



THE ABBEY CE VA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Together we learn, we care, we achieve –
for ourselves, for each other, and for the community in which we live.

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

Policy reviewed and adopted date: February 2020

Policy review date: February 2023

Introduction

The Abbey CE VA Primary School expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children. We will make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school.

Hertfordshire County Council is committed to achieving excellent levels of attendance for individual children, individual schools and for Hertfordshire as a whole. Underpinning this commitment is the belief that if children attend school regularly and punctually they will be best able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. The County Council is committed to openness and equality of opportunity in every activity, from the way we employ staff to the way we deliver services. It is a central responsibility of members, managers and employees of the County Council to ensure that every individual that we come into contact with is treated with dignity and respect.

Statement of intent

Hertfordshire County Council expects the Children's Services and all schools to work closely together in partnership with parents in order to achieve excellent levels of school attendance and punctuality for all children.

Under the **Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006**, the Governing Board are responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which children are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether the absence was authorised or unauthorised. A child's absence impacts on their progress in learning and settled participation in school life.

Responsibilities – Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are responsible in law for ensuring that their children of compulsory school age receive an efficient education suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs that they may have. Most parents fulfil this responsibility by registering their children at a school. Parents and carers whose children are registered at a school are responsible for ensuring that their children attend and stay at school. It is also their responsibility to ensure they are aware of the attendance and punctuality policy.

Parents and Carers should:

- a) Ensure that their children arrive at school on time, appropriately dressed and ready to learn.
- b) Instill in their children an appreciation of the importance of attending school regularly.
- c) Ensure that they are aware of the attendance policy (if the school has an attendance policy) of their children's school
- d) Impress upon their children the need to observe the school's code of conduct.
- e) Take an active interest in their children's school career, praising and encouraging good work and behaviour and attending parents' evenings and other relevant meetings
- f) work in partnership with their children's school to resolve issues which may lead to non-attendance.
- g) Notify their children's school if they are absent. This should be done on the first day of absence. They should also provide an explanation for the absence. This explanation should be confirmed - preferably in writing when the children return to school.
- h) Avoid arranging medical/dental appointments during school hours
- i) Should not book holidays during term time

School Hours

Reception/Key Stage 1:

Morning: 8.55 am – 12.00 pm (Supervision from 8.45 am in classroom)
break 10.40 – 10.55 am)

Afternoon: 1.05 pm – 3.20 pm
break 2.45 – 2.55 pm

Key Stage 2:

Morning: 8.55 am – 12.05 pm (Supervision from 8.45 am in classroom)
break 10.40 – 10.55 am)

Afternoon: 1.05 pm – 3.20 pm

Punctuality

Abbey School actively encourage excellent levels of punctuality. Lateness will be monitored and followed up.

Children are asked to arrive 5 or 10 minutes before the beginning of the school day. Supervision of children by a member of staff is provided in their classroom. Parents and carers are requested to say goodbye to their children at the school gates.

Children arriving between 8.55 am-9.30am must enter the school via the school office. They will be recorded as **late** but counted as present for the session. **Registers close at 9.30 am.** Children arriving after 9.30am will be recorded as an **unauthorised absence**. The child's presence on site will be noted in a book in the school office for purposes of emergency evacuation. The afternoon registration is taken at 1.10 pm. The headteacher will monitor individual children's attendance and punctuality along with that of year groups and the whole school, report findings to the governing body.

It is essential that children arriving and leaving school with a parent and carer outside the normal hours are signed in or out from the office. The signing in/out register in the office is used in the case of an emergency or a fire drill.

After school activities

Parents and carers and children will be informed of the days and times of after-school activities and clubs. Children are not permitted to stay in school out of school hours unless they are attending an after-school activity.

For those not attending after school activities, children must be collected at 3.20pm. If parents and carers are unavoidably detained (after 3.30pm) and are unable to collect their children on time, we ask them to inform the school office by telephone to prevent children becoming anxious in advance of 3pm. Children whose parents and carers have not arrived to collect them on time will wait in the library area, where they will be safe (school office only staffed until 4.30pm). Parents and carers should ring the security bell to gain entry on arrival and the headteacher will monitor and follow up any persistent cases.

Absence

Attendance below 90% is considered as a 'persistent absentee' by Herts County Council.

