

Attendance policy



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1. Aims including Inclusive Attendance

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the statutory guidance on [Working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE). We aim to achieve this through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, which includes:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

Inclusive Attendance

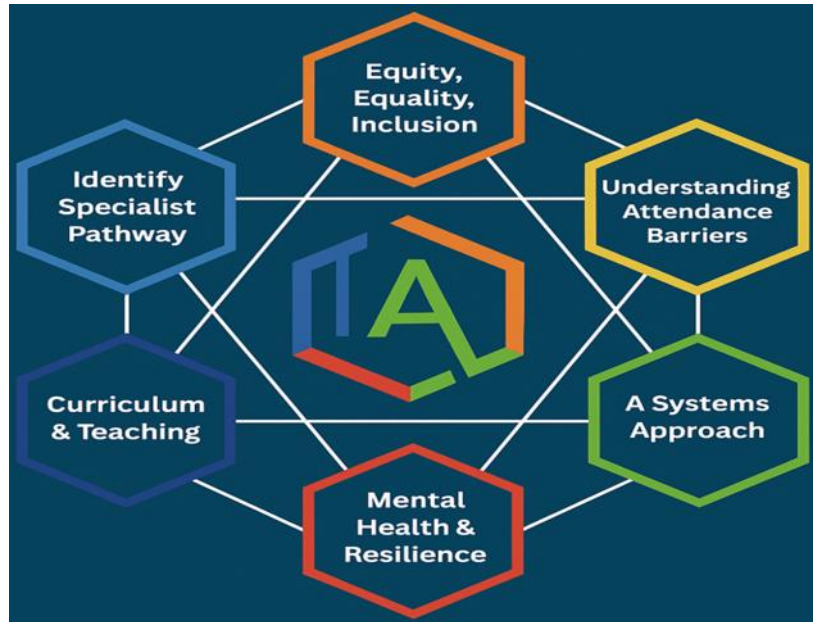
Holly Primary School is proudly recognised as an Inclusive Attendance school. Our unwavering commitment to attendance centres around child-centric actions, evidence-informed practices, and a shared understanding of everyone's roles and collective responsibilities to promote exceptional attendance.

At Holly Primary, we are driven by an unwavering commitment to making school attendance a top priority, fully integrated with every aspect of school improvement. Using the Inclusive Attendance Model – the first and only accredited programme providing the pedagogy of practice – we support children and families to connect, belong, and thrive.

Inclusive Attendance Professional Development Model

The Inclusive Attendance professional development model fundamentally guides our attendance approach.

Comprising six tailored Learning Modules, this model empowers us to deepen our understanding by facilitating continuous professional learning for all staff. Within this model, the four domains of practice ensure the provision of professional learning, professional development, evidence-based practices, and exemplary leadership and management seamlessly integrate theory into practice.

