Hamp Nursery & Infants' School

Attendance Policy 2026 - 2027

Approved by: Mary Weatherburn

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SOMERSET
County Council

Education Safeguarding Service

Model Attendance Policy for Schools

Model attendance policy for use in Somerset schools, colleges and other education provisions for the academic year 2022-23

Last updated 13 September 2022

Education Safeguarding Service
Model Attendance Policy for Schools

This model attendance policy has been produced for use by Somerset schools, colleges and other education provisions for use in the academic year 2022-23. It aligns with local and national guidance and education legislation.

As a model policy, it requires schools to complete sections with information and detail that is relevant to them. These sections are shown in blue. Schools are free to make additional changes to suit their processes and policies.

From April 2023, the Local Authority title will be Somerset Council.

Contents

Part 1 Policy: 4
1. Introduction 4
2. Aims 4
Effects of non-attendance 5
3. Safeguarding and Attendance 6
4. Legislation and Guidance 7
Part 2 What the Law Says and Our School Procedures: 7
1. Contents of Attendance Register 7
2. Present at School (and Lateness) 7
Effects of Late Arrival at School 8
3. Authorised Absence 8
3.1 Illness 8
3.2 Medical/Dental Appointments 9
3.3 Religious Observance 10
3.4 Traveller Absence 10
3.5 Exclusions 10
4. First Day of Absence Response 11
5. Rewarding Good and Improved Attendance 11
6. Leave of Absence Requests – 'Exceptional Circumstances' 11
7. Unauthorised Absence 12
8. Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances (as set out in the law and DfE guidance) 13
9. Support for Poor School Attendance (other than unauthorised term time leave) 13
10. Pupils on Part-time Timetables 15
11. Penalty Notices and Prosecutions 15
12. Children Missing Education (CME) 16
13. Following up Unexplained Absences 16
14. Reporting to Parents 17
15. Roles and Responsibilities 17
16. Policy Monitoring Arrangements 18

Part 1 Policy:

1. Introduction

It is the aim of Hamp Nursery & Infants School that pupils should enjoy learning, experience success and realise their full potential. Our Attendance Policy reflects this and recognises that regular attendance has a positive effect on the motivation and attainment of pupils. It is the intention of Hamp Nursery and Infants school to celebrate both.

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence may seriously affect their learning. Pupils should endeavour to attend school 100% of the time. The Department for Education (DfE) defines a pupil as a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year, for whatever reason. Pupils whose attendance is below 90% are likely to achieve lower educational outcomes and are at increased risk of harm and exploitation. Attendance is considered to be a concern when it falls below 94%.

2. Aims

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regard to school attendance by promoting good attendance; ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled; and acting early to address patterns of absence.

This policy sets out our school's position on attendance and details the procedures that all parents[1] must follow to report their child absent from school.

We recognise that parents have a vital role and there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems. We will provide effective and efficient communications with pupils, parents, and appropriate agencies to provide mutual information, advice and support to meet our objectives.

It is vital that children develop regular attendance habits at an early age. Therefore, the school will encourage parents of Nursery children, and Reception children who are not yet of compulsory school age, to send their children to every session that is available to them. If the child is unable to attend the school for any reason, the parent should inform the school of the reason on the first day of absence. If the school is concerned about a pupil's attendance for any reason, we will contact the parent to discuss the matter, in the first instance.

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory[2] school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

[1] Education law defines parents as: all-natural parents, whether they are married or not; any person who has parental responsibility for a child or young person; and any person who has care of a child or young person i.e. lives with and looks after the child. In this policy the term 'parent' includes parents and carers.

[2] A child becomes of 'compulsory school age' on the 1st January, 1st April or 1st September following their 5th birthday and ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of Year 11.