Illness and medical appointments

If a child is absent because of ill health, parents and carers must notify the school of the reason for the absence. This can be done either by phone using the absence line or email (admin@abbey.herts.sch.uk) to the school **before 9.30 am** on the day of the absence. Absences are recorded in the class register, with the appropriate absence code. The school office should be informed before 9.30 am on the morning of the first day of a child's absence through illness and then each morning, if appropriate, for the duration of the absence.

Parents and carers should make every effort to arrange medical and dental appointments outside school hours. If it is necessary for a child to be out of school for this reason, a note should be sent to the school **prior** to the day of absence so that the absence can be officially recorded. Where possible, the child should be returned to school directly after the appointment. If the child is not at registration, the class teacher should take immediate action by notifying the school office. The school will then contact the parent and carer after 9.30am in order to check on the safety of the child.

Authorised absence

An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent and carer. For example, if a child has been unwell or the parent and carer requests an authorised leave of absence for exceptional circumstances.

Only the headteacher can make an absence authorised. Parents or carers do not have this authority. Absence from school for family leave of absence is not a right. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents and carers will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.

Each request for leave of absence will be considered individually, taking into account: the circumstances for the request, the supporting evidence provided, the overall attendance of your child(ren), your child's stage of education and progress and where appropriate both internal and external examinations and assessments. Absence requests are per child and siblings would be expected to be at school.

Absences without adequate explanation are marked as unauthorised. These include birthday treats, day trips or family outings, but also late arrival at school (after 9.30 am) without proper explanation. Attendance is monitored termly by the **Local Authority Attendance Officer (LAAO)**.

No absences will be authorised in **September**, the start of the academic year, and in the weeks leading up to SATs in **May** in the Summer Term (Years 2-6).

All requests for the authorisation of absences must be made on the school's official form (Appendix 1), obtainable from the school office and school website, at least two weeks in advance, where possible.

It is not acceptable to ask the school to provide homework or catch up activities due to parents choosing to remove children during term time. If children are unwell and cannot attend school, homework would not be provided as its aim is to consolidate the learning taking place in school which the child has missed.

Unauthorised absence

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of both the headteacher and a parent. Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without an exceptional circumstance, even with the support of a parent. Pupils who arrive in school after the registers have closed (9.30am) without good reason are marked as having an unauthorised absence.

Exceptional circumstances

Headteacher has the discretion to authorise leave of absence only if there are exceptional and unavoidable circumstances which warrant it and application is made in advance. These circumstances may include a medical appointment (as above), a day of religious observance or funeral or close family wedding.

Long-term absence

When a child has an illness that means he/she will be away from school for over ten consecutive school days, the school may, if the child is fit enough, direct some activities to be completed at home. If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the home education support service, so that arrangements can be made for the child to be given some tuition outside school if appropriate.

Repeated unauthorised absences

Attendance records are monitored. The school will contact the parent and carer of any child who has an unauthorised absence. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parents and carers will be asked to visit the school and discuss the problem. If the situation does not improve, the school will then contact the LAAO. The LAAO may write to parents and carers, or attend a meeting at school, and may visit home, to raise concerns about absence and parent's and carer's responsibilities regarding school attendance.

The Governing Board, supported by the LA, reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any parents and carers who repeatedly fail to meet their responsibility of ensuring their child's regular full-time school attendance.

Requests for leave of absence

Amendments to the 2006 Pupil Registration (England) Regulations which came into effect on 1st September 2013 remove all references to family holidays and extended leave for holidays in term time. The amendments make clear that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. It is for the headteacher to determine what constitutes exceptional circumstances and for them to determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

All absence from school has a negative impact on a child's education and progress. The Abbey School and the Local Authority takes the view that taking children on holiday during term time can be damaging to the child's educational progress for various reasons:

- a) Children find it difficult to catch up on the learning that they have missed
- b) It can have a negative impact on children's confidence and progress
- c) Excellent attendance and punctuality are vital elements of preparing children for the future
- d) All members of the class suffer if children take leave of absence as teachers have to spend time helping some children to catch up

Parents and carers requesting leave of absence are invited into school to discuss the proposed absence and implications for their child of missing school time and should not book any travel arrangements until authority is given. Parents and carers must check term time dates (available on the school website and circulated a year in advance) before making flight bookings. **Headteachers have the discretion to authorise leave of absence only if there are exceptional and unavoidable circumstances which warrant it and application is made in advance.** Term time absence will be recorded on the child's report.