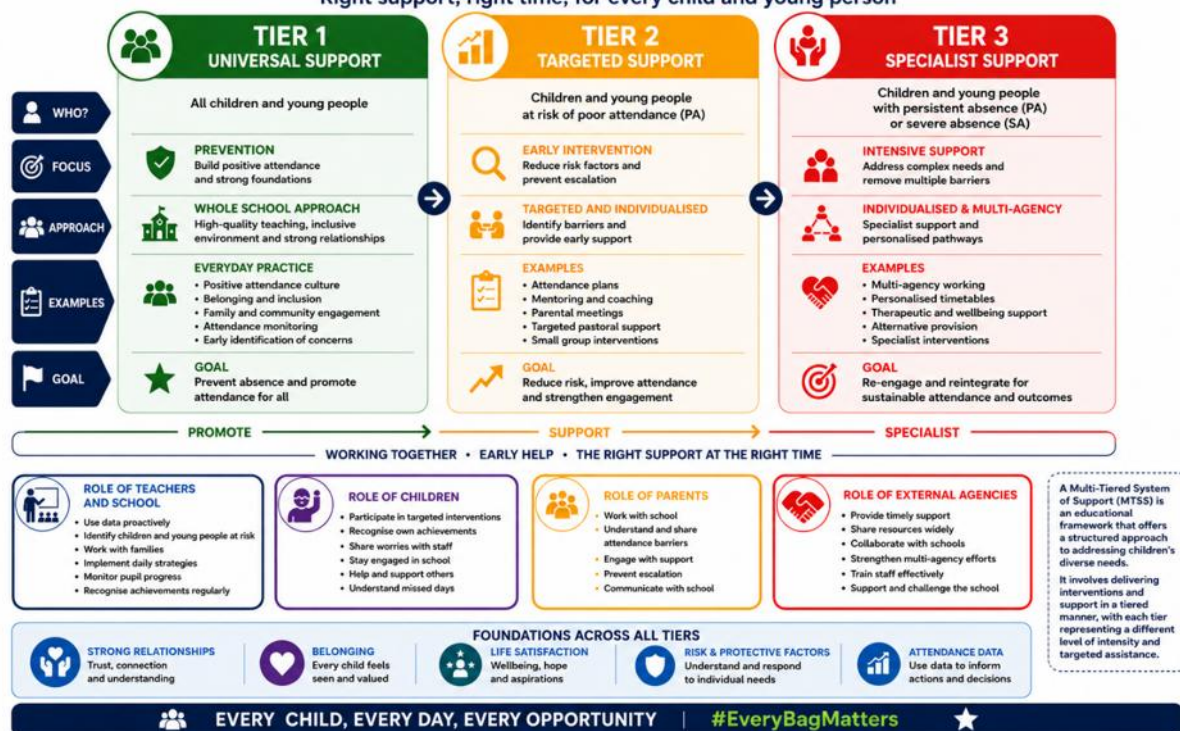


A Multi-Tiered System of Support

To guarantee a comprehensive approach to attendance, Holly Primary School implements a Multi-Tiered System of Support. A Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) for school attendance involves three tiers of intervention, with roles for teachers, the school, children, parents, and external agencies – including the Local Authority. Data-driven decision-making and training requirements are pivotal to the implementation of this system. The system aligns with the Department for Education's (DFE) "Working Together to Improve School Attendance" statutory paper 2026.

INCLUSIVE ATTENDANCE: A MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORT

Right support, right time, for every child and young person



2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the DfE's statutory guidance on [Working together to improve school attendance](#) and [School attendance parental responsibility measures](#). The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of the [Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 7 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2006/1751/contents> [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- The [Equality Act 2010](#)

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2013/757/regulation/2/made> It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)
- [Ofsted's 2025 framework toolkit](#)

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents/carers

- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations, statutory duties and comply with the law on school attendance, including:
 - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
 - Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils' needs
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
 - The importance of good attendance
 - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
 - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
 - The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

At Holly Primary School we have a link governor for attendance who meets with a member of leadership team regularly to monitor and review our pupil attendance.

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising the Deputy Headteacher to be able to do so
- Working with the parents/carers of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs

- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents/carers through all available channels
- Sharing information from the school register with the local authority, including:
 - Notifying the local authority when a pupil's name is added to or deleted from the school admission register outside of standard transition times
 - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who fail to attend school regularly, or who have been marked with an unauthorised absence for a continuous period of 10 school days
 - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who the school believes will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

Attendance Champion: The role of an Attendance Champion in improving children's attendance in schools is critical in ensuring that students attend school regularly and achieve their educational potential. Attendance Champions have a multifaceted role that encompasses various responsibilities and strategies aimed at enhancing attendance rates.

The designated senior leader/Deputy Head Teacher (also known as the 'senior attendance champion') is responsible for:

