the matter to an appropriate external agency for multi-agency support, such as implementing a Family Support Plan or referring to Children Services, where there are safeguarding concerns

8.1 Expected absence procedure for parents:

A parent has a legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends school regularly.

If a child is unavoidably absent from school parents are expected to:

- Contact school by telephone call on the first day of absence and each subsequent day, identifying the reason for absence and the expected date of return
- If no contact is received, the Attendance protocols will be instigated

8.2 Support Systems

School recognises that poor attendance can be an indication of difficulties in a family's life. This may be related to problems at home and or in school. Parents are encouraged to inform school of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and or behaviour in school, for example, bereavement, divorce/separation, incidents of domestic abuse. This will help the school identify any additional support that may be required.

We also recognise that some pupils are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance.

The school will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance. Strategies used may include:

- Discussion with parents and pupils
- Intervention by the Welfare Officer
- Pupil Voice Activities

- Friendship groups
- 1 to 1 mentoring
- Reward systems
- Additional learning support
- Behaviour support
- Reintegration support packages
- Attendance panels
- Parenting contracts
- Engaging the support of other agencies

Support offered to families will be child centred and planned in discussion and agreement with both parents and pupils. Where parents fail or refuse to engage with the support offered and further unauthorised absence occurs, the Head teacher will consider the use of legal sanctions following consultation with the Local Authority.

9. Related Policies

To underpin the values and ethos of our school and our intent to ensure that pupils at our school attend school regularly and reach their full potential the following policies are integral to this approach:

- safeguarding including child protection
- admissions
- anti-bullying
- exclusion
- special educational needs
- teaching and learning
- behaviour and rewards

10. Statutory Framework

This policy has been devised in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- School attendance, DFE (2019)
- School attendance parental responsibility measures: statutory guidance, DFE (revised August 2019)
- Norfolk County Council Children Missing Education Practice & Procedures
- 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', DFE (2019)

Fixed Penalty Notices

With the implementation of the Anti Social Behaviour Act (2003) the Local Authority has statutory powers to use Penalty Notices to help tackle irregular school attendance and unauthorised absences. An unauthorised absence is any absence that the school has not given permission for or the parent/carers has been unable to provide a reason for the absence, which is acceptable to the school.

The school will discuss with the Local Authority any cases of unauthorised absence and whether the issuing of a Penalty Notice would be appropriate. A Penalty Notice is an alternative to a prosecution to the offence and can be issued when it is felt that parents/carers are failing in their legal responsibility to ensure their child attends school regularly.

The penalty is in the form of a £60 fine per parent/carers per child payable within 21 days, this increases to £120 payable per parent/carers per child within 28 days. Failure to pay usually results in prosecution in the Magistrates' Court.