- If the school does not agree the absence and you take the leave without permission or your child is absent for more than the agreed number of days the absence will be unauthorised.
- Leave of absence taken without the authorisation of the school may lead to your child(ren) being referred to the LAO and the possibility of statutory action and a fine.

Attendance targets

The school is set a challenging attendance target each year. These targets are agreed by the senior staff, the Chair of Governors and the LA School Improvement Partner at the annual target-setting meeting. The Headteacher will report on attendance percentages in the termly report to the governing board.

Monitoring and reviewing

It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance, and they will request an annual report from the headteacher. The governing body also has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out. The governors will therefore examine closely the information provided to them, and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be. The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.

Class teachers will be responsible for monitoring attendance in their class. If there is a longer-term general worry about the attendance of a particular child, where there is a pattern of continued absence, this will be reported to the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher, who will contact the parents or carers.

Responsibilities - Schools

Abbey School is responsible for supporting the attendance of their children and for dealing with problems that may lead to non-attendance.

The school is required to call attendance registers at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session and to record whether children are present, absent or on an approved educational activity.

For children of compulsory school age, schools are required to differentiate in the registers between absence that is authorised and absence that is unauthorised.

The school's aim:

- Work actively to maximise attendance rates - both in relation to individual children and for the pupil body as a whole - as one of their key tasks
- Have clear policies in place to address persistent absence
- Have clear policies in place to address the attendance of vulnerable groups
- Support parents and carer in ensuring the regular and punctual attendance of children and promptly respond to any issue which may lead to non-attendance
- Be sensitive to the needs of individual parents and carers and this should be reflected in the way in which attendance issues are addressed. Schools should recognise that some parents and carers have difficulty understanding written communications. They should also recognise the reluctance of some parents and carers to come into school.
- Produce school attendance policies which are consistently applied and clearly

- communicated to all parents, carers, children and staff
- In recognition of local circumstances registers may be kept open for a reasonable period (no longer than 30 minutes).
 - Set attendance targets each year agreed by the headteacher, school improvement partner and Chair of Governors at the annual target-setting meeting in the Autumn Term.

This policy will be reviewed by the Governing Body every 3 years.



THE ABBEY CE VA PRIMARY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

The pupil registrations (England) 2006 and the Education (Pupil Registration / England/ Amendment) Regulations 2013 states that: Schools may only grant leave of absence in exceptional circumstances as taking children out of school in term time is disruptive to their education.

I would like to apply for an authorised absence from school for the children named below:

Children's Names

- 1. Year Group
- 2. Year Group
- 3. Year Group

Please tick: Less than a whole day Whole day(s)

If less than a whole day: Date from:.....From.....am/pm toam/pm

Or if whole day(s), period of absence: Date from :..... to (if appropriate)

Please note: If your child is to arrive at school after 10 am, your child must bring in a home packed lunch if the School Office has not been notified the day before that a school lunch will be required.

The circumstances that require my children to be absent from school are:

.....
.....
.....

Signed(Parent/Guardian) Date

Please return this form to School Office ASAP.

SCHOOL OFFICE USE ONLY Request No. 2020/2021 Date received:.....

Permission for authorized absence is granted.