- **Legal Compliance:** Are knowledgeable about legal requirements related to attendance, including regulations governing authorised and unauthorised absences. They ensure the school complies with these regulations.
- **Promoting a Positive School Culture:** Creating a school culture where attendance is valued, and students feel motivated and supported to attend regularly.
- **Continuous Improvement:** Regularly evaluating the effectiveness of attendance strategies and interventions. They adapt their approaches based on data and feedback to achieve sustained improvements in attendance rates.
- **Supporting Families:** Work closely with parents and guardians to build positive relationships and engage them in improving their child's attendance. They may conduct home visits, organise meetings, and provide guidance on strategies to promote regular attendance. Connect families with resources and services that can help alleviate attendance-related challenges, such as housing support, counselling, or healthcare services.
- **Community Engagement:** Collaborate with community organisations, social services, and local authorities to address attendance issues within the broader community context.
- **Safeguarding:** Are vigilant for safeguarding concerns related to attendance. They recognise signs of neglect or abuse and report them to designated safeguarding officers or authorities as necessary.
- **Legal Compliance:** Are knowledgeable about legal requirements related to attendance, including regulations governing authorised and unauthorised absences. They ensure the school complies with these regulations.
- **Staff Training:** Provide training to school staff on effective attendance monitoring, reporting, and intervention strategies. They ensure that all staff members understand their roles in promoting attendance.
- **Interventions and Incentives:** Design and implement interventions and incentives to motivate children to attend school. This may include recognition for attendance, recognition programmes, or targeted interventions for specific groups of students.
- **Mentoring and Coaching:** Offer mentoring or coaching to children with attendance problems. They help children understand the importance of attending school regularly and provide strategies for overcoming barriers.
- **Data Analysis:** Analyse attendance data to identify trends and patterns. They use this information to pinpoint areas of concern, such as high levels of severely absence, persistent absence, frequent lateness, or particular year groups or demographic groups with attendance challenges.

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Miss McGuiness and can be contacted via email at SMcGuiness@holly.notts.sch.uk or by telephoning the school T 01623 477280

3.4 Senior Leadership

Leadership: Senior staff, including the headteacher and deputy headteacher lead by example. They emphasise the importance of regular attendance and set high expectations for all staff and students.

Enforcing Policies: Senior staff enforce attendance policies consistently and fairly, addressing unauthorised absences promptly. They communicate the consequences of poor attendance to students and parents.

Promoting a Positive Culture: Senior staff actively promote a positive school culture where regular attendance is recognised, and children feel motivated to attend school regularly.

Monitoring and Reporting: They monitor attendance data regularly, analysing trends and patterns. Senior staff use this data to identify students at risk of poor attendance and to measure the impact of attendance improvement strategies.

Setting Expectations: Senior staff establish clear expectations for staff regarding attendance monitoring, recording, and intervention. They ensure that staff understand their roles in promoting regular attendance.

Professional Development: They provide training and professional development opportunities for staff, including teachers, teaching assistants, and support staff, to enhance their knowledge and skills in attendance-related matters.

Early Intervention: Senior staff support early intervention efforts by identifying children with attendance issues and working with staff to implement targeted interventions. They ensure that appropriate support is provided to address attendance barriers.

Parental Engagement: They promote parental engagement in attendance improvement initiatives. Senior staff encourage open communication with parents and guardians and may organise meetings or workshops to involve parents in addressing attendance challenges.

Data Analysis: Senior staff use attendance data to inform decision-making. They set attendance targets and benchmarks for improvement and regularly review progress toward these goals.

Supporting Vulnerable Students: They are attentive to the needs of vulnerable students, including those with medical conditions, special educational needs, or safeguarding concerns. Senior staff ensure that these students receive appropriate support to attend school regularly.

Recognising Attendance: They may implement incentives and recognition programmes to recognise children and reinforcing a positive attendance culture.

3.5 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 9)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance, and the headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher/deputy headteacher (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices or refer to enforcement

- Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who fail to attend school regularly, or who have been marked with an unauthorised absence for a continuous period of 10 school days
- Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who the school believes will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness
- To undertake timely home visits where concerns about a pupil's attendance, welfare, or engagement arise, to ascertain circumstances, assess support needs, and strengthen partnership working with families to improve attendance.

The attendance officers are Emma Crawford and Sam Jones and can be contacted via T 01623 477280 or by email attendance@holly.notts.sch.uk

3.6 Class teachers

- Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1), and submitting this information to the school office at morning and afternoon registration.
- Promoting Punctuality: Class teachers should encourage students to arrive at school on time each day. Punctuality is essential for a smooth start to the school day and minimises disruptions in the classroom.
- Creating a Welcoming Classroom Environment: Class teachers should strive to create a positive and welcoming classroom environment where students feel motivated and engaged. A supportive atmosphere can encourage attendance.
- Identifying Barriers: Class teachers should be alert to potential barriers to attendance, such as bullying, health issues, or family problems. Identifying these barriers and reporting them to school staff can lead to effective interventions.

