



# Secondary Attendance and Absence Policy

**Approved by:**

Full Governing Body

**Date:**

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## Statement of intent

Belper School and Sixth Form Centre believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Students cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school.

We understand that barriers to attendance are complex, and that some students find it harder than others to attend school; therefore, we will continue to prioritise cultivating a safe and supportive environment at school, as well as strong and trusting relationships with students, parents/carers.

We take a whole-school approach to securing good attendance, and recognise the impact that our efforts in other areas – such as the curriculum, behaviour standards, bullying, SEND support, pastoral support, and the effective use of resources such as pupil premium – can have on improving student attendance.

We are committed to:

- Promoting and modelling high attendance and its benefits.
- Ensuring equality and fairness for all.
- Intervening early and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our students.
- Building strong relationships with families to overcome barriers to attendance.
- Working collaboratively with other schools in the area, as well as other agencies.
- Ensuring parents/carers follow the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any SEND they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- Ensuring our attendance policy is clear and easily understood by all staff, parents/carers and students.
- Regularly monitoring and analysing attendance and absence data to identify students or cohorts that require more support.

The school's attendance lead is Gavin Brookes, and the attendance team can be contacted via [attendance@belperschool.co.uk](mailto:attendance@belperschool.co.uk). Staff, parents/carers and students will be expected to contact the attendance team for queries or concerns about attendance.

## 1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended)
- DfE (2022) 'Working together to improve school attendance'
- DfE (2016) 'Children missing education'
- DfE (2022) 'Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE) 2023'
- DfE (2023) 'Providing remote education'
- DfE (2023) 'Working together to improve attendance: guidance summary'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy – including SEMH
- Supporting students with Medical Conditions Policy
- Attendance Officer Home Visit Policy

## 2. Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

### **Absence:**

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

### **Authorised absence:**

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

### **Unauthorised absence:**

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

### **Persistent absence (PA):**

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

## **3. Roles and responsibilities**

The governing board has overall responsibility for:

- Monitoring the implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Promoting the importance of good attendance through the school's ethos and policies.
- Arranging attendance training for all relevant staff that is appropriate to their role.
- Working with the SLT to set goals for attendance and providing support and challenge around delivery against those goals.
- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.
- Having regard to KCSIE when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Ensuring Children Missing Education is included in this policy in place and that this is regularly reviewed and updated.

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Appointing a member of the SLT to the attendance officer role.
- Ensuring all parents/carers are aware of the school's attendance expectations and procedures.
- Ensuring that every pupil has access to full-time education and will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence.

Staff are responsible for:

- Following this policy and ensuring students do so too.
- Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual students to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.
- Where designated, taking the attendance register at the relevant times during the school day.

The attendance Lead is responsible for:

- The overall strategic approach to attendance in school.
- Developing a clear vision for improving attendance.
- Monitoring attendance and the impact of interventions.
- Analysing attendance data and identifying areas of intervention and improvement.
- Communicating with students and parents/carers regarding attendance.

- Following up on incidents of persistent poor attendance.
- Informing the LA of any student being deleted from the admission and attendance registers.

Parents/carers are responsible for:

- Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.
- Providing the school with more than one emergency contact number.
- Updating the school if their details change.
- The attendance of their children at school.
- Promoting good attendance with their children.

Students are responsible for:

- Attending their lessons and any agreed activities when at school.
- Arriving punctually to lessons when at school.

#### **4. Attendance expectations and punctuality**

The school has high expectations for students' attendance and punctuality, and will ensure that these expectations are communicated regularly to parents/carers and students.

Students will be expected to:

- Attend school every day they are required to be at school, for the full day.
- Attend school punctually.
- Attend every timetabled lesson.

#### **Punctuality**

The school day will start at 8.35am, and students will need to be in their form room by that time; therefore, pupils will be expected to be on the school site by 8:30am. **Students who arrive after 8.30am will receive a 30 minute afterschool detention the next day.** Students will have a morning break at 11.00am, which will last until 11:20am, and a lunch break at 12.20pm, which will last until 1.05pm – students will be expected to have returned from each break promptly and be ready to recommence learning at the stated times.