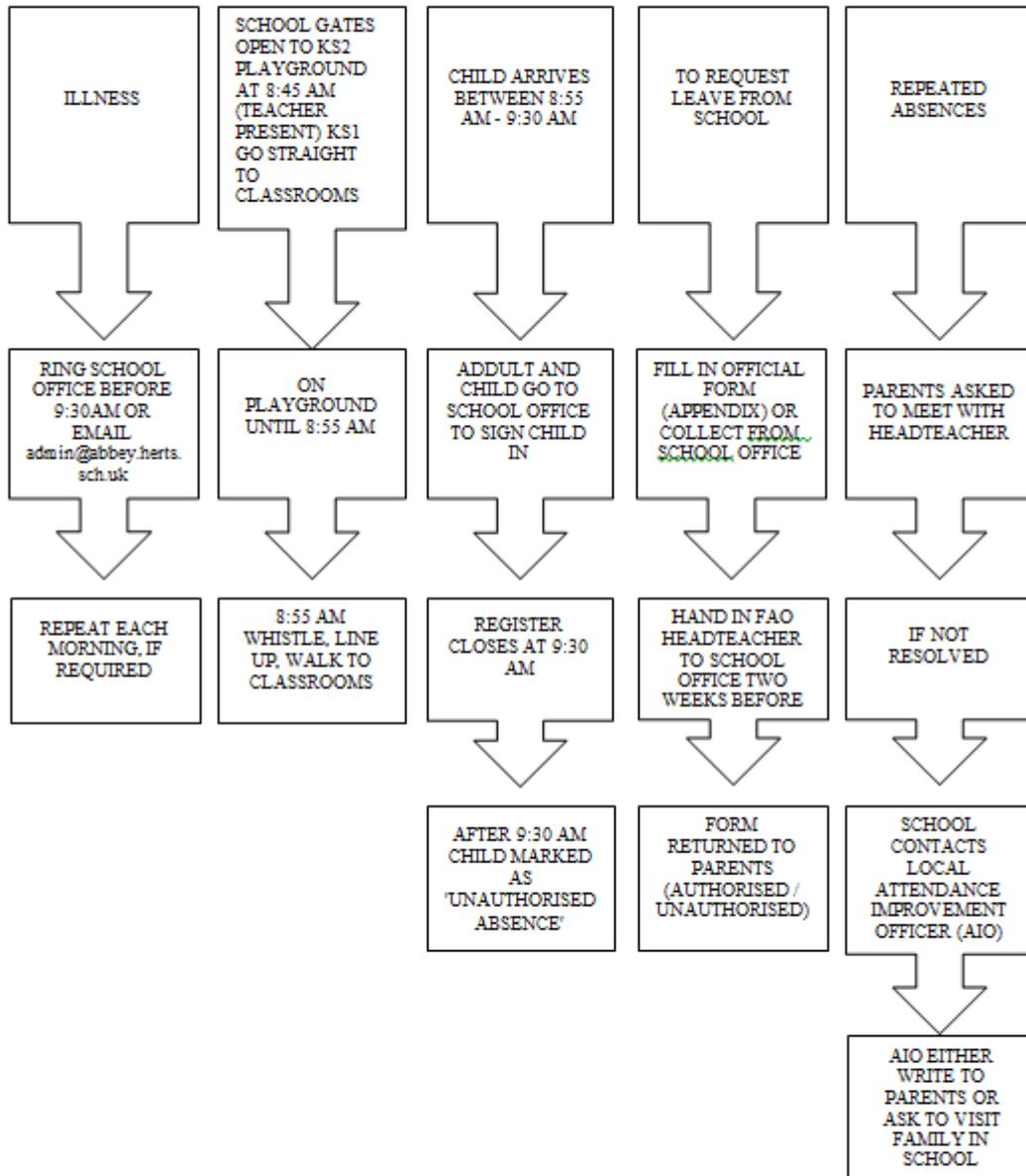
SignedMiss Emma Fenn – Headteacher

Permission for an authorised absence has NOT been granted because:

Signed
Miss Emma Fenn, Headteacher

Appendix 2

THE ABBEY CE VA PRIMARY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE



NO ABSENCES GRANTED IN MONTHS OF SEPTEMBER (START OF ACADEMIC YEAR) OR MAY, LEADING UP TO SATS (2-6 YEARS)

GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOLS:

Responsibilities – ISL Attendance Team

The ISL Attendance Teams fulfil the statutory duty of the County Council in enforcing regular school attendance. In doing so it enables schools and parents to meet their respective responsibilities.

Each school in Hertfordshire has a link Local Authority Attendance Officer (LAAO) who can work with the school.

The Attendance Teams can offer the following services:-

ATTENDANCE DUTY SYSTEM

A dedicated telephone line through which schools can contact an LAAO between the hours of 9.00 am to 1.30 pm, Monday to Friday.