Taking Immediate Action: Class teachers will take immediate action when a child is absent without prior notification or a valid reason. This may involve contacting the school's attendance officer or designated staff member to report the absence.

- Early Intervention: Class teachers should identify patterns of poor attendance or lateness and intervene early to address any underlying issues. This may include communicating with the student, their parents or guardians, and relevant support services.
- Maintaining Communication: Class teachers should maintain open lines of communication with parents or guardians regarding attendance. They should inform parents of any concerns about a child's attendance or punctuality.
- Providing Support: Class teachers can provide academic and emotional support to children who may be experiencing attendance challenges. Identifying the root causes and addressing them proactively can help improve attendance.

3.7 School [admin/office] staff

School admin staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the Class Teachers / Senior Leadership Team where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

3.8 Parents/Pupils

Where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult the school and/or local authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them)

Parents are expected to:

- Make sure your child attends every [day/timetabled session] on time
- Establish a Routine: Parents should establish a daily routine that includes regular school attendance. Consistency in waking up, getting ready for school, and arriving on time helps children develop good attendance habits.
- Positive Attitude Towards Education: Encourage a positive attitude towards education. Discuss the value of school and the opportunities it provides for the child's future.
- Set Expectations: Clearly communicate your expectations about attendance to your child. Emphasize the importance of attending school regularly and on time.
- Monitor Progress: Keep track of your child's progress and attendance. Be aware of any sudden changes in attendance patterns that may signal underlying issues.
- Seek Support if Needed: If your child is facing challenges that affect attendance, such as health issues or academic struggles, seek support from the school, healthcare professionals, or relevant agencies. Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting [name/role, e.g. head of year, pastoral lead or family liaison officer], who can be contacted via [telephone number and/or email address]
- Collaborate with the School: Work collaboratively with the school to address any attendance issues. Explore support services or interventions if necessary.
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 8.50am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or local authority

Pupils

Children also play a significant role in attending school regularly and ensuring their educational success

Pupils are expected to:

Commitment to Learning: Recognise the value of education and commit to attending school regularly. They can understand that attending school is essential for gaining knowledge, skills, and opportunities for the future.

Punctuality: Arrive at school on time each day. Being punctual helps them settle into the daily routine and ensures they do not miss important instructions or activities.

Positive Attitude: Maintaining a positive attitude towards school and learning can make attending school a more enjoyable experience. Children should be open to new experiences and willing to engage in classroom activities.

Responsibility: Children can take responsibility for their own education by completing homework and assignments on time. They should also ensure they have the necessary materials and supplies for school.

Communication: If a child is unable to attend school due to illness or other reasons, they should communicate this to their parents or guardians, who can then inform the school. Encouraging open communication helps keep attendance records accurate.

Peer Relationships: Building positive relationships with peers can make school a more welcoming place. Children should be friendly, respectful, and inclusive in their interactions with classmates.

Participation: Actively participating in classroom activities, discussions, and group projects can enhance a child's learning experience and motivation to attend school.

Safety Awareness: Children should follow safety guidelines and rules at school to ensure their well-being. They should report any safety concerns to teachers or school staff.

Healthy Lifestyle: Maintaining a healthy lifestyle through proper nutrition, regular exercise, and adequate sleep contributes to overall well-being and can reduce the risk of illness-related absences.

Attendance Awareness: Children can develop awareness of the importance of attendance and its impact on their education. They should aim to achieve good attendance records and strive for excellent attendance.

Seeking Support: If a child is facing challenges that affect attendance, such as bullying or academic difficulties, they should seek support from teachers, school counsellors, or trusted adults.

- Attend school every day, on time

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an electronic attendance register, and place all pupils on this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of each morning session of each school day and once during each afternoon session. It will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending a place other than school
- Absent
- Absent – unable to attend due to unavoidable causes

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity, where a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances, where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

The school day starts at 8:50am and ends at 3:30pm.

Pupils must arrive in school by on each school day.

Whole School

The register for the first session will be taken at 8:50am and will be kept open until 9:20am.

The register for the second session will be taken at 1:00pm and will be kept open until 1:30pm.