Registers will be taken as follows throughout the school day:

- The morning register will be marked by 9.00am.
- The morning register will close at 9.00am. Students will receive a mark of unauthorised absence if they do not attend school before this time
- The afternoon register will be marked by 1.15pm.

Class teachers will also take informal registers at the start of each lesson period to ensure that students are attending all timetabled lessons. These registers will be analysed alongside formal registers in line with the section of this policy.

**Punctuality to all lesson will be monitored and if students arrive late they will receive a detention in line with our behaviour policy.**

Students will be encouraged to communicate any concerns related to attendance and absence as soon as possible to the relevant member of staff.

## **5. Absence procedures**

Parents/carers will be required to contact the school office via telephone before **8.35am** on the first day of their child's absence – they will be expected to provide an explanation for the absence and an estimation of how long the absence will last, e.g. one school day.

Where a student is absent, and their parent has not contacted the school by **the close of the morning register** to report the absence, administrative staff will contact the parent via **telephone call or text** as soon as is practicable on each day that the student does not attend school.

The school will always follow up any absences in order to:

- Ascertain the reason for the absence.
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is being taken.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
- Identify the correct code to use to enter the data onto the school census system.

The school will not request medical evidence in most circumstances where a student is absent due to illness; however, the school reserves the right to request supporting evidence where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness.

In the case of Persistent Absence, arrangements will be made for parents/carers to speak to a member of the attendance team. The school will inform the LA, on a termly basis, of the details of students who fail to attend regularly, or who have missed 15 school days or more without authorisation.

If a student's attendance drops below 90 percent without reasonable explanation, the attendance team will arrange a formal meeting with the student and their parent.

Where a student has not returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence, or is absent from school without authorisation for 20 consecutive school days, the school will remove the student from the admissions register if the school and the LA have failed to establish the whereabouts of the student after making reasonable enquiries.

The school will attempt to make contact via email, text and / or phone if a student is absent. If a student is absent for 3 days without communication from home as to the reason for the absence, the attendance officer will request a home visit be conducted by attendance / wellbeing team to establish if the student is safe and well. Failure to establish this will result in a safe and wellbeing request made to the police.

## 6. Attendance register

The school uses the Bromcom management information system to keep attendance registers to ensure they are as accurate as possible and can be easily analysed and shared with the appropriate authorities.

Designated staff members will take the attendance register **at the start of each school day and at the start of the afternoon session**. This register will record whether students are:

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

The school will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:

- / = Present in the morning
- \ = Present in the afternoon
- L = Late arrival before the register has closed
- C = Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance granted by the school
- C1 = Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking employment abroad
- C2 = Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
- E = Excluded but no alternative provision made
- I = Illness
- M = Medical or dental appointments
- R = Religious observance
- S = Study leave
- T = Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence
- G = Unauthorised holiday
- N = Reason not yet provided
- O = Unauthorised absence
- U = Arrived after registration closed
- D = Dual registered at another educational establishment
- B = Attending any other approved educational activity
- J1 = Authorised absence for interview
- P = Participating in a supervised sporting activity
- Q = Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements
- V = Educational visit or trip
- K = Attending alternative provision arranged by the LA
- W = Work experience
- Z = Pupil not on admission register
- Y1 = 'Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available' (i.e. where the school is not within walking distance as per specified criteria)
- Y2 = 'Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel' (i.e. disruption caused by a local, national or International emergency)

- Y3 = 'Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed' (i.e. where the pupils affected cannot practicably be accommodated in the remaining open parts of the school)
- Y4 = 'Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed' (i.e. non-planned closures affecting all pupils)
- Y5 = 'Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention' (i.e. pupil is in police detention, remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing or detained under a sentence of detention)
- Y6 = 'Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law'
- Y7 = 'Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause' (i.e. where pupils can't attend due to any other unavoidable cause not covered by the other Y codes. The nature of the other cause also needs to be recorded)

When the school has planned in advance to be fully or partially closed, the code '#' will be used for the relevant pupils who are absent. This code will also be used to record year groups who are not due to attend because the school has set different term dates for different years, e.g. induction days.

