The Abbey

Attendance Policy

The Abbey School, Reading

Reviewed by:	Deputy Head (SS) and Assistant Head (JS)	September 2025
Ratified by:	Whole School Leadership Committee and Governor Audit	September 2025
Next review: September 2026		

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Key Principles

For students to benefit fully from the educational opportunities provided by the School, high levels of attendance and punctuality are important. Ineffective registration or poorly executed follow-up procedures can increase the risks of poor attendance and time-keeping becoming habitual, which may negatively affect personal and social development among students.

Additionally, any child missing from school is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect or may indicate that a student is at risk of significant harm. Consequently, attendance and registration arrangements are vital and must be seen to be regarded as such by students, parents and staff. Improving attendance and punctuality is everyone's responsibility.

Overall there are five strands to effective attendance arrangements:

- High expectations of all students to attend punctually and regularly
- Monitoring attendance to spot issues of concern
- Listening to and understanding where attendance issues arise
- Facilitating informal support
- Formalising support where necessary and ensuring appropriate intervention

Aims

This policy aims to provide a clear, consistent and cohesive framework that meets statutory requirements and promotes high levels of attendance and punctuality of students at the School, as well as outlining clear procedures for identifying and addressing situations where students fail to attend regularly or punctually.

It is intended to promote a shared awareness of statutory obligations and their importance among students, staff and parents. It is also designed to ensure that absences and instances of lateness are identified and recorded systematically and accurately and followed up quickly and appropriately.

This policy also has regard to the School's obligations concerning the admissions register when students leave outside of standard transition times. See Appendix 2.

Statutory Framework

The legal framework governing school attendance is summarised in Working Together to Improve School Attendance (DfE, 2022, updated August 2024). The School also complies with guidance published by the Independent Schools' Inspectorate (ISI) and the advice of local authorities.

Responsibilities

Parents

Parents with a child of compulsory school age have a legal duty to make sure that their child receives efficient full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude and to any special education needs they may have. This means their child must attend every day that school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or securing permission for an absence in advance from the school.

Parents are responsible for informing the school on any occasion/day when their child is unable to attend due to illness, a medical appointment or pre-agreed work experience, providing the reason for non-attendance.

At the Senior and Junior School, the procedure is as follows:

- Absence should be reported by parents as early as possible in the morning and in any case before 8.15 am via My School Portal (MSP)
- If the awareness of an absence is 'last minute' (after 8.15 am, e.g. due to a last-minute illness) parents should contact the relevant school Reception to inform the school
- Parents will be asked to identify the days covered by the absence and give a brief description of the reason.

Parents should only request an advance leave of absence for their child in exceptional circumstances where clear educational benefit or compelling family reasons apply and where it is not feasible for the event to take place in holiday time.

Such requests must be made using MSP. The request will be considered by the relevant member of the leadership team and approval granted, refused or partly approved (e.g. a request for a week's absence to attend an overseas funeral may see only part of the absence approved).Where a student has missed five consecutive days due to illness, or where there is a recurrent pattern of absence due to ill-health, parents may be asked to provide suitable medical evidence.

As far as possible, parents should book medical and dental appointments outside of the school day/term.

The School works closely with all families to help understand and overcome any barriers to attendance. Where there is persistent absence, for example an absence rate of over 10% for extended periods, the School will also work with local authorities to ensure support is joined up and cohesive

Students

Students have a responsibility to attend school when they are fit and well and to arrive at School in time for registration (morning and afternoon) each day during term time.

If, for any reason, a student needs to leave the School site during the school day, they must receive permission from the appropriate member of staff who will liaise with home as necessary. Sixth Formers are permitted to be absent during the day in accordance with arrangements laid out by the Sixth Form team.

The School

The School holds a number of responsibilities regarding student attendance. It must:

- Develop and maintain a whole-school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance.
- Have a clear school attendance policy which all staff, students and parents understand.
- Accurately complete admission and attendance registers and have effective day-to-day processes in place to follow-up absence.
- Regularly monitor and analyse attendance and absence data to identify students or cohorts that require support with their attendance and put effective strategies in place.

- Build strong relationships with families, listen to and understand barriers to attendance and work with families to remove them.
- Share information and work together with other partners in the area, such as local authorities, when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.
- Attempt to restrict leaves of absence as per guidance in 'Working together to improve school attendance' 2024.