Morning Nursery

The register for the first session will be taken at 8:50am and will be kept open until 9:20am.

The register for the second session will be taken at 12:30pm and will be kept open until 1:00pm.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8:50am, or as soon as practically possible, by calling the school staff, who can be contacted via 01623 477280 or by emailing attendance@holly.notts.sch.uk

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised, unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where the absence is longer than 3 days, or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

The school may also undertake a home visit from the first day of absence to ensure students are safeguarded.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

Parents should request leave of absence by contacting our school admin team.

Where possible, the pupil should:

- Be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary, and attend school before/after their appointment
- Wear school uniform to their appointment, to make it easier to return to school afterwards

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible.

The pupil's parent must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. See section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code
- Holly Primary will contact parents whose child/children are experiencing ongoing punctuality issues to agree steps needed to improve this.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may make a referral to outside agencies including the police.
- Our Senior Leadership Team will consider carrying out a home visit when a pupil is absent without explanation and parents/carers cannot be contacted, in order to establish the reason for absence, safeguard the pupil's welfare, and ensure appropriate support and follow-up action are implemented.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session(s) for which the pupil was absent

- Call the parent on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary
- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the pupil's social worker and/or youth offending team officer
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with: we may either issue a notice to improve, a penalty notice or other legal intervention (see section 7 below) where we deem appropriate.

4.6 Reporting to parents

The school will regularly inform parents (see the definition of 'parent', as used in this policy, in section 3.7 above) about their child's attendance and absence levels via half-termly written reports/letters to families who are identified with attendance as a concern.

5. Authorised absence and Unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a **leave of absence** to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the [2024 school attendance regulations](#). These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances

A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as rare and unexpected circumstances which are unlikely to reoccur. Examples include:

- Medical emergencies
- Family emergencies (e.g. death of a relative)]

Leave of absence will not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. Term-time holidays will not be authorised unless exceptional circumstances apply. Where a pupil is absent due to an unauthorised holiday and the school has evidence that the leave has been taken, the school may refer the case to the Local Authority for a Penalty Notice to be considered in accordance with the national framework for attendance enforcement.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least four weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via our school office or [Application for Leave of Absence - Holly Primary School](#). The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

5.2 Other reasons for authorised absence

Other valid reasons for **authorised absence** include (but are not limited to):

- Illness (including mental-health illness, period pains* see unauthorised section) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Severe period pain or other menstrual health conditions - Schools may authorise absence related to severe period pain or other menstrual health conditions where the symptoms are significant enough to prevent a pupil from attending school. Parents/carers are expected to work in partnership with the school where menstrual-related absence becomes recurrent or persistent, so that appropriate support can be identified, reasonable adjustments considered, and access to healthcare advice encouraged to minimize the impact on attendance and wellbeing.
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart for religious observance. Pupils should attend school on the days surrounding those set apart for religious observance
- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – a pupil is a mobile child if their parent is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with them. In these circumstances a pupil will be considered as a mobile child, provided they are of compulsory school age and have no fixed abode and whose parent is in a trade or business that requires them to travel from place to place
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

5.3 Absences from the school site (which are not classified as absences)

The headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings. These are not classified as absences. Reasons include (but are not limited to):

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
- Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority
- Attending work experience
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

5.4 Reasons for unauthorised absence

What will be counted as an unauthorised absence?	What can be done to help in this situation?
Colds, coughs, headaches, nausea, hay fever, sore throats, migraines, cold sores or conjunctivitis, feeling sick/unwell	• Please check the NHS guidance: "Is my child too ill for school?" • Let the school know your child is feeling ill so we can monitor them in school, if the illness is minor. • Please give them doses of recommended medicine before school, for mild illnesses. • If your child has been diagnosed with migraines by your GP, please let the school know. • If your child feels unwell in school, they should report to the Student Engagement Office and a trained First Aider can support them (children must never use their phones to contact parents to say they need picking up).
Period pains*	• Parents/carers are expected to work in partnership with the school where menstrual-related absence becomes recurrent or persistent, so that appropriate support can be identified, reasonable adjustments considered, and access to healthcare advice encouraged to minimise the impact on attendance and wellbeing.