All amendments made to the attendance register will include the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date of amendment and the name and role of the person who made the amendment.

Every entry received into the attendance register will be preserved for a minimum of **three years**.

## **7. Authorising parental absence requests**

Parents/carers will be required to request certain types of absence in advance. All requests for absence will be handled by the headteacher – the decision to grant or refuse the request will be at the sole discretion of the headteacher, taking the best interests of the student and the impact on the student's education into account. The headteacher's decision is not subject to appeal; however, the school will be sympathetic to requests for absence by parents/carers, and will not deny any request without good reason.

### **Leave of absence**

In September 2013 the government introduced new regulations making it clear that Headteachers must not give approval for any leave of absence during term time, including holidays, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

The school will only grant a student a leave of absence in **exceptional circumstances**. In order to have requests for a leave of absence considered, the school will expect parents/carers to contact the headteacher **in writing** at least **two weeks** prior to the proposed start date of the leave of absence, providing the reason for the proposed absence and the dates during which the absence would be expected to occur. **You must have received written authorisation before your child can be absent from school.**

Any requests for leave during term time will be considered on an individual basis and the pupil's previous attendance record will be taken into account. Where the absence is granted, the headteacher will determine the length of time that the pupil can be away from school. The school is not likely to grant leaves of absence for the purposes of family holidays.

Requests for leave will not be granted, unless extremely sensitive reasons are given, in the following circumstances:

- During Year 7 when a pupil is settling into the school, unless certain exceptional circumstances apply, e.g. the death of a family member
- Immediately before and during assessment periods
- When a student's attendance record shows any unauthorised absence
- Where a student's authorised absence record is already above **10 percent** for any reason

If term-time leave is not granted, taking a student out of school will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and may result in sanctions, such as a penalty notice. The school cannot grant leaves of absence retrospectively; therefore, any absences that were not approved by the school in advance will be marked as unauthorised.

Parent/carers may be issued with a penalty notice fine or prosecution should leave of 5 days or more be taken which is not authorised by the Headteacher, or where repeated incidents of leave in term time for less than 5 days occur, or where the unauthorised absence contributes to wider poor attendance that meets the legal threshold. Absence deemed for the reason of unauthorised leave in term time will be marked in the register with the Attendance code G.

You may be issued with a Penalty Notice should leave be taken which is not authorised. If unpaid this could lead to prosecution under section 444(1) of The Education Act 1996.

Repeated period of unauthorised leave and penalty notices

The working together to improve attendance guidance now states that there is a two-penalty notice limit over a rolling 3-year period. If repeated penalty notices are being incurred, it is unlikely that they are having an impact on improving pupils attendance. Therefore, from autumn term 2024, only 2 penalty notices can be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within a 3-year rolling period and any second notice within that period is charged at a higher rate:

-First Offence - The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance 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 Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance 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 for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance a Penalty Notice will not be issued, and the case will be presented straight to the Magistrates' Court.

## **Illness and healthcare appointments**

Parents/carers will be expected to make medical or dental appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, parents/carers will be expected to obtain approval for their child's absence to attend such appointments as far in advance as is practicable. Parents/carers will be responsible for ensuring their child misses only the amount of time necessary to attend the appointment.

## **Performances and activities, including paid work**

The school will ensure that all pupils engaging in performances or activities, whether they receive payment or not, which require them to be absent from school, understand that they will be required to obtain a licence from the LA which authorises the school's absence(s).

Additional arrangements will be made by the school for students engaging in performances or activities that require them to be absent from school to ensure they do not fall behind in their education – this may involve private teaching. These arrangements will be approved by the LA who will ensure that the arrangements are suitable for the student.

The student will receive education that, when taken together over the term of the licence, amounts to a minimum of three hours per day that the pupil would be required to attend a school maintained by the LA issuing the licence. This requirement will be met by ensuring a pupil receives an education:

- For not less than six hours a week; and
- During each complete period of four weeks (or if there is a period of less than four weeks, then during that period), for periods of time not less than three hours a day; and
- On days where the student would be required to attend school if they were attending a school maintained by the LA; and
- For not more than five hours on any such day.

Where a licence has been granted by the LA and it specifies dates of absence, no further authorisation will be needed from the school. Where an application does not specify dates, and it has been approved by the LA, it is at the discretion of the headteacher to authorise the leave of absence for each day. The headteacher will not authorise any absences which would mean that a student's attendance would become a cause for concern. Where a licence has not been obtained, the headteacher will not authorise any absence for a performance or activity.

## **Religious observance**

Parents/carers will be expected to request absence for religious observance at least **two weeks** advance.

The school will only accept requests from parents/carers for absence on grounds of religious observance for days that are exclusively set apart for religious observance by the relevant religious body. The school will define this as a day where the student's parents/carers would be expected by an established religious body to stay away from their employment to mark the occasion.

The school may seek advice from the religious body in question where there is doubt over the request.

### **Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence**

Where a student's parent belongs to a community covered by this code and is travelling for occupational purposes, the parent will be expected to request a leave of absence for their child at least **two weeks** in advance. Absences will not be granted for students from these communities under this code for reasons other than travel for occupational purposes.

## **8. SEND- and health-related absences**

The school recognises that pupils with SEND and/or health conditions, including mental health issues, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers, and will incorporate robust procedures to support students who find attending school difficult.

In line with the SEND Policy and Supporting students with Medical Conditions Policy, the school will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for students with disabilities to reduce barriers to attendance, in line with any EHC plans or IHPs that have been implemented. The school will secure additional support from external partners to help bolster attendance where appropriate.

Where the school has concerns that a student's non-attendance may be related to mental health issues, parents/carers will be contacted to discuss the issue and whether there are any contributory factors to their child's lack of attendance. Where staff have a mental health concern about a student that is also a safeguarding concern, they will inform the DSL and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will be followed. All students will be supported with their mental health in accordance with the school's Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy.

If a student is unable to attend school for long periods of time due to their health, the school will:

- Inform the LA if a student is likely to be away from the school for more than 15 school days.
- Provide the LA with information about the student's needs, capabilities and programme of work.
- Help the student reintegrate at school when they return.
- Make sure the student is kept informed about school events and clubs.
- Encourage the student to stay in contact with other students during their absence.

The school will incorporate an action plan to help any students with SEND and/or health issues cope with the stress and anxiety that attending school may cause them. Such plans will be regularly monitored and reviewed until the student is attending school as normal and there has been signs of significant improvement.

To support the attendance of students with SEND and/or health issues, the school will consider:

- Holding termly meetings to evaluate any implemented reasonable adjustments.
- Incorporating a pastoral support plan.
- Carrying out strengths and difficulties questionnaire.
- Identifying pupils' unmet needs through the Common Assessment Framework.
- Using an internal or external specialist.
- Enabling a student to have a reduced timetable.
- Ensuring a student can have somewhere quiet to spend lunch and breaktimes.
- Implementing a system whereby students can request to leave a classroom if they feel they need time out.
- Temporary late starts or early finishes.
- Phased returns to school where there has been a long absence.
- Small group work or on-to-one lessons.
- Tailored support to meet their individual needs.
- The use of the Out Of School Tuition team (OOST)

## **9. Absence in exceptional circumstances**

Exceptional circumstances will include when a student is unable to attend because:

- Transport provided by the school, LA or parent is not available and the student's home is not within walking distance.
- There has been widespread disruption to travel services which has prevented the student from attending.
- The student is in custody and will be detained for less than four months.

The use of the 'Y' codes for exceptional circumstances will be collected in the school census for statistical purposes.

## **10. Truancy**

Truancy will be considered as any absence of part, or all, of one or more days from school, during which the school has not been notified of the cause behind such absence.

All staff will be actively engaged in supporting the regular attendance of student, and understand the importance of continuity in each student's learning.

Any student with permission to leave the school during the day must sign out at the school office and sign back in again on their return.

Immediate action will be taken when there are any concerns that a student might be truanting. If truancy is suspected, the member of staff on call is notified, and a member of staff will contact the parent in order to assess the reasons behind the student not attending school.

The following procedures will be taken in the event of a truancy:

- In the first instance, a letter of warning will be sent to the parents/carers of the student, informing them of the truancy and stating that any future occurrences could result in further action being taken.
- If any further truancy occurs, then the school will consider issuing a penalty notice.
- A penalty notice will be issued where there is overt truancy, inappropriate parentally-condoned absence, excessive holidays in term-time and persistent late arrival at school.

## 11. Missing children

Students will not be permitted to leave the school premises during the school day unless they have permission from the school. The following procedures will be taken in the event of a student going missing whilst at school:

- The member of staff who has noticed the missing student will inform the member of staff on call immediately.
- The office staff will also be informed as they will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search.
- A member of staff will conduct a thorough search of the school premises to ascertain if the student has left the school site or is elsewhere within the school
- If the student has not been found after **15 minutes**, then the parents/carers of the student will be notified.
- The school will attempt to contact parents/carers using the emergency contact numbers provided.
- If the parents/carers have had no contact from the student, and the emergency contacts list has been exhausted, we will advise the parents/carers to contact the police.
- If the missing student has an allocated social worker, is a looked-after child, or has any SEND, then the appropriate personnel will be informed.
- When the student has been located, members of staff will care for and talk to the student to ensure they are safe and well.
- Parents/carers and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the student has been located.

The headteacher will take the appropriate action to ensure that students understand they must not leave the premises, and sanctions will be issued if deemed necessary. Appropriate disciplinary procedures will be followed in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

Staff will carry out a full investigation and will draw a conclusion as to how the incident occurred. A written report will be produced, logged on Bromcom and policies and procedures will be reviewed in accordance with the outcome where necessary.

## 12. Attendance intervention

In order to ensure the school has effective procedures for managing absence, the attendance officer, supported by the SLT, will:

- Establish a range of specific, evidence-based interventions to address barriers to attendance.
- Monitor the implementation and quality of escalation procedures and seek robust evidence of the escalation procedures that work.
- Attend or lead attendance reviews in line with escalation procedures.
- Establish robust escalation procedures which will be initiated before absence becomes a problem by:
  - Sending letters to parents/carers.
  - Meet with parents/carers
  - Engaging with LA attendance teams.
  - Using fixed penalty notices.
  - Creating attendance clinics.

The school will use attendance data, in line with the [‘Monitoring and analysing absence’](#) section of this policy, to develop specific strategies to improve attendance where patterns of absence are emerging. These strategies will be developed on a case-by-case basis and will consider the particular needs of the students whom the intervention is designed to target.

The school will aim to improve attendance in the overall school cohort by acknowledging good attendance through the school reward system

School trips and events will be considered a privilege. Where attendance drops below 90 percent, these privileges may be taken away. The school will develop strategies for ensuring that students with health needs or home circumstances that result in additional absences are not unfairly excluded from attendance rewards, e.g. by setting individualised targets.

## 13. Working with parents/carers to improve attendance

The school will work to cultivate strong, respectful relationships with parents/carers and families and work to build trust and engagement. Open and honest communication will be maintained with students and their families about the expectations of school life, attendance and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them. The school will liaise with other agencies working with students and their families to support attendance, e.g. social services.

The school will ensure that there are two sets of emergency contact details for each student wherever possible to ensure the school has additional options for getting in touch with adults responsible for a student where the student is absent without notification or authorisation.