All schools are expected to restrict leaves of absence to the specific circumstances set out in regulation 11 of the School Attendance (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority must do so.

These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance or employment abroad: in line with a licence issued by a local authority or Justice of the Peace or a body of persons approval (BOPA). (For full details please see Code C1)
- Attending an interview: for entry into another educational institution or for future employment where requested in advance by a parent the student normally lives with.
- Study leave: for public examinations, as agreed in advance with a parent the student normally lives with. Please note this does not include any internal examinations such as mocks as study leave should not be granted in such cases.
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable: where the student is of compulsory school age, both the parent who the student normally lives with and school agree the student should temporarily be educated on a part-time basis for exceptional reasons and have agreed the times and dates when the student will be expected to attend school as part of that timetable. (For full details please see part-time timetable)

Exceptional circumstances: All schools can grant a leave of absence for other exceptional circumstances at their discretion. In the case of schools maintained by local authorities and special schools not maintained by local authorities, it must be requested in advance by a parent who the student normally lives with. Schools are then expected to consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the school to determine the length of the time the student can be away from school.

Schools Senior Attendance Champions

The designated senior attendance champions are:

- Junior School – Beccy Newton, Head and Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Senior School - George Morton, Deputy Head and Designated Safeguarding Lead

They are supported by members of the administration and reception teams. They have overall responsibility for attendance across the school. Where individual records suggest attendance issues, they support the pastoral team to ensure an appropriate plan is devised in consultation with families to improve the situation.

The Attendance Champions will attend termly meetings with a local authority attendance officer where individual cases are discussed, advice sought, and action plans agreed.

Form teachers and tutors and pastoral teams

Form teachers and tutors see students daily and manage morning registration. They are the first port of call in the event of concerns about attendance. They should know all members of their forms well and provide a supportive environment with clear expectations. Where they identify any substantive concerns with attendance, they should share them with the relevant

Assistant Director/Director/relevant JS Assistant Head so that the pastoral team can help put effective support in place. The pastoral team will ensure regular and supportive communication with home in the event of any attendance concerns.

All staff

All staff are encouraged to be curious and supportive of student welfare and to raise any queries with the appropriate member of the pastoral team, for example reporting habitual late/last minute attendance

Using Data to Support Attendance

The School recognises that worrying attendance trends require swift identification and intervention to prevent them becoming habitual. An effective strategy for reviewing attendance data is therefore essential. As part of its strategies, the school will:

- Monitor and analyse attendance data on a weekly basis
- Analyse trends of half-termly, termly and annual data (including of individual students, cohorts and of poor attendance on specific days)
- Devise appropriate strategies in response to this data, at individual and cohort level as appropriate

Managing Long-Term Conditions

In exceptional circumstances, where it is in a student's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. This may include a period of authorised absence or remote learning and a period of part-time or reduced timetable study. Such arrangements will only be made for the shortest time possible and will be regularly reviewed. They will never be used as part of a strategy to help manage behavioural needs.

Addressing Persistent or Severe Absence

The School will seek to reduce severe or persistent absence, in accordance with Working Together to Improve School Attendance. The school's strategy when doing so is founded upon the understanding that the child's welfare is paramount, and that respectful and positive relationships between home and school will be the foundation of good attendance; and that the School will be seeking to understand and remove barriers to attendance, together with the parents. Wider support from local authority and other partners will be sought where lower-level supports are not proving effective at improving concerning attendance, with enforcement measures as a last resort. The School notes that:

- Where students miss more than 10% of school across a sustained period, the DfE advises that we work with local authorities to put in additional targeted support.
- Particular focus must be given to students missing 40% or more of school, or who have 10 consecutive days of unexplained/unauthorised absence.
- The School will always contact the relevant local authority children's services where a child is absent without an authorised reason for ten days or more, whenever a child's levels of unauthorised attendance exceeds 5% or whenever any absence appears to the School to raise a safeguarding concern.
- The School will also contact the relevant local authority children's services whenever a child misses, or we believe they are due to miss, 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because they are unwell (absence recorded as I) within a 12 month period.

In seeking to address concerning absence, the School will make informal contact seeking to understand in-school barriers and to support student and parents in overcoming these or other barriers. These may include welfare or mental health support, mentoring, creating and emphasising positive reasons to attend school; plans for successfully making it to school; voluntary engagement with the services of local authorities.

The School will be particularly mindful and sensitive when supporting students whose attendance is impaired by long-term medical conditions (physical or mental health), disabilities or special educational needs.

In rare cases the School may identify the need, in partnership with the local authority, to formalise attendance support via attendance contracts, parenting orders, education supervision orders, attendance prosecution or fixed penalty notices. In all such cases the School will work collaboratively and with due regard to the Working Together to Improve School Attendance 2024 statutory guidance.

Appendix 1: Day-to-Day Attendance Processes

The School has a legal responsibility for taking and maintaining an accurate School Register (SR) of all students twice each day throughout term time: once at the beginning of the morning session and once in the second (afternoon) session.

Junior School

Registration is taken by Junior School teachers.

Morning registration: the register opens at 8.30 am and closes at 9.00 am. Registration takes place at 8.40am and needs to be completed by 8.50 am.

Afternoon registration: the register opens at 1pm and closes at 1.30 pm. Registration is at 1.10pm and should be completed by 1.20 pm

Students who have music lessons during registration are noted on the school's MIS and the Reception team checks the accuracy of this. Students who arrive late must register by signing in at Reception.

Senior School

Morning registration is taken by form tutors. Registrations are then taken at the start every lesson by subject teachers. Students may only be registered present when seen in person and not when reported present by others.

Morning registration: students should arrive to registration by 8.30 am and the register should be taken at 8.35 am. Students arriving after 8.45 am will need to register as late at Reception, with the register formally closing at 9.00 am.

Afternoon registration: students are registered in classes during the first ten minutes of each lesson. Teachers will all receive a reminder pop-up on their laptop after ten minutes. Sixth formers with study periods during Period 7 must register with the Sixth Form team. The register formally closes at 1.15 pm.

Students who have music lessons during registration must register via the music department. Students who arrive late must register by signing the late book at Reception.

Lesson-by-lesson registration: students are registered at the start of each lesson throughout the day, with teachers receiving a reminder pop-up on their laptop after ten minutes. Staff will alert the Reception team of any students who are absent, who have been registered as present earlier in the day, by hitting the 'ALERT' button in ISAMS. See the Missing Student Policy for the list of actions that follow the receipt of such an alert.

The attendance registers are checked after each formal registration period. Where a student is absent and no satisfactory reason may be established the procedures outlined in the Missing Student Policy will be followed.

Where the reason for absence is not sufficiently clear, it may be recorded as unexplained. Any such records will be followed up and replaced with the appropriate code within five working days.

Appendix 2: Admission and Attendance registers

The School maintains an accurate Admission Register (the School Roll) and Attendance Register. All students are placed on the Admission Register, both of compulsory and non-compulsory school age, and have their attendance recorded in the Attendance Register.

The School notifies the local authority within five days of adding any student's name to the Admissions Register at the start of the year other than in Nursery, Reception, Upper III and Lower VI and within five days of adding any student (excluding Nursery) to the register after the start of the academic year.

The following information about students is included in the Admissions Register:

- full name;
- sex;
- the full name and address of each of the student's parents;
- which of the student's parents the student normally lives with and at least one telephone number by which each parent who the student normally lives with can be contacted in an emergency; ideally more than one number is recorded
- day, month and year of birth;
- day, month and year of admission or re-admission to the school;
- name and address of the school last attended, if any.

Where a student departs at a non-standard transition point, the School notifies both the local authority and the family's local authority depending on their place of residence before the date of deletion from the Admissions Register. This does not apply to standard transition points at the end of Lower III, Upper V or Upper VI.

A statutory age student should not be taken off the roll at a non-standard transition point until their new school name and start date have been confirmed, and new home address and start date if they have moved home addresses. In cases of students moving abroad, the new school name and start date will suffice.

Appendix 3: Study Leave

This appendix sets out the Study Leave arrangements for students at The Abbey Senior School in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and statutory guidance from the Department for Education (DfE), including 'Working together to improve school attendance' (August 2024). It also aligns with the school's legal responsibilities under the Education and Skills Act 2008 and the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

Study Leave for U3-U5 students

Compulsory school age students in U3-U5 are expected to attend school as normal during internal examinations (e.g., mock exams). When not sitting an exam during these periods, they will undertake supervised revision on school premises. Study leave will not be granted for internal examinations.

A student studying for a public examination can be granted study leave if it has been agreed in advance with a parent who the student normally lives with. The school reserves the right to remove the study leave and enforce attendance for any student that it deems would benefit more, either pastorally or academically, from being in school rather than studying at home.

Study Leave for Sixth Form

Students in the Sixth Form are non-compulsory school age and may be granted study leave for public examinations. During mock exams, absence from school can be authorised using code X (non-compulsory school age pupil absent with leave).

Granting Study Leave

Study leave will be granted at the school's discretion for internal examinations only in exceptional circumstances*, in agreement with parents where applicable.

The school will ensure that:

- Study leave is planned to balance independent study with teacher support.
- Students have access to revision resources and optional supervised study spaces on-site.
- Attendance is monitored, and any concerns about engagement are addressed.

Recording and Monitoring Attendance

- Students granted study leave for public exams will be recorded using the appropriate attendance code S (studying for a public examination).
- Students absent on study leave for internal exams, in exceptional circumstances, will be recorded using code C (leave of absence for exceptional circumstances).
- All study leave arrangements will be reviewed regularly to ensure they support student learning.

This policy ensures fairness, consistency, and compliance with statutory guidance to support student outcomes.

*All schools have the power to grant leave of absence at their own discretion where a parent who the pupil normally lives with (or the pupil themself if they will be over compulsory school age when the absence begins) has asked in advance and they deem there to be exceptional circumstances. In deciding whether a leave of absence should be granted schools are expected to consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the school to determine the length of time the pupil can be away from school.

DfE: Leave of Absence in Independent Schools (March 2025)

Appendix 4: Attendance Register Codes

Attending the school

Relevant regulation 10(2) Table 1

Code / \: Present at the school / = morning session \ = afternoon session

Students must not be recorded as present if they are not in school during registration. If a student were to leave the school premises after registration, they will still be counted as attending for statistical purposes.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as attending.

Code L: Late arrival before the register is closed

The student was absent when the register started being taken but arrives before the register is closed. Schools should actively discourage late arrival and be alert to patterns of late arrival. All schools are expected to set out in their attendance policy the length of time the register will be open, after which a student will be recorded as absent. This should be the same for every session and not longer than 30 minutes. If a student is recorded with code N but arrives later in the session after the register has closed, the attendance register must be amended to record them as absent using code U or another absence code that is more appropriate.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as attending.

Attending a place other than the school

Relevant regulation 10(3) Table 2

Code K: Attending education provision arranged by the local authority

The student is attending a place, other than the school or any other school at which they are a registered student, for educational provision arranged by a local authority under section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996 (exceptional provision of education), section 42(2), or 61(1) of the Children and Families Act 2014 (special educational provision off site). A student attending provision arranged by the school rather than the local authority must be recorded using Codes P or B instead.

Schools must also record the nature of the provision (regulation 10(5)), examples are:

- attending courses at college;
- attending unregistered alternative provision.

Schools should ensure that arrangements are in place whereby the education provider notifies the school of any absence by the student. The school must record the student's absence using the relevant absence code.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as attending an approved educational activity.

Code V: Attending an educational visit or trip

The student is attending a place, other than the school or any other school at which they are a registered student, for an educational visit or trip arranged by or on behalf of the school and supervised by a member of school staff. The visit or trip must take place during the session for which it is recorded.

If the student does not attend the visit or trip the school must record the student's absence using the relevant absence code.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as attending an approved educational activity.

Code P: Participating in a sporting activity

The student is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is a sporting activity. The sporting activity must take place during the session for which it is recorded.

A student can only be recorded as attending a place for an approved educational activity if:

- the place is somewhere other than the school, another school where the student is registered, or a place where educational provision has been arranged for the student by a local authority under section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996 or sections 42(2) or 61(1) of the Children and Families Act 2014;
- the activity is of an educational nature;
- the school has approved the student's attendance at the place for the activity; and the activity is supervised by a person considered by the school to have the appropriate skills, training, experience and knowledge to ensure that the activity takes place safely and fulfils the educational purpose for which the student's attendance has been approved. Supervision means the student is physically supervised by someone who meets this definition.