	If parents do not engage with support then absences may lead to unauthorised absences.
No communication at all from a parent or carer	- Parents and carers have a duty to call in and explain their child's absence. - For family emergencies, please ensure you contact us about your situation, and we will offer support.
Unevidenced medical appointments (doctors, dentist, etc.)	You can send in a screenshot of appointment confirmations.
Holidays	Please always book holidays during the school holidays only.
Feeling tired after a weekend sports fixture, other extracurricular event or enrichment activity.	Inform the school that your child is tired. We can monitor and support in school.
Physical injuries that could be catered for in school	If your child has a physical injury, contact the school for support on how they can attend.
Your child refuses to attend school	- Call our Attendance Team immediately and we can offer support. - If your child is experiencing friendship issues, or is worried about a past incident, send them to school and let us know. We can best support your child when they are in school.
Head lice and nits	Please treat your child's hair with a medical shampoo and call school to let us know.
Low mood or anxiety	- Call our Attendance Team immediately and we can offer support. - If your GP, or other medical professional, has expressed concerns about your child's mental health, please contact school for support
Sunburn	Please apply appropriate after-sun cream and give doses of appropriate medicine. Contact us if you need further support.
Unevidenced and unagreed sporting/musical activities	All external sporting/music activities must be evidenced and agreed by the Head Teacher.
More than one day for religious observance	- Children are granted 1 day for religious observance. - Further absences would be unauthorised.
Lack of uniform or item is missing or broken	- We can provide your child with spare uniform for the day/week to ensure they do not miss learning. - If you require financial support, we can help. Please contact your child's Head of Year/Class Teacher to enquire about what support can be provided.
Collecting students from school without a valid reason.	- School will contact you if it is felt that they need to be collected. For example, an injury that needs to be assessed by a medical professional. - If your child feels unwell in school, they should report to Attendance Team and a trained First Aider can support them (children must never use their phones to contact parents to say they need picking up). School will contact you if they feel they are too unwell to be in school.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

We believe that every day in school matters. We are committed to creating a culture where attendance is everyone's responsibility and where barriers to attendance are identified and addressed at the earliest opportunity. Through high expectations, strong relationships, effective support and partnership working with families, we aim to ensure that every pupil attends regularly, feels a sense of belonging and is able to achieve their full potential. To do this, pupils need to avoid missing lessons and days of school as much as possible.

As a school, we want to reward high attendance and not just penalise pupils for poor attendance.

Attend to Achieve Awards

At Holly Primary School we also aim to celebrate and praise our children at every opportunity. See below for a range of prizes each child and class can win!				
<i>Weekly class award for highest attendance.</i> 	<i>£25 class reward – most weekly certificates over the half term.</i> 	<i>Termly 100% attendance certificates and badges.</i> 	<i>Termly certificates for improved attendance.</i> 	<i>Termly family prize draw for children with 100% attendance!</i> 
Working Together at Holly Primary School to Raise Attendance				



Attendance-letter-to-parents.pdf

To do this we:

- Developed and maintained a whole school culture that promotes the benefit of high attendance.
- Ensured the attendance policy is clear, published, understood and details the key information – including the processes to support students with low attendance.
- Visibly demonstrated the benefits of good attendance and punctuality throughout school life e.g. displays and assemblies.
- Prioritised attendance as the starting point for the school improvement plan, actively teaching the students why good school attendance is so critical every week.
- Assigned designated staff CPL slots and INSET time to attendance to ensure that it was a high priority and that expectations were clear.
- Added attendance as a fixed item on the SLT agenda each week to ensure that the interplay between attendance and wider school improvements is recognised and that it is built into strategies on areas such as attainment – particularly of our most disadvantaged students.
- Communicated attendance priorities with Governors and NOVA Education Trust both through means such as the Headteacher report, but also through regular meetings.
- Ensured cohesion across key staff members including the Attendance Team, Safeguarding Team, Key Workers and Heads of Year through inclusion meetings. These will occur on a case by case basis. Additionally, attendance is a standing agenda item on weekly line management meetings with senior leaders for the Attendance Officer and all Heads of Year.
- Communicated whole school, class and individual attendance weekly with teaching staff and all students through the weekly briefings to ensure that expectations were clear and how strong attendance is rewarded.
- Developed and embedded a well-considered rewards system for attendance and punctuality that raised aspirations and reinforced resilience and commitment to learning. We are now involving the School Council so that student voice shapes future rewards and incentives.