Types of enquiries may include –

- school issues e.g. register coding, holiday absence etc.
- enquiries relating to a pupil
- 10 day absence returns
- request for Early Intervention letters
- FPN enquiries
- Removal from Roll enquiries
- requests for referrals

VISITS TO SCHOOLS

All schools have a named link LAAO who can liaise with the school and undertake whole school work for their allocated schools.

Whole School Attendance Overview

The Local Authority Attendance Officer (LAAO) can work with relevant member(s) of staff to ensure your school is Ofsted ready. Any issues arising from this visit can inform targeted whole school work for the academic year, focussing on supporting your school to reduce PA and the absence of vulnerable groups.

Schools with high levels of PA may be subject to 'no notice' Ofsted inspections. Visit(s) can be used to analyse the school's data, discuss any school specific PA issues, and agree a strategy and action plans to address PA.

Data analysis is an important part of this process and LAAOs will support schools to analyse their attendance data and draw up plans to address any specific issues. Analysis may include:

- persistent absence
- absence profile
- use of register codes
- comparison of form groups in individual years
- percentage of absence due to holidays
- attendance of vulnerable groups

- types of absence e.g. a few pupils with significant absence or many pupils with occasional absence
- lateness after registers close
- year by year percentage attendance
- attendance trends – is attendance increasing or decreasing?

Other than engaging in casework there are a variety of supportive ways in which LAAOs can work with schools to increase attendance levels.

i) School Attendance Policies

Schools are not required to have an attendance policy, but are encouraged to do so to support consistent practice and effective communication of expectations around attendance.

ii) Parents' Evenings

LAAOs can play a key role in promoting school attendance at parents' evenings and new parent induction meetings.

iii) Attendance Surgeries

LAAOs can support schools by attending attendance surgeries, to meet with a number of pupils and parents where attendance or persistent absence has been identified as a concern and early intervention deemed an appropriate action to undertake.

iv) INSET

LAAOs may offer INSET/staff training. This may cover such issues as school attendance, the role of the LAAO, school-age employment and persistent absence.

v) Governors Meetings

LAAOs may attend governors meetings to explain various aspects of the work of the attendance team – case work, legal work, FPNs etc.

Casework

Once a case has been accepted, the LAAO will undertake direct work with pupils and their parents. This may include:

- arranging meetings between the school, parents and pupils
- making home visits to assess the situation and determine what action needs to be taken
- offering specific support to parents and individual pupils, either at school or elsewhere
- facilitating meetings
- enabling the pupil and parents to access appropriate support from other services and agencies

Local Authority Attendance Officers will usually work with children whose absences have not been authorised. However, LAAOs may work with children whose absences have been authorised, such as persistent absentee (PA) pupils (see appendix 1A).

The Use of Legal Action

If a pupil, who is registered at a school, fails to attend that school regularly without a legitimate reason and attempts by the Local Authority Attendance Officer and the school fail to secure that pupil's return to regular attendance, the County Council will take legal action. A complaint may be laid against the parents in the Magistrates' Court under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, or an Education Supervision Order relating to the pupil under Section 36 of the Children Act 1989 will be applied for. Any exceptional mitigating circumstances relating to the pupil's absence will be taken into account, when considering legal action. 'Exceptional mitigating circumstances' will be determined by the Central Attendance and Employment Support Team Manager on behalf of the Local Authority. 'Exceptional mitigating circumstances' might include the death of a close relative, certain medically recognised conditions, awaiting SEN placement, specific child protection concerns, change of provision. Legal proceedings can be considered at any stage if no progress has been made and no exceptional circumstances are deemed to exist.

If, after legal action has been taken, the child still fails to attend school regularly the LAAO may keep the case open and will, if appropriate, take further legal action at a subsequent date.

In cases where parents wilfully withhold a pupil from school, or persistently refuse to co-operate with efforts aimed at affecting a return to satisfactory school attendance, the ISL Attendance Teams will begin legal proceedings promptly on the grounds that no other course of action is available.

The Central Attendance & Employment Support Team Manager on behalf of the Local Authority will give approval before legal proceedings are commenced.

The Attendance Teams will consider applying for an Education Supervision Order when a parent finds it difficult to exercise an effective influence over a child who has developed a pattern of poor attendance. Education Supervision Orders will not usually be applied for in relation to pupils in Years 10 or 11.

Before an application is made for an Education Supervision Order:

- other possible means of dealing with the pupil's poor attendance will be explored
- the attitudes of the parent and pupil towards the poor attendance, and their wishes as to how it should be dealt with, will be noted
- the Local Authority will be of the view that the Order will have a significant effect on the pupil's attendance at school

Education Related Penalty Notices for Parents of Truants

Subsection (1) of section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 added two sections (444A and 444B) to section 444 of the Education Act 1996. These sections introduced penalty notices as an alternative to prosecution and enable parents to discharge potential liability for conviction for that offence by paying a penalty.

A penalty notice is a suitable intervention in circumstances of parentally condoned truancy, where the parent is judged capable of securing their child's regular attendance but is not willing to take responsibility for doing so. For example it could be used where a parent has failed to engage in any supportive measures

Further information on penalty notices is available at <http://www.thegrid.org.uk/info/welfare/attendance.shtml> or from the local Attendance Team Manager.

School Attendance Orders

If a parent fails to register a child of compulsory school age at a school (and he/she does not intend to educate the child otherwise than at school). The LA will serve a School Attendance Order under Sections 437 - 439 of the Education Act 1996. This requires the parent to register their child at a school named by the Local Authority.

Admission & Attendance Registers

The rules governing the maintenance of registers, including removal from roll, are contained in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended 2010, 2011, 2013 and 2016.

It is important that the school's admission register is accurate and kept up to-date. Schools should regularly encourage parents to inform them of any changes whenever they occur, through existing communication channels such as regular emails and newsletters. This will assist both the school and local authority when making enquiries to locate children missing education.

Where a parent notifies a school that a pupil will live at another address, all schools are required to record in the admission register:

- a) the full name of the parent with whom the pupil will live;
- b) the new address; and
- c) the date from when it is expected the pupil will live at this address.

Where a parent of a pupil notifies the school that the pupil is registered at another school or will be attending a different school in future, schools must record in the admission register:

- a) the name of the new school; and
- b) the date when the pupil first attended or is due to start attending that school.

All schools are required to notify the local authority **within five days** via school admissions - <http://www.intra.thegrid.org.uk/admissions/seam.shtml> when a pupil's name is added to the admissions register at a non-standard transition point. Schools will need to provide the local authority with all the information held within the admission register about the pupil. This duty does not apply when a pupil's name is entered in the admission register at a standard transition point – at the start of the first year of education normally provided by that school.

All schools are required to notify the Local Authority of any pupil of compulsory school age who fails to attend school regularly, or who has been absent for a continuous period of more than 10 school days, without a legitimate reason. This duty also extends to academies and independent schools.

For further guidance see - <http://www.thegrid.org.uk/info/csf/admissions.shtml>

Responsibilities of the LAAO – Attendance Registers

Inspection of registers

Registers should be available for inspection during school hours by a Local Authority Attendance Officer when requested.

If the link LAAO is concerned that a school's registers have not been kept in accordance with the requirements of the relevant regulations he/she will:

- notify the Headteacher of the concern and request that the matter is addressed
- if no appropriate action is taken by the school, and the LAAO remains concerned, the Attendance Team Manager will address the concern with the Headteacher
- if the matter still remains unresolved, the Attendance Team Manager will write to the Headteacher formally noting the concern. A copy of this letter will be sent to the relevant ISL Area Manager and the County Lead for Access and Inclusion-

Registers - Retention

Registers should be kept in a secure place for a period of not less than 3 years.

When computerised registration systems are used a print-out of the register should be made not less than once a month. A print-out of the register relating to a particular school year should be bound in a single volume and retained for a period of not less than 3 years.

Removal from Roll

There are strict grounds as to when schools may remove pupils from their admissions register. These are outlined in **Regulation 8** of the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006. Regulation 12(6) states that when a school has decided to delete a pupil's name from their admission roll they must notify their Local Authority as soon as the ground for removal is met and no later than the time at which the pupil's name is removed from the register. This responsibility applies to all Maintained Schools, Academies, Free Schools, Studio Schools, University Technical Colleges, Education Support Centres and Independent Schools. Full guidance on Removal from Roll is available at - <http://www.thegrid.org.uk/info/welfare/attendance.shtml>

If the pupil has left the school without explanation and there are concerns about the pupil's welfare please contact the local Attendance Team immediately.

If there are concerns that a pupil may be at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation or radicalisation please contact the local Attendance Team immediately.

If a school is told that a pupil is leaving to attend another school, staff at the school of departure should establish the pupil's new address, the name and address of the new school and the date the pupil will start there. Confirmation should then be sought from the receiving school. When this information has been obtained, the school should complete a Removal from Roll form and return it to the local Attendance Team office. Whenever a pupil leaves a school a Common Transfer File (CTF) must be completed.

If a school is concerned about any aspect of a transfer or if a pupil has "disappeared" the matter should be drawn without delay to the attention of the Local Attendance Team.

Further guidance and a referral form is available at - <http://www.thegrid.org.uk/info/welfare/attendance.shtml>

Authorising Absence

Only the school can authorise an absence. The fact that a parent has provided a note or other explanation (telephone call or personal contact) in relation to a particular absence does not, of itself, oblige the school to accept it, if the school does not accept the explanation offered as a valid reason for absence. If, after further investigation doubt remains about the explanation offered - or when no explanation is forthcoming at all - the absence should be treated as unauthorised and the parent informed.

Schools should communicate to parents their policies with regard to the notification and categorisation of absence. Some parents, such as those whose first language is not English or who do not read or write may experience difficulty in providing notes. In such cases schools should seek to make alternative arrangements.

Schools are encouraged to keep all absence notes for at least a term and when a pupil's absence is a cause for concern to retain the notes until there is no longer a concern.

Absence should be authorised if:

- the pupil is absent with leave (defined as 'leave granted by any person authorised to do so by the governing body or proprietor of the school')
- the pupil is ill or prevented from attending by any unavoidable cause
- the absence occurs on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent belongs
- the school at which the child is a registered pupil is not within walking distance of the child's home; and no suitable arrangements have been made by the LA for any of the following: the child's transport to and from school; boarding accommodation for the child at or near the school; enabling the child to become a registered pupil at a school nearer to his/her home
- the pupil is the child of Traveller parents who are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending alternative provision
- there is a close family bereavement
- leave of absence has been applied for in advance and has been granted because of exceptional circumstances relating to the application. (Parents should be reminded that they cannot expect, as of right, that the school will grant leave of absence)
- leave of absence should be granted to allow a pupil to take part in a performance within the meaning of s37 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1963 (c) for which a child performance licence has been issued

Before granting a licence the local authority must be satisfied that the child's education will not suffer. A school letter is requested as part of the licence application as confirmation of this. If a school believes a child's education will suffer as a result of taking part in a performance they should provide reasons to the local authority in writing. The information must be specific to the child (saying for example that it is against school policy is not sufficient). If the school does not provide such information the local authority will issue the licence. The absence should be recorded as code C

Further guidance is available at - <http://www.thegrid.org.uk/info/welfare/attendance.shtml>

- Absence should be unauthorised if no explanation is forthcoming from the parents or if the school is dissatisfied with the explanation

Administrative Codes (Appendix 2A)

There are a number of administrative codes which are not counted as a possible attendance in the school census. They must only be used in the circumstances described:

- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances (Code Y)

This code is collected in the school census for statistical purposes but is not counted as a possible attendance It may be used when:

the school site, or part of it is closed due to unavoidable cause; or

the transport provided by the school or the local authority is not available *and* where the pupil's home is not within walking distance; or
a local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the pupil from attending school.

- Not required to be in school (Code X)

is used to record sessions that non –compulsory school age children are not expected to attend.

- Pupil not on admission register (Code Z)

enables schools to set up registers in advance of pupils joining the school to ease administration burdens. Schools must put pupils on the admission register from the first day that the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school.

- Planned whole of partial school closure (Code #)

should be used for closures that are planned or known in advance eg holidays, curriculum planning/training days (up to five per year) or the use of the school as a polling station.

- Different Term Dates for Different Pupils (Code #)

can also be used to record staggered starts or induction days. This is only acceptable where the school ensures that pupils not attending on that day are still offered a full education over the school year.

Approved Off-Site Educational Activity

Pupils who are engaged in off-site educational activities should be recorded as attending (or absent from) an approved educational activity using the appropriate code.