The school will ensure that parents/carers are aware of their legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and to facilitate their child's legal right to a full-time education – parents/carers will be made aware that this means their child must attend school every day that it is open, save for in certain circumstances, e.g. sickness or absences that have been authorised by the headteacher in advance. The school will regularly inform parents/carers about their child's levels of attendance, absence and punctuality, and will ensure that parents/carers are aware of the benefits that regular attendance at school can have for their child educationally, socially and developmentally.

If a pattern of absence becomes problematic, the attendance officer will work collaboratively with the student and their parents/carers to improve attendance by addressing the specific barriers that prevent the student from being able to attend school regularly. The school will always take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for student absence and will approach families to offer support rather than immediately reach for punitive approaches.

Where these barriers are related to the student's experience in school, e.g. bullying, the attendance officer will work with the headteacher and any relevant school staff, e.g. the DSL and SENCO, to address this. Where the barriers are outside of the school's control, e.g. they are related to issues within the student's family, the attendance officer will liaise with any relevant external agencies or authorities, e.g. children's social care or the LA, and will encourage parents/carers to access support that they may need.

## **14. Persistent absence (PA)**

There are various groups of pupils who may be vulnerable to high absence and PA, such as:

- Children in need
- LAC
- Young carers
- Students who are eligible for FSM
- Students with EAL
- Students with SEND
- Students who have faced bullying and/or discrimination

The school will ensure it provides support to students at risk of PA, in conjunction with all relevant external authorities where necessary.

The school will use a number of methods to help support students at risk of PA to attend school. These include:

- Offering catch-up support to build confidence and bridge gaps in learning.
- Meeting with the student and their parent to discuss patterns of absence, barriers to attendance, and any other problems they may be having.
- Establishing plans to remove barriers and provide additional support.
- Leading regular check-ins to review progress and assess the impact of support.
- Making regular contact with the student's parent to discuss progress.
- Assessing whether an EHC plan or IEP may be appropriate.
- Considering what support for re-engagement might be needed, including with regard to additional vulnerability.

The school will focus particularly on students who have rates of absence over 50 percent, and will work with the LA and other partners to engage all relevant services needed to identify and address the wider barriers to attendance these students are facing.

Where a student at risk of PA is also at increased risk of harm, the school will work in conjunction with all relevant authorities, e.g. social services, to support the student in line with the school's duty of care. The school will also bear in mind that the continuation of severe PA following intervention may, in itself, constitute neglect, and will escalate any concerns in this regard in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

## **15. Legal intervention**

The school will allow sufficient time for attendance interventions and engagement strategies to improve students' attendance; however, where engagement strategies to improve attendance have not had the desired effect after one term, the attendance officer will consider:

- Holding a formal meeting with parents/carers and the school's point of contact in the School Attendance Support Team.
- Working with the LA to put a parenting contract or an education supervision order in place.
- Engaging children's social care where there are safeguarding concerns.

Where the above measures are not effective, the headteacher will issue a fixed penalty notice in line with the LA's code of conduct.

Where attendance still does not improve following a fixed penalty notice, the school will work with the LA to take forward attendance prosecution as a last resort.

## **16. Monitoring and analysing absence**

The attendance officer will monitor and analyse attendance data weekly to ensure that intervention and support is delivered quickly to address habitual absence at the first signs.

The school will collect data regarding punctuality, truancy, and authorised and unauthorised absence, for:

- The school cohort as a whole.
- Individual year groups.
- Year groups preparing for exams.
- Individual students.
- Demographic groups, e.g. students from different ethnic groups or economic backgrounds.
- Other groups of students, e.g. students with SEND, LAC and students eligible for FSM.
- Students at risk of PA.

The attendance officer will conduct thorough analysis of the above data on a half-termly, termly and full-year basis to identify patterns and trends. This will include identifying, for each group:

- Patterns in uses of certain codes.
- Particular days of poor attendance.
- Subjects which have low lesson attendance.
- Historic trends of attendance and absence.
- Barriers to attendance.

The attendance officer will provide regular reports to staff across the school to enable them to track the attendance of students and to implement attendance procedures. The attendance officer will also be responsible for monitoring how attendance data changes in response to any interventions implemented to increase attendance in future.