- Half Termly meetings with the Trust attendance lead have ensured that we are held accountable and that the strategy is continually reflected on. Holly Primary School colleagues have taken the most impactful strategies from other schools and deployed these in our own setting, adjusting to meet the needs of our context and cohort.

7. Supporting pupils with poor attendance

Our school will make use of the full range of support and potential sanctions – including, but not limited to, those listed below – to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

7.1 Attendance Improvement Plans

We use attendance improvement plans as a form of attendance support.

An attendance contract is a formal written agreement between a parent and the school to address irregular attendance at school. An attendance contract is not legally binding, but it provides a more formal route where previous support has not worked or would not have been appropriate.

Where an attendance contract would be an appropriate form of support, the school will arrange a meeting with the parent (and pupil if they are old enough to understand) to discuss how we can work in partnership to improve the pupil's attendance.

Where parents fail to comply with an agreed attendance contract, the school may seek an alternative course of action. In the first instance, this will include discussions with the parents to seek explanations and determine whether the attendance contract remains useful. Where there is further non-compliance following these discussions, the school may take further action.

7.2 Education supervision order

In cases where voluntary early help plans and attendance improvement plans have been unsuccessful, we may work with the local authority to issue an education supervision order. If an education supervision order is considered, the local authority will inform the parent(s) in writing and will set up a meeting.

An education supervision order is a formal intervention but **not** criminal prosecution.

An education supervision order initially lasts for 1 year, but it can be extended within the last 3 months for a period of up to 3 years at a time.

In cases where parents persistently fail to meet the directions given under the education supervision order, they may be liable to a fine of up to £1,000 upon conviction.

7.3 Notice to improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

A notice to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

It will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under [section 7 of the Education Act 1996](#)
- Details of the support provided so far
- Opportunities for further support or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued, or prosecution considered, if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

7.4 Penalty notices

The headteacher (or a deputy or assistant headteacher authorised by the headteacher), the Local Authority or the police may issue a penalty notice for unauthorised absence where a child is of compulsory school age. In Nottinghamshire Local Authority, schools will submit a Penalty Notice Request to the Local Authority, which considers the evidence and issues any penalty notice in accordance with the Local Authority Code of Conduct for Penalty Notices.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks) Or the unagreed leave of absence immediately precedes, or is attached to, a school closure (e.g.school holidays/INSET/school closure etc) or any form of absence.
- Term-time holidays will not be authorised unless exceptional circumstances apply. Where a pupil is absent due to an unauthorised holiday and the school has evidence that the leave has been taken, the school may refer the case to the Local Authority for a Penalty Notice to be considered in accordance with the national framework for attendance enforcement.
- The National Framework does not prevent a penalty notice from being used in other cases where an offence has been committed but before doing so authorised officers are expected to make the same considerations as set out above. If in an individual case the local authority (or other authorised officer) believes a penalty notice would be appropriate, they retain the discretion to issue one before the threshold is met. This might apply for example, where parents are deliberately avoiding the national threshold by taking several term time holidays below threshold, or for repeated absence for birthdays or other family events. If local authorities wish to exercise this discretion to issue a penalty notice earlier in such circumstances, they will make this clear in their Local Code of Conduct.
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

Each parent who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

If a **second** penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days.

A **third** penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day). These penalty notices are not included in the National Framework, not subject to the same considerations about support being provided, and do not count towards the limit as part of the escalation process.

In these cases, the parent must pay £60 within 21 days, or £120.

8. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

8.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

- We work closely with the pupil, their family, and relevant professionals to understand the underlying causes of absence.
- Develop an individual attendance plan that includes realistic, achievable targets and identifies specific strategies to remove in-school barriers, such as timetable adjustments, mentoring support, or access to safe spaces.
- Maintain consistent, open communication with families through regular meetings, phone calls, and written updates.
- Liaise with external agencies (e.g., social care, early help teams, youth services) where additional support is required.
- Monitor progress and adapt strategies as needed to sustain improvements in attendance. Our aim is to ensure that every pupil can access education in a way that feels safe, achievable, and supportive.
- If the school becomes aware of barriers that relate to the pupil's needs, we will inform the local authority. We will work closely with outside agencies with pupils
- Pupils with complex barriers to attendance will work towards a bespoke attendance plan around the individual child. Our SENDCo will lead this as part of the schools' wider support for inclusion.