The key features of approved educational activity are that they must be:

- educational *and*
- approved by the school *and*
- supervised by the school or someone authorised by the school

(Study leave is NOT an approved educational activity)

A pupil should be recorded as approved educational activity if he/she is attending:

- an approved work experience placement (Code W)
- a field trip or educational visit (Code V)
- an approved sporting activity approved by and supervised by someone authorised by the school (Code P)
- the pupil is attending an interview with a prospective employer, or another educational establishment (Code J)
- an off-site educational activity (Code B)

Note: The B code should be used when pupils are present at an off-site educational activity that has been approved by the school. Ultimately schools are responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils educated off-site. By using code B, schools are certifying that the education is supervised and measures have been taken to safeguard pupils.

- Dual Registered – at another educational establishment (Code D)

Note: This code is used to indicate that the pupil was not expected to attend the session in question because they were scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered. This code is not counted as a possible attendance in the school census. This code should be used where pupils are attending an ESC, hospital or special school on a temporary basis or for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children where they are known to be registered at another school for the session in question. Each school should only record the attendance/absence for those sessions where the pupil is expected to attend. Schools must ensure that they follow up all absence in a timely manner.

Flexi-schooling

Head teachers can agree to flexi-schooling arrangements where the parents take on the responsibility for their child's education for part of the school week. Head teachers are advised to consider any such requests from parents very carefully before agreeing to them and are advised to draw up a written agreement with the parent. Where agreement has been reached, pupils should be marked authorised absent from school during periods when they are receiving home education. (Code C).

Part-time time-tables

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In exceptional circumstances there may be a need for a part time timetable to meet an individual pupil's needs. A part time timetable must be time limited and must not be treated as a long term solution and can only be made with parental agreement. The school should mark the sessions where the pupil is not expected to attend as authorised absence. (Code C).

Guidance on part-time timetables is available at -
<http://www.thegrid.org.uk/info/welfare/attendance.shtml>

Requests for Family Holidays During Term time

Amendments to the 2006 Pupil Registration (England) Regulations which come into effect on 1st September 2013 remove all references to family holidays and extended leave for holidays in term time. The amendments make clear that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. It is for the Headteacher to determine what constitutes exceptional circumstances and for them to determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

At the request from Headteachers the local authority has provided a standard letter to be handed to parents and carers to support the governing body and Headteachers in communicating their decision making regarding individual requests for leave of absence for holidays in term time. This is available on <http://www.thegrid.org.uk/info/welfare/attendance.shtml>

Further information and advice of school attendance including the use of the correct registration codes is available at www.education.gov.uk

The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 and subsequent amendments in 2010, 2011, 2013 and 2016 is available at <http://www.legislation.gov.uk>

Further details information and advice on all aspects of school attendance in Hertfordshire is available at <http://www.thegrid.org.uk/info/welfare/attendance.shtml>

Appendix 1A

HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Policy for Local Authority Attendance Officers working with children whose absence has been authorised

- if the LAAO becomes concerned (through checking the attendance register) that a pupil has accumulated significant amounts of authorised absence this will be discussed with the relevant member of school staff
- if it is agreed that there is a concern about the pupil's attendance the school should share this concern with the parents
- if concerns about the pupil's attendance remain, the LAAO will consider asking the school to make a referral to the attendance team
- if a pupil is identified as being a persistent absentee (PA). Persistent absence is when a pupil enrolment's overall absence equates to 10 per cent or more of their possible sessions.

(Note: if a pupil's absence has been authorised by the school, the LA cannot cite that absence as evidence of non attendance under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996).

Appendix 2A

ATTENDANCE CODES, DESCRIPTIONS AND MEANINGS

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Present at off site educational activity	Approved Education Activity
C	Leave of absence authorised by the school	Authorised absence
D	Dual registered at another educational establishment	Not expected to attend this session
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
G	Holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Holiday authorised by the school	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Other unauthorised absence	Unauthorised absence
P	Supervised sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Day set aside exclusively for religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence for occupational reasons	Authorised absence
U	Late and arrived after the registers closed	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Not required to be in school (non-compulsory school age pupils)	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to all pupils (Planned)	Not counted in possible attendances