The governing board will regularly review attendance data, including examinations of recent and historic trends, and will support the SLT in setting goals and prioritising areas of focus for attendance support based on this data.

The school will also benchmark its attendance data against local-, regional- and national-level data to identify areas of success and areas for improvement, and will share practice which has been shown to be effective with other schools.

## **17. Training of staff**

The school will recognise that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, staff will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk students as part of their induction and refresher training.

The governing board will ensure that teachers and support staff receive training in line with this policy as part of their induction. Following this initial training, staff will be offered regular and ongoing training as part of their CPD opportunities.

Training will cover at least the following:

- The importance of good attendance
- That absence is almost invariably a result of wider circumstances
- The legal requirements on schools, e.g. the keeping of registers
- The school's strategies and procedures for monitoring and improving attendance
- The school's procedures for multi-agency working to provide intensive support for students who need it

The governing board will provide dedicated and enhanced attendance training to the attendance officer and other staff with specific attendance functions in their role – this will include training regarding interpreting and analysing attendance data and supporting students to overcome barriers to attendance.

Staff will receive training to ensure they understand that increased absence from school could indicate a safeguarding concern, and know how such concerns should be managed.

## **18. Monitoring and review**

Attendance and punctuality will be monitored throughout the year. The school's attendance target is 96 percent

This policy will be reviewed every three years by the Headteacher. The next scheduled review date for this policy is September 2026.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

## Attendance Monitoring Procedures

1. A red, amber, green (RAG) rated spreadsheet will be sent fortnightly to form tutors (FT) detailing attendance to date.
2. Contact will be made with parents/carers on the first day of absence for any student absence not reported. Any N codes not established after a week will be recorded as unauthorised absence.
3. Student attendance drops below 95 percent – HOY / attendance team will speak to students to discuss any issues or problems to ascertain how the school can help to improve their attendance. Attendance team will make a phone call home, if applicable.
4. Student attendance drops below 90 percent without good reason– a letter will be sent home explaining that a student's absence is now being monitored. The attendance team will contact parents/carers. Attendance is monitored for two weeks. If attendance has not improved, then parents/carers will be required to attend a meeting in school with their child's HOY / attendance team. If parents/carers are unwilling to co-operate, or genuinely unable to attend, a referral may be required to the local education authority who will then carry out a home visit.
5. If attendance has not improved within the two-week monitoring period (likely to be close to 85 percent or below), or if attendance has fallen rapidly, parents/carers will be invited to either: a school attendance meeting with HOY and AO if appropriate, or a medical action planning meeting with the school nurse, HOY, AO and SENCO. Provision will be discussed and targets will be set for raising attendance. This will be monitored over a further two-week period.
6. After the two-week monitoring period, if targets are met, a letter will be sent home from the leadership team to congratulate the student and the family. Monitoring and communication with the family will continue until attendance stabilises – if targets are not met, the Attendance team will make a referral to the LA.
7. Education Welfare protocol will be followed and a parental contract will be drawn up – there will be a four week monitoring period. No improvements in this time will result in a final written warning. If there is still no further improvement following this, then a fixed penalty notice will be issued.

# Attendance Agreement Form

## Student Attendance Agreement

I agree to attend school and understand the consequences I may face if my attendance drops below 100 percent. I will ensure that the school is made immediately aware of when I will not reasonably be able to attend, and will give the school full details of my absence.

As a student of Belper School and 6th form, I am dedicated to:

- Being in attendance every day.
- Always being punctual to school and lessons.
- Informing the school of the reason for any absence.
- Not missing school for trivial reasons.

<b>Pupil name:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Form tutor name:</b>	<b>Date:</b>

## Parental Attendance Agreement

I understand that it is my responsibility to send my child to school. I agree to send my child to school every day and understand the consequences if I fail to do so. When my child is absent from school due to exceptional circumstances, I will ensure the correct procedures are followed.

<b>Parent name:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Form tutor name:</b>	<b>Date:</b>