8.2 Pupils absent due to mental or physical ill health

We are committed to supporting pupils whose attendance is affected by mental health difficulties, physical health needs, or special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

We will:

- Work in partnership with families, healthcare professionals, and the pupil to understand the impact of their needs on attendance.
- Where appropriate, make reasonable adjustments to the curriculum, timetable, or environment (e.g., part-time attendance, flexible start times, reduced sensory stimulation) to enable attendance.
- Provide additional in-school support such as access to wellbeing spaces, pastoral mentoring, or SEND interventions.
- Ensure that learning is accessible for pupils who are temporarily unable to attend in person, in line with our remote learning offer.
- Monitor attendance closely and review support regularly with the family and relevant professionals. Where a pupil has an education, health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, or we become aware of attendance barriers linked to their identified needs, the school will inform the local authority in line with statutory duties
- Pupils who are absent from school due to mental or physically ill health will work towards a bespoke attendance plan around the individual child. Our SENDCo will lead this as part of the schools' wider support for inclusion.

Parents should consult the NHS guidance [Is my child too ill for school?](#) when deciding whether to keep their child home due to illness. We will share this guidance with parents, and provide support in understanding it, in order to promote school attendance wherever appropriate.

8.3 Pupils absent due to other barriers to attendance

Reasonable and timely adjustments / interventions will be timely and appropriate, well chosen and Targeted. Our SENDCo will lead this and these may be appropriate for children:

- Having SEND

- Being Disadvantaged
- Being Known (or previously known) to children's social care
- Having other barriers to attendance (eg. Young carers)

Where a pupil has an education health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, the school will inform the local authority.

8.4 Pupils returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence

We recognise that returning to school after a significant absence can be challenging, and we are committed to providing a structured, supportive reintegration process.

We will:

- Meet with the pupil and their family before their return to agree a tailored reintegration plan.
- Consider a phased return to school if appropriate, with gradual increases in time and expectations.
- Identify a named member of staff to act as a key point of contact for the pupil during the transition period.
- Provide targeted academic support to help the pupil catch up on missed learning, alongside pastoral support to rebuild relationships and confidence.
- Work closely with external agencies involved in the pupil's care or education to ensure continuity of support.
- Monitor progress and adapt the plan in response to the pupil's needs and feedback. Our goal is to ensure that all returning pupils feel welcomed, supported, and able to re-engage fully with school life.
- Where pupils return back into school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence a reintegration meeting will be held with the pupils, parents and member of the schools' leadership team.

8.5 Prolonged absence for children in the EYFS

In cases of prolonged absence, or when a child is absent without notification, we will attempt to contact the child's parents and alternative emergency contacts.

When deciding whether a child's absence should be considered prolonged, we will consider the:

- Patterns and trends in the child's absences and their personal circumstances
- Vulnerability of the child and their parents, as well as the circumstances of their home life

We will also implement our safeguarding procedures (see our child protection policy [Holly-Primary-Child-Protection-Policy-26-27.pdf](#) and refer any concerns to local children's social care and/or request a police welfare check.

9. Attendance monitoring

9.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) weekly, half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level.

Specific pupil information will be shared with the DfE on request.

Data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics.

The school will benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement, and share this with the governing board.

9.2 Analysing attendance

The school will: (use of powerbi, Tracker +, View Your Education Data and FFT)

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and
- Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

9.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
- Provide targeted support to the pupils we have identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence, and their families (see section 9.4 below)
- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinators, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads)
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

9.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's strategy for improving attendance.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
 - Discuss attendance and engagement at school
 - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
 - Explain the help that is available
 - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
 - Review any existing actions or interventions
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant

- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
- Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 7, above)

10. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every 3 years by the senior leadership team. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

11. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions
- Pupil Mental health and wellbeing

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's [guidance on school attendance](#).

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination

X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or

		Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays