

CONTENTS

	Page
1. Introduction.....	1
2. Legal framework.....	2
3. Safeguarding.....	3
4. Categorising absence.....	3
5. Deletions from the register.....	6
6. Roles and responsibilities.....	7
7. Using attendance data.....	9
8. Support systems.....	10
9. Legal interventions.....	12
Westmorland and Furness Escalation of Intervention Process.....	13
Table 1: National School Attendance Codes.....	14
Penalty Notice Fines for Schools.....	17
Attendance Ladder.....	18

1. Introduction

- 1.1 All staff at South Cumbria Pupil Referral Service (PRS) understand that, for our pupils to achieve their very best academically and socially they must attend school regularly. For our most vulnerable pupil's regular attendance is vital to mental and physical health and wellbeing, is an important protective factor and needs to be identified and supported appropriately.
- 1.2 South Cumbria Pupil Referral Service (PRS) believes that regular school attendance is the key to enabling pupils to maximise the educational opportunities available to them and become emotionally resilient, confident, and competent adults who can realise their full potential and make a positive contribution to their community.
- 1.3 South Cumbria Pupil Referral Service (PRS) values all pupils. As set out in this policy, we will build strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school and identify the reasons for poor attendance.
- 1.4 South Cumbria Pupil Referral Service (PRS) recognises 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:
- Admissions
 - Safeguarding & child protection
 - Behaviour & relationships
 - Special Educational Needs and Inclusive learning.

This policy considers the Human Rights Act 1998, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the Race Relations Act 2000.

1.5 Aims:

By writing and implementing this Policy and the procedures that support it, we aim to:

- Ensure the safeguarding, child protection and welfare of all pupils.
- Ensure every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled.
- Promote a positive and welcoming atmosphere – a place where pupils want to be and where they feel safe, secure and valued.
- Create an ethos in which good attendance and punctuality are recognised as the norm and seen to be valued by the whole school community.
- Raise awareness among parents, carers, and pupils of the importance of uninterrupted attendance and punctuality at every stage of a pupil's education.
- Build strong relationships and work collaboratively with families, listening to and understanding barriers to attendance and remove them so that all pupils can realise their full potential.
- Improve pupils' achievement by ensuring high levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent and severe absence.
- Provide effective strategies for early intervention to ensure pupils are not deprived of educational opportunities through non-attendance or poor punctuality.
- Establish a pattern of monitoring attendance to ensure consistency in recognising and rewarding good attendance and punctuality.

2. Legal framework

- 2.1 This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)

Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)

Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)

[The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

[The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2024 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

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

- 2.2 Legal proceedings are a statutory intervention used by the local authority against the parents of registered pupils who fail to attend regularly at school. Parents whose children are on a school register and fail to ensure the regular and punctual attendance of their child(ren), may be guilty of an offence under Section 444(1) or 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996 and the authority may take enforcement action through the courts to secure regular attendance.
- 2.3 Legal proceedings are not used as a punishment to parents for their child's absence from school; they are a supportive measure intended to make parents realise the importance of attendance and to avoid further absence from school.
- 2.4 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 prosecution can take place against any person who has parental responsibility for the child's education or who has care of the child. Parents have a legal duty to make sure that their children are properly educated. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly and arrive on time. If you allow your child to be absent from school without good reason, the school will not authorise the absence, you may be committing an offence, and you could be issued with a penalty notice or prosecuted.
- 2.5 A child is of Compulsory School Age at the beginning of the term following their fifth 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.
- 2.6 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.
- 2.7 The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, 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.

- 2.8 The register must record whether the pupil was:

- present
- absent
- present at approved educational activity; or
- unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

3. Safeguarding

- 3.1 Every pupil should be able learn in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. We respect and value all children and young people and are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so they can learn and participate in all school activities in a relaxed and secure atmosphere.
- 3.2 Attending school regularly promotes the welfare and safety of children and young people whilst they are not in the care of their parents/carers. Safeguarding is about offering early help and support to children and their families. Difficulties with attendance and lateness may be signs that something is causing worry or that there are difficulties within the family. Poor or irregular attendance, persistent lateness, or children missing from education may be considered a safeguarding matter if this places a child at risk of harm.
- 3.3. Safeguarding the interests of each pupil is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this school, safeguarding and promoting the welfare and life opportunities for children encompasses attendance, behaviour management, health and safety, access to the curriculum and anti- bullying, protecting children from abuse and neglect, online safety, radicalisation and extremism, Female Genital Mutilation and Child Exploitation.
- 3.4 More information on safeguarding and the protection of children can be found in the school's Child Protection Policy and Overarching Safeguarding Statement.
- 3.5 In order to allow us to safeguard the pupils in our care it is important that parents and carers provide the school with their current contact details and provide at least one other contact number in case of emergency.
- 3.6 It is also important for parents to inform the school of any specific vulnerability in relation to their child or home circumstances.

4. Categorising absence

- 4.1 Where pupils of compulsory school age are recorded as absent, the register must show whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised.
- 4.2 Absence can only be authorised by the headteacher 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.
- 4.3 Parents must report all absences to our dedicated attendance line on 01229 407393, or email PRSAffendance@cumbria.gov.uk by 9:00am, on the first day of absence to provide school with a reason for absence and 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.
- 4.4 Absence will be categorised as follows:

- 4.4.1 Illness
Parents may be asked to provide medical evidence to allow the headteacher to authorise absence where appropriate. This will usually be in the form of an appointment card, prescription, etc.
- 4.4.2 Medical/dental appointments
Parents are advised where possible to make medical and dental appointments outside of the school day. Where this is not possible, pupils must attend school for part of the day. Parents must show the appointment card to school.
- 4.4.3 Other authorised circumstances
This relates to where there is cause for absence due to exceptional circumstances.
- 4.4.4 Suspended or permanently excluded (no alternative provision made)
Suspension or permanent exclusion from attending school is counted as an authorised absence. School staff will make arrangements for work to be sent home. Alternative provision must be arranged from the sixth consecutive school day of any suspension or permanent exclusion, and the appropriate attendance code should be used to record this.
- 4.4.5 Religious Observance
South Cumbria Pupil Referral Service (PRS) 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 this necessitates a consideration, by written request by the parent, of authorised absence.
- 4.4.6 Study leave
Study leave may be granted for Year 11 pupils approaching GCSE examinations. School will offer in school study programmes during this period to reduce absence levels.
- 4.4.7 Traveller absence
It is expected that Traveller children, in common with all other pupils, are to attend school as regularly and as frequently as possible.

To protect Traveller parents from unreasonable prosecution for non-attendance, the Education Act 1996, section 444(6), states that a Traveller parent is safe from prosecution if their child accrues 200 attendances (i.e. 200 half days) in the year preceding the absence. To help ensure continuity of education for pupils, when their parent(s) is travelling for occupational purposes in England it is expected that the pupil should attend a mainstream school where their parent(s) is travelling and be dual registered.

South Cumbria Pupil Referral Service (PRS) will be regarded as the base school if it is the school where the pupil 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 while away from their base school; in such cases, the pupil's school place at South Cumbria Pupil Referral Service (PRS) will be kept open for them whilst travelling. This is to protect them from unfairly losing their place at their school of usual attendance.

South Cumbria Pupil Referral Service (PRS) can only effectively operate as the base school if it is 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.

South Cumbria Pupil Referral Service (PRS) will authorise absence of Traveller children if we are satisfied that a family is travelling for work or trade purposes 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;
- the child is undertaking supervised educational activity under the jurisdiction of another local authority's Traveller Education Service;

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 and appropriate statutory action may be undertaken.

4.4.8 Late arrival

Pupils are greeted by staff on arrival and are promptly reminded of the time to ensure they are in the building by 9:00am.

Registration begins at 9:00am; pupils arriving after this time will be marked as present but arriving late (code L). The register will close at 9:30am (*no more than thirty minutes after the opening of the register*); pupils arriving after the close of register will be recorded as late (code U). This is not authorised and will count as an absence for that school session and statutory action may be taken where appropriate.

On arrival after the close of register, pupils must 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.

The absence will be recorded as unauthorised if the pupil has arrived late without justifiable cause.

Persistent punctuality issues are investigated to identify any barriers to getting to school on time. A punctuality letter will be sent out to parents and support is also offered to the family; this can take many forms i.e. transport to school.

Excellent attendance and punctuality are recognised and rewarded as part of our whole school rewards programme.

Consequences may also be implemented to tackle poor punctuality i.e. breaktime detentions.

4.4.9 Unauthorised absence

Absence will not be authorised unless parents have provided a satisfactory explanation and that it has been accepted as such by the headteacher.

4.5 The headteacher will only grant leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be exceptional circumstances.

We consider 'exceptional circumstances' as one off events, which are unavoidable. Examples may include the death of a close relative, attendance at a funeral, respite care of a looked after child or a housing crisis which prevents attendance.

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

A notification of pupil leave of absence form, available from the school office or via the school website, should be completed and handed to the headteacher giving at least 14 days' notice of the proposed absence.

All requests for leave of absence will be responded to in writing outlining the conditions of leave granted.

- 4.5.1 If a pupil fails to return and contact with the parents has not been made or received, school may take the pupil off the school's roll in compliance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. This means that the child will lose their school place.
- 4.5.2 If the permission to take leave is not granted and the parent takes their child out of school the absence will be unauthorised. In cases where the national threshold is met schools must consider a penalty notice. In these circumstances the school will refer to the local authority. Fixed penalty notices will be issued in accordance with Westmorland and Furness Council's code of conduct.

5. Deletions from the register

- 5.1 In accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, pupils will only be deleted from the register 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.
 - Parent notifies the school in writing they are withdrawing the child to be educated otherwise than at school.
 - Failure to return from a period of leave after both the school and the local authority have tried to locate the pupil.
 - Where a pupil has been detained under a sentence of detention and here are reasonable grounds to believe the pupil will not return to the school after the period of detention. This will be agreed in discussion with the Youth Justice Service.
 - 20 days continuous unauthorised absence and both the local authority and school have tried to locate the pupil and agree to deletion from the register.
 - Left the school but not known where he/she has gone after both the school and the local authority have tried to locate the pupil.
- 5.2 South Cumbria Pupil Referral Service (PRS) will follow Westmorland and Furness Council's Children Missing Education Procedures when a pupil's whereabouts are unknown.

6. Roles and responsibilities

6.1 The Management Committee

The Management Committee are 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 headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

There is currently no link member for attendance, but this will be pursued this academic year. The link member for safeguarding is [Sarah Campbell](#).

6.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school.
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to the Management Committee.
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils.
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies.

6.3 The designated senior leader responsible for school attendance

The designated senior leader is 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.

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Jeremy Mark and he can be contacted on 01229 407470 or email Jeremy.Mark@cumbria.gov.uk

6.4 Engagement Officers (EO's)

The school Engagement Officers are responsible for:

- Making first day contact with parents/carers, when a pupil is absent from school and recording the outcome of calls on BehaviourWatch – where no reason is provided recording 'N' ensuring that a reason is continued to be sought and within 5 working days of the session. If staff cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may conduct a home visit.
- Attending a weekly attendance meeting, focusing on punctuality and attendance - identifying barriers and strategies to overcome them.

- Building positive relationships with pupils and parents/carers to support them to overcome barriers to accessing education.
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data.
- Ensuring accurate records are kept regarding pupil attendance and welfare.
- Supporting key teachers by attending half termly education reviews with parents/carers where attendance and absence are discussed.
- Sending personalised letters of concern to parents where attendance falls below 90%.
- Implementing School Attendance Contracts (SAC's) if there is no significant improvement following the letter of concern. The SAC includes short term targets which are agreed with pupils, school and parents/carers.
- Celebrating success by acknowledging and rewarding good and improved attendance and punctuality.

6.5 Attendance Champion

The school attendance champion is responsible for:

- Producing weekly attendance data reports for key teachers, identifying areas of concern and causes for celebration.
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement.
- Providing regular attendance reports to designated senior leader responsible for attendance, the headteacher and management committee.
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues.
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families.
- Working with the named LA Attendance Support Officer to agree actions for pupils whose attendance is a concern and support strategies are not working.
- Regularly informing parents about their child's attendance and absence levels.
- Celebrating success by acknowledging and rewarding good and improved attendance and punctuality.

The school Attendance Champion is Kerry Stockdale, and can be contacted on 01229 407393 or email PRSAAttendance@cumbria.gov.uk

6.6 Key Teachers

Key Teachers are responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of good attendance and punctuality to pupils and their parents/carers at their child's PRU induction meeting - providing a copy of or directing parents/carers to our school attendance policy on the school website.
- Recording attendance on a daily basis during form time, using the correct codes, and submitting this information on Behaviourwatch during morning registration (9:00am) and afternoon registration (12:10pm).
- Promoting the importance of good attendance during form times.
- Organising educational reviews where attendance concerns can be identified and challenged if necessary.
- Acknowledging and celebrating good and improved attendance and punctuality.

6.7 Business Support

Business support staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on Behaviourwatch, ensuring all appropriate staff are cc'd.
- Transfer calls from parents to appropriate staff in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance.

6.8 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every timetabled session on time.
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9:00am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence and advise when they are expected to return.
- Be honest about absences so that strategies are meaningful and responsive.
- Provide the school with more than one emergency contact number for their child.
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day.
- Attend review meetings with key staff in school - to support their child and to discuss any potential barriers to attending school.

6.9 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend every timetabled session on time.

7. Using attendance data

7.1 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 there are groups of pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern.

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 Management Committee.

7.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data weekly 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 Key Teachers 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.

South Cumbria Pupil Referral Service (PRS) will make every attempt to support parents and pupils in improving their attendance and will, where necessary follow the Local Authority formal attendance process to strategize an individuals attendance.

8. Support systems

8.1 South Cumbria Pupil Referral Service (PRS) recognises that poor attendance is often an indication of difficulties and trauma in a child or young person'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, incidents of domestic abuse. This will help the school identify any additional support that may be required. It is expected that the child and their family work collaboratively with school to identify the anxiety-based school avoidance resources most appropriate for support and to accept the support that is offered or advised.

8.2 South Cumbria Pupil Referral Service (PRS) also recognises 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.

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

- Promoting the importance of good attendance and punctuality at the initial induction meeting at the PRS - providing pupils, parents and carers with a copy of the school attendance policy.
- Greeting and welcoming pupils at the school gate on arrival at 9:00am – positive interaction at the start of the school day.
- Form group allocations based on pupil/staff relationships, peer friendships, and pupil strengths and interests.

- Form time activities – activities identified through student voice surveys.
- Form time snacks and drinks i.e bagels.
- 'In to Win' raffle - awarding pupils raffle tickets for achieving 100% attendance each week. Termly prize draw. Prizes identified through student voice surveys.
- Termly certificates awarded for excellent and most improved attendance.
- Attendance notice board promoting the importance of good attendance and the link to academic achievement.
- Termly text/postcard home to pupils and parents to acknowledge and celebrate good and improved attendance and punctuality.
- Pupil monitoring charts on display in form rooms – pupils complete each week to take ownership and recognise their own attendance and punctuality.
- Termly punctuality focus week – reminder to all pupils and parents of the importance of arriving to school on time. Whole staff cross-curricular activities/conversations about punctuality. Daily punctuality raffle during this focus week.
- Engagement Officer support available to all pupils and parents – identifying areas of concern, barriers to attendance and ensuring appropriate support and intervention is offered.
- Weekly monitoring of individual pupils' punctuality – discussions with pupils, parents, punctuality concerns letters, if appropriate and monitored across a three-week period. Supportive interventions offered.
- Weekly monitoring and analysis of each individual pupil attendance allowing for early intervention. Discussions with pupils, initial and ongoing concerns letters sent to parents/carers and reviewed across a three-week period. If significant progress is not made then an attendance meeting is arranged with pupil, Engagement Officer, Key Teacher, pupil and parents/carers to initiate a School Attendance Contract (SAC).
- At the SAC meeting targets are agreed, support will be identified – this may involve additional in-house support from school staff such as Engagement Officer, Behaviour Support Worker, Key Teacher, School Counsellor or a trusted adult, home visits or organising school provided transport. It may also be recommended to seek support from external agencies such as school health, Barnardos, CAMHS, Family Action or alternative provision may be investigated and offered. Early Help may be offered to the family if not already registered.
- A part-time timetable may be considered if felt to be appropriate to meet the needs of the pupil, and in agreement with parents/carers. This would be as a temporary measure and reviewed on a regular basis, at least every 6 weeks, with a view to increasing the provision at the earliest opportunity. Refer to PRS reduced timetable agreement policy.
- School Attendance Champion meets with the Local Authority Inclusion Officer at least every term to monitor whole school attendance and to ensure appropriate support and interventions are in place for our most vulnerable pupils, especially those who are persistently and severely absent from school.
- Refer to Attendance Escalation of Intervention for further details.

8.4 Where parents fail or refuse to engage with the support offered and further unauthorised absence occurs; South Cumbria Pupil Referral Service (PRS) will consider the use of legal sanctions.

9. Legal interventions

9.1 Prosecution

Where intervention fails to bring about an improvement in attendance, the local authority will be notified and legal action in the Magistrates' Court may be considered; however, initiating prosecution proceedings is a serious step that is normally taken by an Attendance Support Officer or other relevant officer at the LA.

All alternatives to prosecution will be considered and discounted ahead of considering prosecution. These include Attendance Contracts, Penalty Notices or an Education Supervision Order.

- 9.1.1 Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 states that if a parent fails to ensure the regular school attendance of their child if he/she is a registered pupil at a school and is of compulsory school age, then they are guilty of an offence.
- 9.1.2 A parent found guilty of this offence can be fined up to £2,500 and/or be imprisoned for a period of up to three months.
- 9.1.3 Alternatives to Section 444 prosecution are Attendance Contracts, Penalty Notices or an Education Supervision Order.

9.2 Attendance contracts

An attendance contract is a voluntary agreement between 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.

- 9.2.1 The contract will outline attendance targets and will detail agreed actions that will help to achieve the target. The contract will be reviewed regularly.
- 9.2.2 The contract can be used as evidence in a prosecution should parents fail to carry out agreed actions.

9.3 Penalty Notices

Penalty Notices will be considered when:

- A pupil is absent from school and the absence has not been authorised by the school.
- A pupil has accrued unauthorised absence without reasons provided and/or accepted as exceptional by the headteacher/principal.

- 9.3.1 A Penalty Notice gives the parent the opportunity to discharge themselves of their legal responsibility if a £160 fine is paid within 28 days. There is usually the opportunity to pay a reduced amount of £80 if paid within 21 days of the date the Notice was issued.
- 9.3.2 Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in a prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.
- 9.3.3 Penalty Notices will be used in accordance with Westmorland and Furness Council's Penalty Notice Code of Conduct.

Westmorland and Furness Escalation of Intervention Process

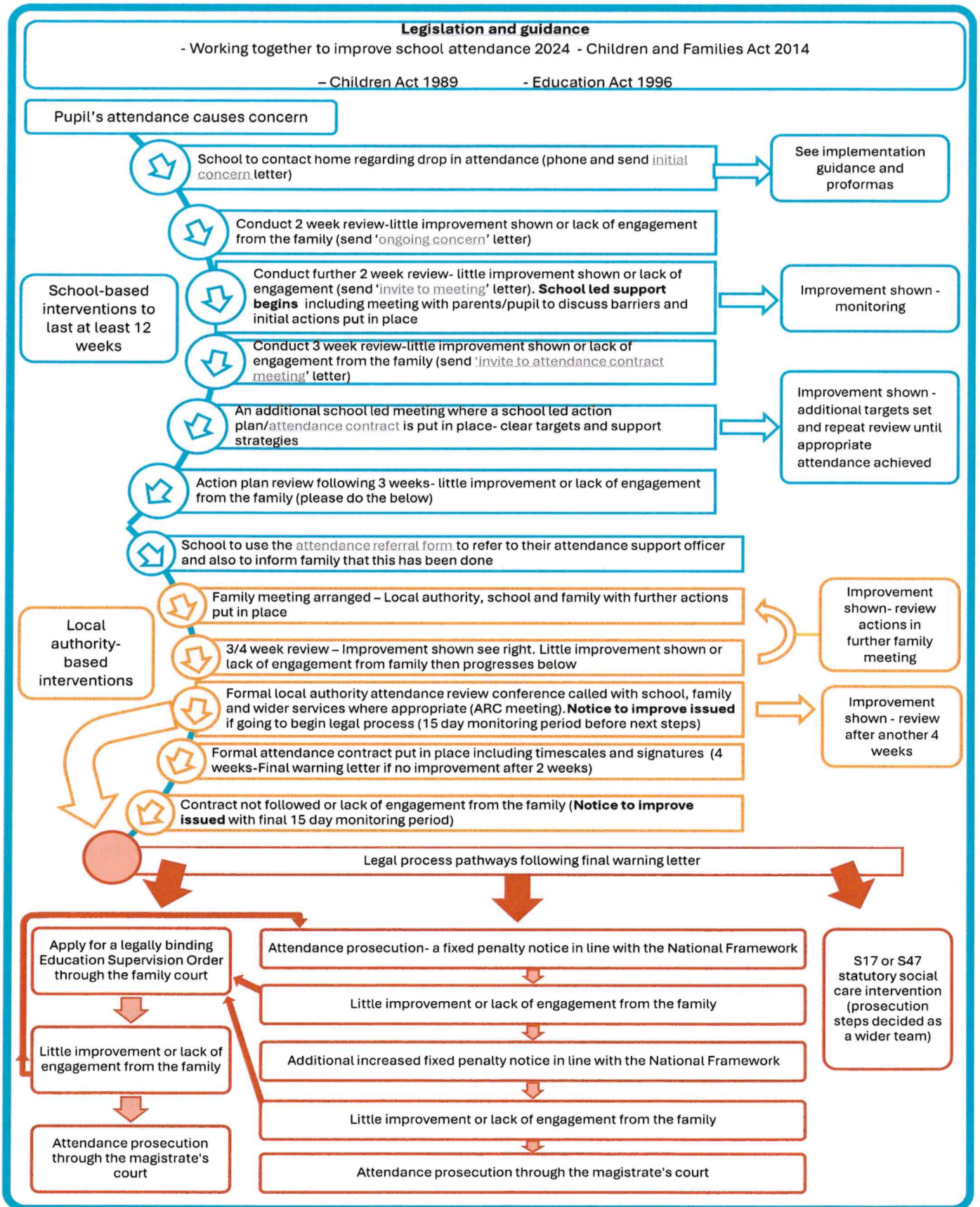


Table 1: National School Attendance Codes

On each occasion the register is taken the appropriate national attendance and absence code must be entered for every pupil (of both compulsory and non-compulsory school age) whose name is listed in the admission register at the time (with the exception of a pupil who is a boarder).

Code	Definition	Scenario (present mark)
/	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. If a pupil is recorded 'N' but arrives later in the session, the attendance register must be amended to record them as absent using code 'U' or another appropriate code.
B	Approved educational activity	Attendance at any other approved educational activity arranged by the school e.g. Alternative provision not arranged through the approved framework (See 'K' below); transition/taster days at other schools; course at college. Record nature. Education provider to notify the school of any absence which must be recorded with the relevant code. Pupils who are absent from school but receiving remote education still need to be recorded as absent using the relevant absence code.
K	Education provision arranged by the LA	Attending education provision arranged by the LA e.g. home tutoring; approved framework for alternative provision; course at college; blended learning. Not provision arranged by the school where codes 'P' or 'B' must be used. Record nature. Education provider to notify the school of any absence which must be recorded with the relevant code.
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered e.g. PRU; hospital education; education at a secure/residential site; off-site direction/managed move. This code may be used by either setting. All unexpected and unexplained absences must be promptly followed up by school.
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a physically supervised sporting activity approved by school. Record nature. Provider to notify the school of any absence which must be recorded with the relevant code.
V	Educational trip or visit/offsite educational activity	Pupil is at a school staff supervised off-site educational activity or on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by school. Record nature. Relevant code must be used if the pupil does not attend the activity.
Q	Unable to attend	Pupil unable to attend because of a lack of access arrangements i.e. a failure by the LA to make travel arrangements for the pupil to which the pupil was entitled.
W	Work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement provided by the school or LA. Provider to notify the school of any absence which must be recorded with the relevant code.
Authorised absence		

C	Leave of absence granted by the school	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances. Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days a pupil can be absent from school. Schools are expected to act reasonably and grant a sufficient period of leave from schools for pregnant pupils. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the school's discretion. Generally a holiday or other absence for leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance.
C1	As above.	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad under a licence or exemption.
C2	As above.	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a temporary or permanent part-time timetable.
E	Suspended or Permanently excluded	Pupil has been suspended or permanently excluded on disciplinary grounds but their name is still entered in the admission register and no alternative provision has been made. Alternative provision must be arranged from the sixth consecutive school day of any suspension or permanent exclusion.
J1	Interview	Pupil is attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness (both physical and mental health related). Only where the school has genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness should medical evidence be requested to support the absence.
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment. Application for leave must be made in advance by parent or pupils over compulsory school age. If a pupil is present at registration but then leaves the school to attend an approved medical or dental appointment during the session, no absence needs be recorded for that session.
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day or part day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body the parent(s) belong to (not the parents themselves). If a religious body sets apart a single day and the parent applies for more than one day, only one day should be recorded using this code, any other additional dates should be recorded using the relevant code 'C'.
S	Study leave	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination. Must be used sparingly with revision opportunities in school.
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes accompanied by the pupil (mobile child)	The pupil is a mobile child and their parent(s) is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with them. A mobile child is a child of compulsory school age who has no fixed abode and whose parent(s) is engaged in a trade or business which requires them to travel from place to place. For a child aged 6 or over, the parent must prove that the child has attended school for at least 200 sessions in the preceding 12 months.

Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday or term-time leave that was not granted or approved by school or in excess of the period authorised by the school. The school cannot grant leave of absence retrospectively.
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended with the correct absence code as soon as the reason emerges, but no more than 5 school days after the session or replaced with code O if no reason for absence is established within 5 school days).
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence or are not made aware of the reason for absence within 5 school days.
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed.
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age who is not required to attend school. If the pupil is absent when timetabled to attend school, the absence must be recorded using the relevant absence code.
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause or exceptional reasons. 'Y' codes are broken down below.
Y1	Not expected to attend	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available and school is not within walking distance of their home (normal walking distance rules apply).
Y2	As above.	Unable to attend due to widespread (local, national or international emergency) disruption to travel.
Y3	As above.	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed and pupil cannot practicably be accommodated in other open areas of the school.
Y4	As above.	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed. For example, extreme weather, damage, no hot water, or heating. Not to be used for planned closure e.g. weekends or holidays.
Y5	As above.	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention. For example, in police detention, remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or detained under a sentence of detention.
Y6	As above.	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law. Travel to or attendance would be contrary to, or prohibited by, any guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of infection or disease which says they should not attend.
Y7	As above.	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause. For example, an emergency has prevented the pupil from attending, bail conditions prevent attendance or the pupil is legally required to attend Court. The unavoidable cause must be something that affects the pupil, not the parent. The nature of the unavoidable cause must be recorded.
Z	Pupil on admission register (does not attend)	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school. This code is not collected for statistical purposes.
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day/use of the whole school as a polling station. Not collected for statistical purposes.

Penalty Notice Fines for School Attendance are changing from 19th August 2024

With the introduction of the new National Framework for Penalty Notices issued by DfE, the following changes will come into force for School Penalty Notice Fines issued **after 19th August 2024**.

From 19 August 2024 there is a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England of 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period.

These sessions do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence.

The 10-school week period can span different terms or school years.

Please note: The DfE **does not** consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.

First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence the amount will be:

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

Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.

Second Offence (within 3 years)

The Second time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence the amount will be:

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

Third Offence and Any Further Offences (within 3 years)

The third time an offence is committed a Penalty Notice will not be issued and the case could be presented straight to the Magistrate's Court. Prosecution can result in Criminal records and fines of up to £2,500.

Cases found guilty in Magistrates' Court may show on the parent's future DBS certificate due to 'failure to safeguard a child's education'.

***Parent**

Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 defines "parent" as:

- All natural (biological) parents, whether they are married or not.
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person.

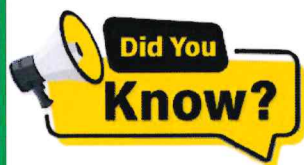
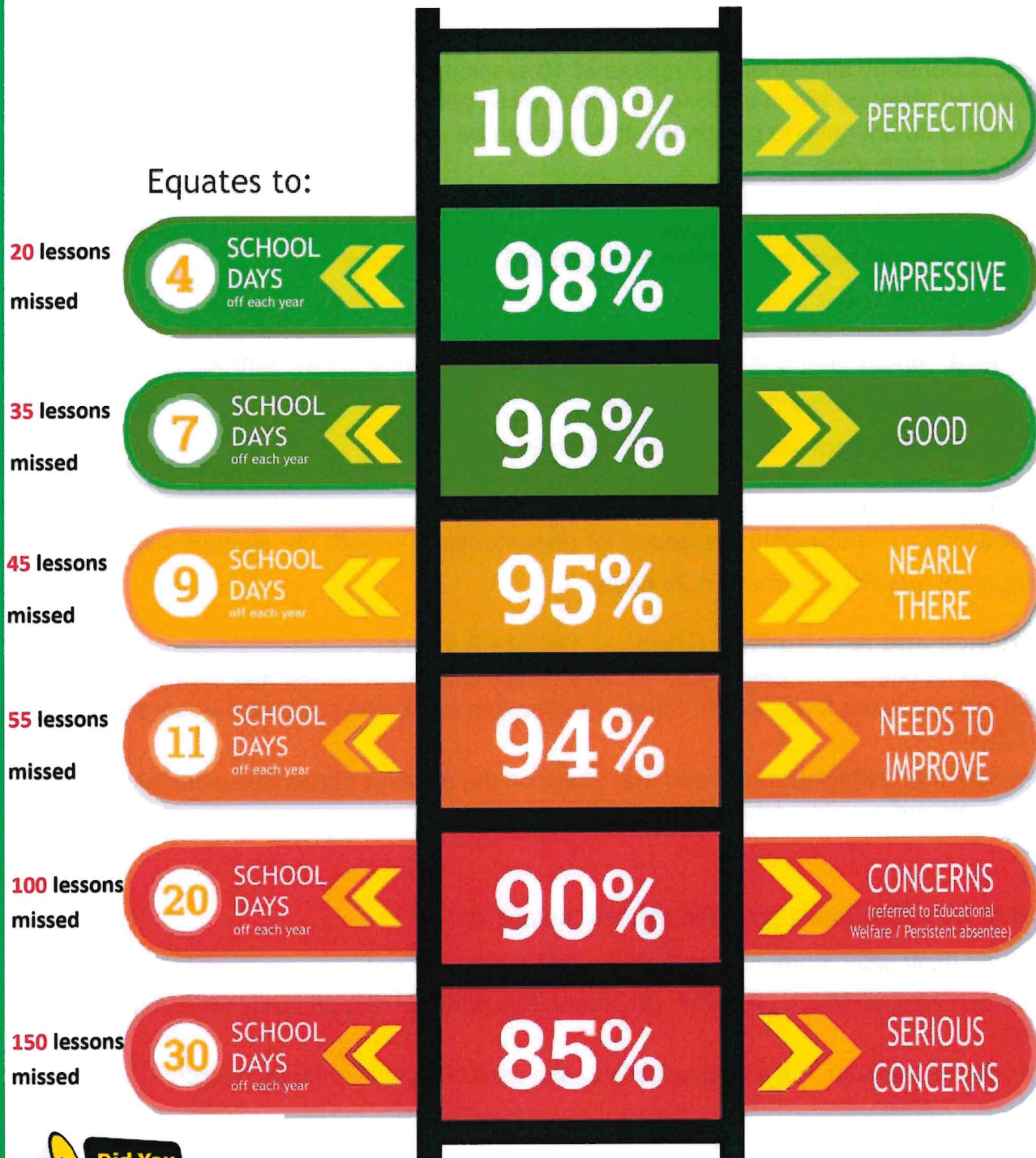
Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person.

Per Parent*, Per Child

Penalty Notice Fines are issued to each parent*, for each child that was absent.

For example: 3 siblings absent for term time leave, would result in each parent receiving 3 separate fines.

Attendance Ladder



90% attendance across 5 years
 = 1/2 a school year missed!!!