We want our pupils to attend school every day, unless they are really not well enough to do so. We believe that children who attend school regularly are more likely to feel settled in school, maintain friendships, keep up with their learning and gain the greatest benefit from their education. We want all our pupils to enjoy school, grow up to become emotionally resilient, confident and competent adults who are able to realise their full potential. Regular attendance and punctuality is essential in the workplace and children who are used to attending school on time, and on every occasion unless they are too unwell to attend, will be better prepared for the attendance expectations in the workplace.

In April 2017 the Supreme Court clarified the definition of regular attendance to be attendance "in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school", therefore if an absence is not authorised by the school, the pupil's attendance is deemed to be irregular.

We will do all we can to encourage our pupils to attend. We will also make the best provision we can for any pupil who needs additional support in school or who is prevented from attending school, due to a medical condition.

Please see DfE guidance documents 'Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions - December 2015 (last updated 2017)' and 'Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs- January 2013' – or ask the school for printed copies.

We believe that one of the most important factors in promoting good attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children, and to foster positive and mutually respectful relationships with parents.

By promoting good attendance and punctuality we aim to:

- Make good attendance and punctuality a priority for all those involved in the school community
- Raise our pupils' awareness of the importance of good attendance and punctuality
- Provide support, advice and guidelines to parents, pupils and staff
- Work in partnership with parents
- Celebrate and reward good attendance and punctuality

Effects of non-attendance

The table below indicates how what might seem like just a few days' absence can result in children missing a significant number of lessons.

Attendance during school year	Days lost in a year	Which is approximately	Approximate number of lessons missed
95%	9.5 Days	2 Weeks	50 Lessons
90%	19 Days	4 Weeks	100 Lessons

3. Safeguarding and Attendance

Knowing where children are during school hours is an extremely important aspect of safeguarding. Absence can be an indicator of abuse and neglect and may also raise concerns about other safeguarding issues, including the criminal exploitation of children.

Parents should always inform the school as soon as possible if their child is absent from school. Where necessary, the school will challenge parents about the reasons for their child's absence. An explanation by a parent does not guarantee that the absence will be authorised. In the event that the school is unable to contact parents during an absence, we will try to contact emergency contacts, and if necessary, a welfare visit will be carried out.

Our school will monitor trends and patterns of absence for all pupils as a part of our standard procedures. However, we are aware that sudden or gradual changes in a pupil's attendance may indicate additional or more extreme safeguarding issues. In line with government guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023, we will investigate and report any suspected safeguarding cases to the relevant authorities. As part of our safeguarding duty and our standard procedures, we will inform the Local Authority and/or the Police of the details of any pupil who is absent from school when the school cannot establish their whereabouts and is concerned for the pupil's welfare. (Please see our school's Safeguarding Policy for more information.)

Additional measures are in place to monitor the attendance of vulnerable pupils.

The leadership and staff supporting attendance at school will hold regular meetings, where attendance is discussed and tracked, so that suitable support and interventions are put in place as quickly as possible.

Key Staff and Contacts- The Attendance Team

Role	**Name**
Attendance officer	**Clare Cowen**
Support for attendance (HSLW, ELSA)	**Nicky John**
Head teacher	**Mary Weatherburn**
Designated Safeguarding Lead	**Mary Weatherburn**
Deputy Safeguarding leads	**Charlotte Beresford** **Nicky John**
Nursery Safeguarding leads	**Tracy Miller** **Jorja Ingram**
SENDCo	**Lucy Burrows**
School Absence reporting line	**01278 422012**

Contact via the school office by calling 01278 422012 OR by emailing office@hnischool.uk

4. Legislation and Guidance

This policy meets the requirements of working together to improve school attendance 2022, from the DfE, and refers to the DfE's 2015 statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance including:

- The Education Act 1996 (as amended)
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended in 2010, 2011, 2013 and 2016)
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended in 2012 and 2013)

The DfE's guidance on the school census explains the persistent absence threshold.

Part 2 What the Law Says and Our School Procedures:

1. Contents of Attendance Register

The law makes it clear that schools must take the attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. On each occasion, the school must record whether each pupil is:

- Present;
- Absent;
- Attending an approved educational activity; or,
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

2. Present at School (and Punctuality)

Pupils are marked present if they are in school when the register is taken. If a pupil leaves the school premises after registration for, for example, a medical appointment they are still counted as present for statistical purposes.

It is the duty of parents to ensure that children attend school on time. This encourages habits of good timekeeping and lessens any possible classroom disruption.

The Head teacher or Home School Liaison Worker will meet with parents of those children who are frequently late arriving at school to investigate reasons and suggest solutions to enable more punctual attendance.

Our pupils must arrive at 8.30 on each school day.
Our morning register is taken at 8.40 am and will be kept open until 8.45 am.
Our afternoon register is taken at 1.15 pm.
A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late (**L**) – which counts as present.

A pupil who arrives late **after** the registers close will be marked as absent. If the pupil is late arriving due to a valid reason such as an unavoidable medical appointment, the absence will be authorised. If there is no valid reason for the pupil being late, they will be marked with the **unauthorised** absence code 'Late after registers close' (**U**). See DfE Attendance Codes – Appendix One.

Parents will be asked to sign a late register giving reasons why they are late for school.

Effects of Late Arrival at School

When a child arrives late to school, they miss important events like interventions, instructions, introductions and phonics. Children often also feel embarrassed at having to enter the classroom late. They miss settling into the day and being sociable with their friends.

The table below indicates how frequent lateness can add up to a considerable amount of learning being lost. This can seriously disadvantage children and disrupt the learning of others.

Minutes late per Day	Equates to Days of Teaching Lost in one Year	Which means this number of lessons missed
5 mins	3 Days	15 Lessons
10 mins	6 Days	30 Lessons
15 mins	9 Days	45 Lessons

3. Authorised Absence

'Authorised absence' means that the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away from the school or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence (this does not apply to absence due to holiday). The decision to authorise an absence rests with the Head teacher, and a note or explanation given by a parent does not guarantee that the absence will be authorised.

The following information outlines the main circumstances where absence may be authorised by the school:

3.1 Illness

In most cases, absences for illness which are reported by following the school's absence reporting procedures will be authorised. That is unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

The school follows the working together to improve school attendance guidance 2022, which states that if the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the parent to provide medical evidence, such as a prescription, appointment card, or other appropriate form of evidence. (See DfE working together to improve school attendance guidance 2022 document - link in the Legislation and Guidance section, or at the end of this policy, or ask the school for a printed copy.)

We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily. In some instances the school may ask the parents to obtain a letter from a GP, or the school may seek parental permission to contact the pupil's GP directly.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Where a pupil has a high level and/or frequency of absence, the school may require medical evidence of some description in order to authorise any future medical absences. If this is the case, the school will make the parent/s aware of this expectation in advance.

The reporting of absence due to illness remains the responsibility of the parent. Absences due to illness which have **not** been reported to the school by the parent on the first day of absence may not be authorised.

The parent should telephone the school on the first day of the child's absence due to illness.

If a child is absent for more than one day, the parent should contact the school each day to provide an update on the child's condition, unless otherwise agreed by the school.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Parents who have concerns about their child's mental wellbeing can contact our school's Designated Safeguarding Lead for further information on the support available.

Parents should also contact their GP or the NHS Helpline by phoning telephone number 111 for advice if they are concerned. In case of emergency parents should dial 999.

Pupils taken ill during the school day

If a pupil needs to be sent home due to illness, the pupil must be collected from the school office by a parent or other authorised adult, and staff will sign the child out. No pupil will be allowed to leave the school site without their parent or an authorised adult.

3.2 Medical/Dental Appointments

Parents should try to make appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where appointments during school time are unavoidable, the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment. It is not acceptable for a child to miss a whole day's schooling for an appointment, unless absolutely necessary, in which case the school will need an explanation as to why this is.

If a pupil must attend a medical appointment during the school day, they must be collected from the school office by the parent or other authorised adult, and staff will sign the child out. No pupil will be allowed to leave the school site without their parent or an authorised adult.

Advance notice is required for medical or dental appointments, unless it's an emergency appointment, and must be supported by providing the school with sight of, or a copy of, the appointment card or letter, or sight of a text confirmation of the appointment – only then will

the absence be authorised.

3.3 Religious Observance

Our school acknowledges the multi-faith nature of the school community and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside of school holidays or weekends. In accordance with the law, the school will authorise one day's absence for a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs. Should any additional days be taken, these will be recorded in the register as unauthorised absence. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body, to confirm whether the day is set apart.

3.4 Traveller Absence

The school will authorise the absence of a Traveller pupil of no fixed abode who is unable to attend school because they are travelling with their parent who is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require him/her to travel from place to place. This is subject to certain limits, depending on the child's age and number of sessions absent. The school will discuss cases individually with Traveller parents as necessary. Parents should let the school know of their plans as far in advance as possible. Authorised Traveller absence will be recorded appropriately in the register.

To help ensure continuity of education for Traveller children, wherever possible, the child should attend school elsewhere when their family is travelling for occupational purposes. In which case the child will be dual registered at that school and this school, which is their 'main' school.

Children from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities whose families do not travel for occupational purposes are expected to register at school and attend as normal. They are subject to the same rules as other children in terms of the requirement to attend school regularly.

3.5 Suspensions and Exclusions

Decisions to suspend or exclude a child are not taken lightly and only used as a last resort when a pupil's continued attendance in school provides a danger to themselves, to other pupils or to staff. If the school decides to send a pupil home due to unacceptable behaviour, this will be recorded as a suspension. The school will follow the current DfE's statutory guidance on suspensions and exclusions.

Any decisions to suspend a pupil are the responsibility of the Headteacher, or Deputy Head in the Head's absence.

The school will notify the parent of the suspension or exclusion. If the pupil is a 'Looked After Child', the school will notify the pupil's carer, social worker and Virtual School. In other instances, where a pupil is known to Children's Social Care for any reason, the school will also inform their allocated social worker.

The pupil must be collected from the school office by the parent or another authorised adult,

and will be signed out by staff. No pupil will be allowed to leave the school site without their parent or an authorised adult.

4. First Day of Absence Response

If the school has not been provided with a reason for a child's absence on the morning of the child's first day of absence, the parent will be telephoned by the school office staff, leaving a message where possible. If there is no response within 48 hours, school will then attempt to telephone the child's emergency contacts.

Parents are asked to supply details of at least two people who can be contacted in an emergency and these details will be reviewed twice a year through data collection sheets.

Parents are regularly reminded to advise the school of any changes to telephone numbers and/or addresses.

If the school is unable to contact any of the emergency numbers provided, and is concerned for the welfare of the pupil, the school would carry out a welfare check, possibly reporting to Children's social care if their concerns are upheld.

5. Celebrating Good and Improved Attendance

Across our Nursery and Infants school it is important to note that our pupils are too young to bring themselves safely to school, and rely on their parents to facilitate this. The school works to build relationships with parents and carers to support them to improve attendance. Each individual class displays a good attendance board in their room to celebrate the best attenders within each class. Once per term, the school has an amazing attendance celebration assembly and attendance certificates are given to pupils with the best attendance within each class, or with a significant improvement. At the end of the school year, individual pupils with the highest attendance for the whole year are rewarded with a gift/book voucher. Each term school celebrates the class with the highest attendance, with an in-school treat or reward, such as an extended break time.

6. Leave of Absence Requests – 'Exceptional Circumstances'

The law does not grant parents the automatic right to take their child out of school during term time.

Only very exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. The school will consider each application individually, taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. The request must be made by the parent with whom the child normally lives, and permission must be sought in advance. However, the school will not grant leave of absence unless there are very exceptional circumstances, which does not include any family holidays, no matter whether they have been arranged by another family member e.g. Grandparent, who was unaware of the school calendar. The school must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances, based on the individual facts and details of the case; following consultation with other staff as required, including the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Where a leave of absence is

granted, the school will determine the number of days the pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Headteacher's discretion. The school will not grant a leave of absence if the pupil's attendance is below 94%, or if the absence will cause the attendance to fall below 94%.

Circumstances which could be authorised include family weddings and significant family emergencies or funerals. For celebrations such as weddings, the minimum of time would be authorised for the event, with an expectation pupils are only absent on the day of the event, and not for a week either side of a wedding. In the event of a wedding abroad, the school will not authorise a "holiday period" either side of the actual day. The school will always work with parents following a family emergency or funeral to support pupil's mental health and well-being so they can return to school as quickly as possible. In many cases, parents will also be aware that, it can be better for children to continue to attend school normally during difficult family times.

Parents should complete a Leave of Absence Request form, which is available from the school. The request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated; and wherever possible, at least **four weeks** before the absence. **Although such absence may be unauthorised, it is better that we know your child is safe, rather than missing. When a pupil is thought to be missing the school has a duty to investigate this further and if concerned, report this to Safeguarding services.** Please be aware that you may be required to provide us with additional evidence in order to support your request. If we have any concerns about possible safeguarding risks such as risk of FGM we will follow the necessary protocols. (Please see our school's Safeguarding Policy for more information.)

7. Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised absence is where a school is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence.

Absence will be unauthorised if a pupil is absent from school without the permission of the school. Whilst parents can provide explanations for absences, it is the school's decision whether to authorise the absence or not.

Unauthorised absence includes:

- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Pupils who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- Shopping
- Birthdays
- Waiting at home for a washing machine to be mended, or a parcel to be delivered
- Day trips
- Long weekends and holidays in term time
- In the case of term time leave - if a pupil is kept away from school longer than was agreed, the additional absence will automatically be unauthorised

Unauthorised absences may result in legal sanctions, usually Penalty Notices or Prosecutions.

8. Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances (as set out in the law and DfE guidance)

In accordance with DfE school attendance guidance, our school will record pupils as 'Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances' in the following circumstances (such circumstances are not recorded as absences):

- Our school site, or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause
- A local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the pupil from attending school.
- A local or national emergency such as the Covid-19 pandemic has prevented pupils being able to attend school (the school will follow national guidance).

9. Support for Poor School Attendance (other than unauthorised term time leave)

Sometimes pupils can be reluctant to attend school. We encourage parents and pupils to be open and honest with us about the reason for the pupil's absence. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or for a parent to give in to pressure to let the child stay at home. This can give the impression to the child that attendance does not matter and can make things worse. As a school, we need to understand the reasons why a pupil is reluctant to attend in order to be able to support pupils and parents in the best way.

When we have concerns about the attendance of a pupil, we will do our best to make the parent/s aware of the concerns about their child's attendance and give them the opportunity to address this. However, if parents do not make use of the support offered and improve their child's attendance to an acceptable level, this may result in legal sanctions. Parents will be asked to meet with the Home School Liaison Worker to discuss the matter. In some cases, this may result in a formal action plan being produced in the form of an Attendance Contract or support from the 'Team Around the Family' being offered, including attendance from the LA Education Engagement |Service.

If our school refers a case of poor school attendance to the Local Authority for legal sanctions, we will show that we have warned the parent/s that they are at risk of receiving a Penalty Notice or other legal sanction. This will at least be evidenced via the sending of a warning letter.

Where poor attendance is symptomatic of complex family circumstances, our school will take a holistic approach to the issue, involving other agencies as necessary, to fully consider how to best support and improve pupil's attendance, working with families to address their barriers to good attendance. We will not usually request legal sanctions from the Local Authority in cases such as these, with the exception to this being where parents fail to accept or engage with support offered by the school and/or other agencies, or fail to implement the suggested changes. Again, when referring for legal sanctions, we will show that we have warned the parent/s that they are at risk of receiving a Penalty Notice or other legal sanction.

If our school has safeguarding concerns about a pupil who is absent we will share information with other agencies as we deem necessary.

Attendance Intervention stages:

Through regular attendance monitoring and scrutiny, Hamp Nursery and Infants school is able to identify pupils that require support in relation to their attendance at the earliest possible stage.

Attendance Stage	**Strategies, Support and Interventions-graduated response within each stage-to aid improvement in overall attendance.**
Monitoring 96% to 100%	• Attendance monitored by class teacher • Attendance celebrations for pupils with the best attendance in each class, or improved attendance • Termly, in-school treat for class with highest attendance.
Stage 1 94% to 96%	• Class teacher conversation with parent if attendance is concerning • Absences will be discussed upon return to school • In-school support considered and offered.
Stage 2 90% to 94%	• Initial concerns attendance letter sent • Support and interventions as laid out in Stage 1. • Appointment with HSLW to discuss attendance, identify barriers and offer further support.
Stage 3 80% to 90% Significant absence	• Attendance improvement letters • HSLW/attendance team meeting arranged with parents to discuss, • Home visit if meetings not attended. • Team around family meetings arranged to share concerns, if appropriate. • with HSLW/EEO. • Medical evidence requested, where appropriate • Targets agreed and actions set for improvement • Formal attendance contract meeting if no improvement.
Stage 4 50% to 80% Persistent Absence	• Support and interventions as laid out in Stage 3 • Attendance Improvement Plan created with HSLW/EEO. • Medical evidence requested, where appropriate • Stage 4 letter sent – final warning letter • Step in support requested from EES • Multi-agency support required • Attendance Casework from the ESS • Possible legal interventions for unauthorised absences

Stage 5 Below 50% Severe Absence	• Support and interventions and laid out in Stage 4 • Continued statutory intervention • High risk of legal intervention for unauthorised absence

The process outlined above is for guidance purposes only. The strategies used to support attendance will vary depending on a child's circumstances, the reasons for their absence and their needs.

Early intervention and support is the most effective approach to improving attendance. Parents are strongly encouraged to engage with any support offered, as this may improve attendance quickly and prevent the need for requests for support from statutory services.

While the use of statutory and legal interventions is always a last resort, they may be put in place by the Education Safeguarding Service on behalf of the Local Authority.

10. Pupils on Part-time Timetables

Pupils are entitled to a full-time education, suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and any special educational needs or disabilities that they may have.

If, for any reason, our school is unable to provide a pupil with a full-time education due to the pupil's needs, we will work with the pupil, parent and other agencies where appropriate, to come to a mutually convenient arrangement. Any part-time timetables will be for the shortest amount of time possible, whilst arrangements are made to support the pupil's return to a full-time timetable.

11. Penalty Notices and Prosecutions

Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends school on a regular basis. It is a criminal offence under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 to fail to secure regular attendance of a registered pupil at the school. This applies to both resident and non-resident parents who may both be subject to legal sanctions if their child fails to attend school regularly. It also applies to others who may not be the parent, but may have day to day care of the child.

Unauthorised absence from school can result in a number of different outcomes for parents and children. Each case is considered individually.

Under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, if a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school his/her parent(s) are guilty of an offence. Parents with more than one school aged child need to be aware that each child's irregular attendance is dealt with as a separate matter.

The school is required to refer cases of unauthorised absence that meet the threshold, currently 10 unauthorised sessions in 12 school week period, for a Penalty Notice to the Local Authority for legal action, unless there are reasonable grounds for not doing so. The outcome of a referral to the Local Authority may be a Penalty Notice or Prosecution.

Penalty Notices are intended as a sanction for low level offences and a tool to support improved school attendance. They are an alternative to prosecution, and may not be issued if prosecution is considered to be a more appropriate response to a pupil's irregular attendance.

A pupil's unauthorised absence from school could result in one of the following:

1. A Penalty Notice. The penalty is £80 payable within 21 days, rising to £160 if paid between 22 and 28 days. (Failure to pay will result in prosecution.)
2. Prosecution.

Prosecution could lead to a fine of up to £2500 and/or three months' imprisonment. (See DfE's statutory guidance on School attendance parental responsibility measures for more information and Somerset County Council's Penalty Notice Code of Conduct, available here.) Penalty Notices and prosecution proceedings are issued to each parent with responsibility for the child and are issued for each child with irregular attendance. For example, in the case of Penalty Notices, if two siblings had irregular school attendance, and there were two parents with responsibility for the children, four Penalty Notices would be issued. Penalty Notices cannot be paid in instalments.

12. Children Missing Education (CME)

In line with the statutory policy guidance Keeping children safe in education (2022) our school will ensure that:

- All members of staff are aware of attendance guidance and expectations.
- All members of staff understand what to do when a child's attendance becomes a concern.
- The school has in place robust procedures and policies on responses for pupils who go missing from education.
- All staff are aware of the risks of FGM and the legal requirement to take action is there is reason to believe a child is at risk.
- The school will follow Somerset's Child Missing Education process and make CME referrals as appropriate. Please see policy here.

13. Following up Unexplained Absences

Where no contact has been made with the school the school will contact parents by telephone, letter or home visit to try to establish the reason for a child's absence. When we establish the reason for the absence, we will mark it as authorised or unauthorised depending on the reason for the absence. If we are unable to establish the reason for absence within 5 school days, we will mark the absence as unauthorised, using the 'O' code. If we are concerned about a pupil's absence and are unable to contact the parent/s, we will contact the pupil's emergency contacts and/or other professionals or contacts of the family who we reasonably expect may be able to advise us of the pupil's whereabouts. The school will carry out a welfare visit if necessary to make contact and ensure the pupil's well-being.

14. Reporting to Parents

Attendance figures, including late arrivals, are provided to parents on their child's end of school year report. We will also share attendance data and information with parents on a termly through parent consultations.

15. Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body

The governing body is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school. It also holds the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher

The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher are responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented consistently across the school and for monitoring school level absence data and reporting it to the governors.

They support other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and requesting fixed penalty notices, where necessary.

Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

The SLT supports the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher as necessary.

Attendance Officer

The Attendance Officer:

- Monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil level.
- Reports concerns about attendance to the Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) as appropriate.
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues.
- Co-ordinates requests for Term-time Leave of Absence for reference to the Headteacher for their decision as to whether the absence will be authorised or not.
- Analyses the attendance of the vulnerable groups.
- Coordinates with the attendance team.

Home School Liaison Worker (HSLW)

The HSLW:

- Supports the above staff to implement the policy.
- Meets with parents to support and enable individuals to improve attendance and punctuality.
- Signposts parents to external support services
- Engages with external agencies as and when necessary.
- Supports pupils with 1-1 sessions, including ELSA.

Class Teachers/Form Tutors

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.

Office/administrative Staff

School office staff are responsible for taking and making calls from and to parents about absence and recording it accurately on the school system.

16. Policy Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed bi-annually by the Headteacher, along with the attendance team, or more frequently if there are changes to legislation and guidance. At every review, the policy will be shared and approved by the governing body.

Appendix 1 – Department for Education (DfE) Attendance Codes

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
****	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. present at another school or PRU)	Not counted in possible attendances
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed or days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	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 (not covered by other codes or descriptions)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Day set aside exclusively for religious observance	Authorised absence

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late and arrived after the registers closed	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience (not work based training)	Approved Education Activity
X	Un-timetabled sessions for non-compulsory school age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Where the school site, or part of it, is closed due to unavoidable cause; or the transport provided by the school or local authority for pupils (who do not live with walking distance) is not available; or where a local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the pupil from attending school	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to all pupils	Not counted in possible attendances