



Whaddon C of E School

School Attendance Policy

January 2023

Policy Written: January 2023

Adopted by governing body: March 2023

Review date :January 2024

1. Introduction

Regular school attendance is essential if children are to achieve their full potential.

Whaddon C of E School believe that regular school attendance is the key to enabling children to maximise the educational opportunities available to them and become emotionally resilient, confident and competent adults who are able to realise their full potential and make a positive contribution to their community.

Whaddon C of E School values 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.

Whaddon C of E School 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, bullying, behaviour and inclusive learning. This policy also takes into account the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010.

2. Attendance Targets

To keep whole school attendance **above 96%** which is in line with national expectations.

3. Legal Framework

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 and 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.

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.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, 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. Categorising absence

Where pupils of compulsory school age are recorded as absent, the register must show whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised.

Absence can only be authorised by the school and cannot be authorised by parents. All absences will be treated as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation for the pupil's absence has been received.

Parents should advise the school by telephone on the first day of absence and provide the school with an expected date of return. This should be followed up in the form of a written note from the parent/carer, though verbal explanations may be acceptable where this is considered appropriate. Alternative arrangements will be agreed with non-English speaking parents/carers.

Absence will be categorised as follows:

Illness: In most cases a telephone call or a note from the parent informing the school that their child is ill will be acceptable. Parents may be asked to provide medical evidence where there are repeated absences due to reported illness. This will usually be in the form of an appointment card, prescription etc.

Medical/Dental Appointments: Parents are advised where possible to make medical and dental appointments outside the school day. Where this is not possible, pupils should attend school for part of the day. Parents should show the appointment card to school.

Other Authorised Circumstances:

This is discretionary and will be discussed with the individual families.

Excluded (no alternative provision made): Exclusion from attending school is counted as an authorised absence. The child's class teacher will make arrangements for work to be sent home.

Late Arrival: Registration begins at 08.35 Pupils arriving after this time will be marked as present but having arrived late. The register will close at 09.40. Pupils arriving after the close of register will be recorded as absent. This will not be authorised and will count as an absence for that school session.

On arrival after the close of register, pupils must immediately report to the school office to ensure that we can be responsible for their health and safety, whilst they are in school.

The absence will only be authorised if a satisfactory explanation for the late arrival can be provided, for example, attendance at a medical appointment. (Code M)

The absence will be recorded as **unauthorised** if the pupil has arrived late after the registers close without justifiable cause, for example, if they woke up late or were waiting for their uniform to dry. (Code U)

Unauthorised absence: Absence will not be authorised unless parents have provided a satisfactory explanation that has been accepted as such by the school.

Examples of unsatisfactory explanations include:

- A pupil's/family member's birthday
- Shopping for uniforms
- Having their hair cut
- Closure of a sibling's school for INSET (or other) purposes
- "Couldn't get up"
- Illness where the child is considered well enough to attend school
- Holidays taken without the authorisation of school

Leave of Absence and Extended Leave: Parents do not have an automatic right to remove their child from school during term time for the purpose of a holiday and are strongly advised not to do so. Parents should be aware that if their child is absent for 10 school days they will miss 5% of their education during that academic year.

Parents wishing to take their child out of school during term time must send a written request to the head teacher before arrangements are made. Documentary evidence of leave and return dates may be required in order to process your request. Retrospective requests will not be considered and therefore will result in the absence being categorised as unauthorised. Each request will be considered individually and will take the following factors into account:

- Length of the proposed leave
- Age of the pupil
- The pupil's general absence/attendance record
- Proximity of SATs and public examinations
- Pupil's ability to catch up the work missed
- Pupil's educational needs
- General welfare of the pupil
- Circumstances of the request
- Purpose of the leave
- Previous term time holidays taken
- When the request was made

All requests for leave of absence will receive a written response. Where a request has been granted, the letter should state:

- The expected date of return
- That parents must contact school should any delays occur

If the permission to take leave is not granted and the pupil is absent, the absence will be **unauthorised**. In such cases the school may refer the matter to the County Attendance Team who may issue a Penalty Notice.

5. Religious Observance

Whaddon C of E School 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 that this necessitates a consideration of authorised absence or special leave for religious observance. (Code R)

It is reasonable for a parent to allow their children not to attend school on any day of religious observance if recognised by the parent's religious body.

Parents are requested to give advance notice to the school if they intend their child to be absent.

However, in the interests of fulfilling the academic requirements of the school and limiting the authorised absence rate of the school, it is identified as reasonable that no more than one day be designated for any individual occasion of religious observance/festival and no more than three days in total in any academic year. Absence in excess of this will be categorised as unauthorised.

6. Traveller Absence:

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.

To protect Traveller parents from unreasonable prosecution for non-attendance, the Education Act 1944, section 86, states that a Traveller parent is safe from prosecution if their child accrues 200 attendances (i.e. 200 half days) in a year. Traveller absence (Code T) is acceptable only when the family is 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.

When in or around Buckinghamshire, if a Traveller family can reasonably travel back to their base school (see below) then the expectation is that their child will attend full-time.

Whaddon C of E School will be regarded as the base school if it is the school where the child normally attends when they are not travelling. However, the pupil must have attended in the last 18 months. Traveller children can register at other schools temporarily whilst away from their base school. In such cases, the pupil's school place at Whaddon C of E School will be kept open for them whilst travelling. This is to protect them from unfairly losing their place at their school of usual attendance.

Whaddon C of E School can operate effectively as the child's base school only if we are engaged in on-going dialogue with Traveller families. This means that parents must:

- advise of their forthcoming travelling patterns before they happen; and
- inform the school regarding proposed return dates

Whaddon C of E School will authorise absence of Traveller children if we are satisfied that a family is travelling and has given indication that they intend to return.

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
- The child is undertaking computer based distance learning that is time evidenced

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 for any other pupil.

7. Deletions from the Register

In accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, pupils will be deleted from the register only when one of the following circumstances applies:

- The school is replaced by another school on a School Attendance Order
- The School Attendance Order is revoked by the Local Authority
- The pupil has ceased to be of compulsory school age
- Permanent exclusion has occurred and procedures have been completed
- Death of a pupil
- Transfer between schools
- When a parent informs the school in writing that the pupil is to be withdrawn to be educated outside the school system
- Failure to return from an extended holiday after both the school and the local authority have tried to locate the pupil
- A medical condition prevents their attendance and return to the school before ending compulsory school-age
- In custody for more than four months (in discussion with The Youth Offending Team)
- 20 days' continuous unauthorised absence have elapsed and both the Local Authority and school have tried to locate the pupil
- A pupil has left the school but it is not known where he/she has gone after both the school and the Local Authority have tried to locate the pupil

Whaddon C of E School will follow Buckinghamshire County Council's Children Missing Education Protocol when a pupil's whereabouts is unknown.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

Whaddon C of E School believe that improved school attendance can only be achieved if it is viewed as a shared responsibility of the school staff, governors, parents, pupils and the wider school community.

All school staff:

- 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 Registration Regulations, England, 2006 and other attendance related legislation
- Implement systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site
- Analyse attendance data to identify causes and patterns of absence and report to the Headteacher in a timely way
- Contribute to the evaluation of school strategies and interventions
- Work with other agencies 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

9. The Governing Body

- Ensure an effective whole school culture of high attendance is underpinned by clear expectations, procedures and responsibilities.
- Offer a clear vision for high attendance, underpinned by high expectations and core values, which are communicated to and understood by staff, pupils and families.
- Have a clear, written school attendance policy.
- Regularly review and understand attendance data, discussing and challenging trends and helping school leaders to focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it the most within school.
- Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- Make sure staff, pupils and families understand that absence from school is a potential safeguarding risk and understand their role in keeping children safe.
- Expect good attendance and punctuality from all members of the school community and make sure that pupils understand its importance.
- Convey clear messages about how absence affects attainment, wellbeing and wider outcomes. Empower staff to take responsibility for attendance.
- Recognise attendance as an important area of school improvement. Make sure it is resourced appropriately (including through effective use of pupil premium funding) to create, build and maintain systems and performance.
- Make sure staff receive training/professional development and support to deploy attendance systems effectively.

10. The Head teacher:

- Ensure compliance with DfE Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities – Working together to improve School Attendance – September 2022 - [Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/112122/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance.pdf)
- Ensure every member of staff knows and understands their responsibilities for safeguarding and how this links with poor school attendance – ensuring compliance with Keeping children Safe in Education 2022, Statutory guidance for schools and colleges – September 2022 - [Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/112122/Keeping_children_safe_in_education.pdf)
- Develop good support for children with medical conditions (including the use of individual healthcare plans), mental health problems and special educational needs (SEND). Ensuring compliance with Statutory Guidance for governing bodies of maintained schools and proprietors of academies in England December 2015 - Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions - [Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/112122/Supporting_pupils_at_school_with_medical_conditions.pdf)
- Ensures every member of staff knows and understands their responsibilities for attendance.
- Ensures accurate completion of admission and attendance registers.
- Ensures staff are actively working to maximise attendance rates, both in relation to individual pupils and the pupil body as a whole.
- Have clear processes in place to address persistent and severe absence - pupils who are severely absent may be at risk of CCE/CSE/grooming etc. and this cohort must be made the top priority for action and support. Be especially conscious of any potential safeguarding issues ensuring joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners. Often severely absent pupils have additional needs and therefore it is vital that schools ensure all appropriate services are informed and aware of the pupil's absence so suitable support can be considered, and education provided/accessed.
- Ensure that all staff adopt a consistent approach in dealing with absence and lateness.
- Monitor and analyse data and trends.
- Report to the Governing Body the attendance figures and progress to achieving the set targets.
- Remind parents of their commitment to this policy.
- Build and model respectful relationships with staff, pupils, families and other stakeholders in order to secure their trust and engagement. Making sure there is a welcoming and positive culture across the school.
- Proactively promote attendance practice as part of staff induction Consider the individual needs and vulnerabilities of pupils
- Open and honest communication with staff, pupils and families about their expectations of school life and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them.
- Liaise with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, for example, where a young person has a social worker or is otherwise vulnerable.
- Share information on and working collaboratively with other schools in the area, LA's and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming severe or persistent.
- Monitor implementation of policy and practice, for example through form time, drop in, shadow late gate, planner checks
- Engage in community businesses, partners and residents to promote attendance and report non-attendance.
- Monitor whole school data regularly to identify reasons for absence, patterns, attendance of particular groups and the impact of interventions

- Establish and ensure implementation and robust monitoring of arrangements to identify, report and support children missing education (CME) or at risk of becoming CME
<https://schoolsweb.buckscc.gov.uk/behaviour-wellbeing/children-missing-education/>
- Ensure the school attendance policy is applied fairly and consistently and recognises the individual needs of pupils and their families who have specific barriers to attendance. Schools should consider their obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. ☒
 Ensure that all staff members:
 - treat pupils with dignity
 - build relationships rooted in mutual respect and observe proper boundaries
 - take into consideration the vulnerability of some pupils and the ways in which this might contribute to absence, handling confidential information sensitively
 - understand the importance of school as a place of safety where pupils can enjoy trusted relationships with staff and pupils, particularly for children with a social worker and those who have experienced adversity.
 - communicate effectively with families regarding pupils' attendance and well-being
 - deliver clear messages about expectations, routines and consequences to new pupils and families through prospectus and admission/transition events
 - use physical presence to reinforce routines and expectations on arrival and departure
 - regularly communicate expectations for attendance and punctuality and school performance through regular channels of communication with staff, pupils and parents
 - establish and monitor implementation of rewards for attendance and punctuality and sanctions for absence and lateness.

11. Teachers

- Ensure the effective whole school culture of high attendance is underpinned by setting an example of punctuality and good attendance.
- Implement the policy and ensure it is applied fairly and consistently.
- Ensure that the registers are taken at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session and are accurate and up to-date;
- Review class and individual attendance patterns;
- Inform the school attendance manager/Headteacher of any concerns; Emphasise with pupils the importance of punctuality and good attendance.
- Reminding parents of their commitment to upholding the content of this policy.
- Build respectful relationships with staff, pupils, families and other stakeholders, in order to secure trust and engagement.
- Make sure there is a welcoming and positive culture across the school.
- Communicate openly and honestly with staff, pupils and families about their expectations of school life and performance, so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them.
- Hold meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or Local Authority) consider to be vulnerable or are persistently or severely absent to discuss attendance and engagement at school.
- Liaise with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, for example, where a young person has a social worker or is otherwise vulnerable.
- Model respectful relationships and appropriate communication with staff and pupils. This will help foster relationships between pupils and staff to reflect a positive and respectful culture.

12. All staff members should

- treat pupils with dignity
 - build relationships rooted in mutual respect and observe proper boundaries
 - take into consideration the vulnerability of some pupils and the ways in which this might contribute to absence handling confidential information sensitively
 - understand the importance of school as a place of safety where pupils can enjoy trusted relationships with staff and pupils, particularly for children with a social worker and those who have experienced adversity
 - communicate effectively with families regarding pupils' attendance and well-being
- Rehearse and reinforce attendance and punctuality expectations continually
 - Emphasise the importance of attendance and its impact on attainment
 - Promote the next lesson and the sequence of the lesson to motivate pupils to be in the classroom
 - Promote rewards and celebrate progress but continue to outline sanctions
 - Apply rewards and sanctions consistently
 - Follow up on absence and lateness with pupils to identify barriers and reasons for absence
 - Contact parents and carers regarding absence and punctuality
 - Review class attendance weekly to share data, identify issues, intervene early and help set targets
 - Periodically review practice and consistency both across classes and the school

13. Parents:

- Talk to their child about school and what goes on there. Take a positive interest in their child's work and educational progress
- Instil the value of education and regular school attendance within the home environment
- Encourage their child to look to the future and have aspirations
- Contact the school if their child is absent to let them know the reason why and the expected date of return. Follow this up with a note where possible.
- Try to avoid unnecessary absences. Wherever possible make appointments for the doctors, dentists etc. outside of school hours
- Ask the school for help if their child is experiencing difficulties
- Inform the school of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance
- Support the school; take every opportunity to get involved in their child's education, form a positive relationship with school and acknowledge the importance of children receiving the same messages from both school and home
- Encourage routine at home, for example, bed times, home work, preparing school bag and uniform the evening before
- Not keep their child away from school to go shopping, to help at home or to look after other members of the family
- Avoid taking their child on holiday during term-time. Where this is unavoidable, send a written leave request to the Head Teacher in advance of booking the holiday.

14. Using Attendance Data

All pupils' attendance will be monitored and will be shared with the Local Authority and other agencies if a pupil's attendance is a cause for concern.

Every three weeks the Attendance Manager will provide all class teachers with attendance data for the previous five weeks for each pupil within their class. The list will be presented in numerical descending order with the highest attendees at the top;

This pupil level data will be used to trigger school action as set out in the escalation of intervention (Appendix 1).

Attendance data will also be used to identify emerging patterns and trends to inform whole school strategies to improve attendance and attainment.

Whaddon C of E School will share attendance data with the Local Authority as required. All information shared will be done so in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

15. Support Systems

Whaddon C of E School recognise that poor attendance is often an indication of difficulties in a child's life. This may be related to problems at home and or in school. Parents should make school aware of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and/or behaviour in school, for example, bereavement, divorce / separation. This will help the school identify any additional support that may be required.

Whaddon C of E School also recognise that some pupils are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance, for example, those pupils with special educational needs, those with physical or mental health needs, migrant and refugee pupils and looked after children.

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

- Discussion with parents and pupils to discuss absence, patterns, barriers and problems
- Referrals to support agencies
- Learning mentors 1:1
- Friendship groups
- Reward systems
- Time limited part time time-tables
- Additional learning support, reasonable adjustments prepare supporting resources to ensure pupils can access learning when they return
- Behaviour support plans
- Reintegration support packages making regular contact with families to discuss progress
- lead daily or weekly check-ins to review progress and the impact of support
- Establish action plans to remove barriers, provide additional support and set targets. This could include:
 - lunchtime arrangements
 - support with uniform, transport, wake up routines or emotional wellbeing
- Support offered to families will be child centred and planned in discussion and agreement with both parents and pupils.
- provide tailored praise and encouragement when pupils attend and arrive on time
- Keep parents informed on a regular basis of their child's attendance and absence record (this should be communicated to parents in an easy-to-understand format and percentage headlines

should be avoided. For example, concentrate on the amount of time missed and the impact on the pupil's learning).

16. Punctuality

- Parents are welcome to enter the school site from 08.40am and supervise their children until the staff member comes to receive them.
- The School staff receive their children from **08.25am**
- The register will be open for no longer than 10 minutes after the session begins, at 08.30.
- Pupils who arrive after the register has closed at **08.40am** and parent provides a satisfactory explanation will be marked as 'authorised absent' for that session.
- Pupils who arrive after the register has closed and their parent fails to provide a satisfactory explanation will be marked as 'unauthorised absent' for that session (Code U).
- The school may arrange a meeting with parents to discuss concerns so that the problem can be addressed.

17. Part-time Timetables

- As part of the framework for the inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after, and care leavers (Ofsted June 2015) local authorities are required to provide detailed data on school age children in their area who are not in receipt of full-time education and schools are similarly expected to maintain data on students of compulsory school age who are on their roll but attending on a part-time timetable.
- The Local authority has published guidance for all maintained schools, academies, free schools, studio schools, UTCs, ESCs and PSBs on the use of part-time timetables for pupils of compulsory school age (the term after their fifth birthday to the last Friday in June following their 16th birthday)
- All schools are required to return information on children who are on part-time tables within five days of the pupil starting or ending a part-time timetable.
- <https://schoolsweb.buckscc.gov.uk/behaviour-wellbeing/county-attendance-team/attendance-codes/>

18. Pupils at risk of Persistent Absence (93% or below)

School is expected to:

- Proactively use data to identify pupils at risk of poor attendance.
- Work with each identified pupil and their parents to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-school barriers to attendance.
- Signpost and support parents to access any required services where out of school barriers are identified.
- If the issue persists, take an active part in a multi-agency effort with the Local Authority and other partners.
- Act as the Lead Practitioner where all partners agree that the school is the best placed lead service.
- Where the Lead Practitioner is outside of the school, continue to work with the Local Authority and partners.

19. Pupils who are persistently absent (below 90%)

Persistent absence occurs when a child's attendance is at or falls below 90%. Absenteeism at this level will considerably damage a pupil's educational prospects and the school will work alongside parents/carers to tackle this issue.

School is expected to:

- Continue support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent.
- Ensure additional targeted support is in place to remove any barriers. Where necessary this includes working with partners.
- If there is lack of engagement, hold more formal conversations with parents, being clear about the potential need for legal intervention in future.
- Where support is not working or being engaged with, work with the Local Authority on legal intervention.
- If there are safeguarding concerns, intensify support through statutory children's social care.
- Work with other local schools, such as schools previously attended or schools of siblings.

20. Pupils who are severely absent (below 50%)

Severe absence occurs when a child's attendance is at or falls below 50%.

School is expected to:

- Continue support as for pupils who are persistently absent.
- Agree a joint approach for all pupils who are severely absent with the Local Authority.

Pupils who are severely absent may be at risk of CCE/CSE/grooming etc. and teachers must ensure this cohort is made the top priority for action and support.

We must be especially conscious of any potential safeguarding issues ensuring joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners.

Often severely absent pupils have additional needs and therefore it is vital that school ensure all appropriate services are informed and aware of the pupil's absence so suitable support can be considered, and education provided/accessed.

21. Legal Sanctions

Where intervention fails to bring about an improvement in attendance, Whaddon C of E School will notify the County Attendance Team of the irregular attendance.

The County Attendance Team or school, may invite parents to attend a Parenting Contract Meeting and issue a formal warning of a Penalty Notice.

22. Parenting Contracts (Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003) A Parenting contract is a voluntary agreement between the Local Authority, school and the parent, it can also be extended to include the child and any other agencies offering support to resolve any difficulties leading to improved attendance.

The contract will outline attendance targets and will detail agreed actions that will help to achieve the target. The contract will be reviewed regularly.

The contract can be used as evidence in a prosecution should irregular attendance continue.

23. Penalty Notices

(Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003) Penalty Notices will be considered when:

- Intervention has failed to bring about improvement and further unauthorised absence has occurred following written warning to improve.
- A pupil has taken leave of absence i.e. for the purpose of a holiday in term time and the absence has not been authorised by the school

A Penalty Notice gives the parent the opportunity to avoid a prosecution. A £60 fine, per parent/carer, per child must be paid within 21 days. The fine increases to £120 per parent/.carer, per child if paid after 21 days but within 28 days of the date the Notice was issued.

Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in a prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

24. Prosecution

The school will provide the Local Authority with evidence required for a prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. This is to ensure that parents realise their own responsibilities in ensuring attendance at school and most importantly about returning children to education.

Intervention Flow Chart

School will notify parent of the child's irregular school attendance and offer them the opportunity and support to improve.

If you receive a letter informing you of concerns regarding your child's attendance you should

- Speak with your child to see if there are any reasons why they are reluctant to attend
- Contact the school to discuss any difficulties you or your child may be experiencing.
 - Ensure your child attends school regularly

If there is no improvement and the parent has not provided a good reason for the absence, the school may refer to the County Attendance Team

Whilst your involvement in a Parenting Contract is voluntary, if you fail to engage with the support offered and your child's attendance remains irregular, the County Attendance team may issue a Penalty Notice or begin legal proceedings in the Magistrates' Court.

If you are issued with a Penalty Notice of £60 per parent/carer, per child this must be paid in full within 21 days otherwise the Penalty will increase to £120 per parent/carer, per child. If you fail to pay the Penalty by the 28th day, the County Attendance Team may instigate legal proceedings against you.

If you are found guilty of this offence you can be fined up to £2500 and/or be imprisoned for a period of three months.

A Parenting Contract is a voluntary agreement between you and the Local Authority aimed at supporting you in improving your child's school attendance.

The County Attendance Team will invite you to attend a Parenting Contract Meeting and may issue a Warning of a Penalty Notice.