If schools have concerns about the appropriateness of an activity, they can seek advice from the sports' national governing body. The final decision on approving the activity, however, rests with the school and they should take the effect on the student's general education into account.

Schools have responsibilities for the safeguarding and welfare of students attending an approved educational activity. The school will need to be satisfied that appropriate measures have been taken to safeguard the student. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the sporting activity notifies the school of any absence by the student. The school must record the student's absence using the relevant absence code.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as attending an approved educational activity.

Code W: Attending work experience

The student is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is work experience provided under arrangements made by a local authority or the school as part of the student's education. The work experience must take place during the session for which it is recorded.

A student can only be recorded as attending a place for an approved educational activity if:

- the place is somewhere other than the school, another school where the student is registered, or a place where educational provision has been arranged for the student by a local authority under section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996 or sections 42(2) or 61(1) of the Children and Families Act 2014;
- the activity is of an educational nature;
- the school has approved the student's attendance at the place for the activity; and
- the activity is supervised by a person considered by the school to have the appropriate skills, training, experience and knowledge to ensure that the activity takes place safely and fulfils the educational purpose for which the student's attendance has been approved. Supervision means the student is physically supervised by someone who meets this definition.

Schools have responsibilities for the safeguarding and welfare of students attending an approved educational activity. The school will need to be satisfied that appropriate measures have been taken to safeguard the student. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the work experience notifies the school of any absence by the student. The school must record the student's absence using the relevant absence code.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as attending an approved educational activity.

Code B: Attending any other approved educational activity

The student is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience. The educational activity must take place during the session for which it is recorded.

A student can only be recorded as attending a place for an approved educational activity if:

- the place is somewhere other than the school, another school where the student is registered, or a place where educational provision has been arranged for the student by a local authority under section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996 or sections 42(2) or 61(1) of the Children and Families Act 2014;
- the activity is of an educational nature;
- the school has approved the student's attendance at the place for the activity; and
- the activity is supervised by a person considered by the school to have the appropriate skills, training, experience and knowledge to ensure that the activity takes place safely and fulfils the educational purpose for which the student's attendance has been approved. Supervision means the student is physically supervised by someone who meets this definition.

Schools must also record the nature of the approved educational activity (regulation 10(5)), examples are:

- attending transition days at other schools;
- attending courses at college;
- attending unregistered alternative provision arranged by the school.

Schools have responsibilities for the safeguarding and welfare of students attending an approved educational activity. The school will need to be satisfied that appropriate measures have been taken to safeguard the student. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the educational activity notifies the school of any absences by the student. The school must record the student's absence using the relevant absence code.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as attending an approved educational activity.

Absent - leave of absence

Relevant regulation 10(4) Table 3

All schools must use the following codes to record the reason for a student being absent with leave:

Code C1: Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad

All schools can grant leaves of absence for students to undertake employment (paid or unpaid)

during school hours. Schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority can only do so in the following circumstances (under regulation 11(2)):

- Where the local authority have granted a licence for the student to take part in a performance regulated by section 37(2) of the Children and Young Persons Act 1963.
- Where a student does not need a licence for such a performance because an exception applies under section 37(3) of the Children and Young Persons Act 1963, including where a Body of Persons Approval (BOPA) covering the student has been issued by the local authority in whose area the performance will take place or the Secretary of State.
- Where a Justice of the Peace has given the student a licence to go abroad for a performance or other regulated purpose under section 25(2) of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933.

Schools should be sympathetic to requests for leave of absence that are supported by a licence issued by a local authority or a BOPA; as long as the school remains satisfied that this will not have a negative effect on a student's education. Where a local authority licence specifies the dates that a student is to be away from school to perform, the school should record the absence for those days as if a leave of absence had been applied for and granted. Where the terms of the local authority licence do not specify dates, however, or where a BOPA or other exemption or licence from a Justice of the Peace applies, it is at the discretion of the school to grant leave of absence.

Schools that are not required to follow regulation 11, must still use this code to record a student who is absent with leave for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or work abroad under a licence or exemption as described above.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Code M: Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment

Schools should encourage parents to make appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, they should get the school's agreement in advance and the student should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.

Schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority can only grant leave of absence for this under regulation 11(11), where an application is made in advance by a parent the student normally lives with (or the student if they will be over compulsory school age by the time of the absence), and the school is satisfied that, based on the individual facts of the case, there are exceptional circumstances which justify the leave.

Schools that are not required to follow regulation 11, must still use this code to record a leave of absence has been granted for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment.
If a student is present at registration but then leaves the school to attend a medical or dental appointment during the session in question, no absence needs be recorded for that session.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Code J1: Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution

Schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority can grant leave of absence, under regulation 11(4), where an application has been made in advance by the parent who the student normally lives with (or the student if they will be over compulsory school age by the time of the absence) and the leave is to enable the student to attend an interview for employment or admission to another educational institution.

Schools that are not required to follow regulation 11, must still use this code to record a leave of absence has been granted for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational establishment.

This interview must take place during the session for which it is recorded.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence

Code S: Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination

Schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority can grant leave of absence, under regulation 11(5), for a student to study for a public examination where the leave has been agreed in advance with a parent who the student normally lives with (or the student if they will be over compulsory school age by the time of the absence).

Study leave should not be granted by default once tuition of the exam syllabus is complete and should be used sparingly. If schools do decide to grant study leave, provision must still be made available for those students who want to continue to come into school to revise.

Schools that are not required to follow regulation 11, must still use this code to record when a student is absent with leave that has been granted for the purpose of studying for a public examination.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Code X: Non-compulsory school age student not required to attend school

Schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority can grant a leave of absence, under regulation 11(7) or (8) for a student not of compulsory school age to attend school part-time.

Schools that are not required to follow regulation 11, must still use this code to record when a student is absent with leave because their timetable does not require them to attend.

Where the student is absent when timetabled to attend the school, the absence must be recorded using the appropriate absence code not code X.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance.

Under compulsory school age

In cases where a parent wishes their child to begin school on a part-time basis in line with the school admissions code, schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority may give leave of absence for sessions the student is not expected to attend. This must be agreed between the school and the parent they normally live with and must end at the point at which the student reaches compulsory school age. The times and dates when the student is expected to attend the school must be agreed by the school and the parent with whom the student normally lives with.

Over compulsory school age

Where a sixth form student's timetable does not require them to be on site for every session of the week, a school maintained by a local authority or a special school not maintained by a

local authority may give leave of absence. The times and dates when the student is expected to attend the school must be agreed with the parent with whom the student normally lives with or the student.

Code C2: Leave of absence for a compulsory school age student subject to a part-time timetable

All students of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a student's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs.

Schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority can grant a leave of absence, under regulation 11(6) to temporarily reduce the timetable of a student of compulsory school age to part-time, if the school and a parent who the student normally lives with have agreed that, exceptionally, the student should temporarily be educated only part-time and have agreed the times and dates when the student will, during the period of temporary part-time education, be expected to attend the school.

Schools that are not required to follow regulation 11, must still use this code to record when a student is absent with leave because they are subject to a part-time timetable in line with an agreement between the school and a parent the student normally lives with that the student should temporarily be educated part-time.

Where a student is receiving a full-time education, but only part-time at the school in question (e.g. dual registration, part-time unregistered alternative provision or flexi schooling) this code must not be used and the appropriate code for why the student is not in school for that session should be used.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Code D: Dual registered at another school

The law allows a student to be registered at more than one school. This code is used to indicate that the student is absent with leave to attend the other school at which they are registered. The main examples of dual registration are students who are attending a student referral unit, a hospital school or a special school on a temporary basis.

The school at which the student is scheduled to attend must record the student's attendance and absence with the relevant code. Code D may only be used by either school for a session where the student is scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby all unexpected and unexplained absences are promptly followed up.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance to avoid double counting.

Code C: Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance

All schools are able to grant a leave of absence at their discretion. A leave of absence should not, and from a school maintained by a local authority or a special school not maintained by a local authority, must not be granted unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Schools must judge each application individually considering the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind each request. Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days a student can be absent from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the school's discretion.

Schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority can only grant such a leave of absence under regulation 11(11), where an application is made in advance by a parent the student normally lives with (or the student if they will be over compulsory school age by the time of the absence).

Generally, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance.

Schools that are not required to follow regulation 11, must still use this code to record where a student is absent with leave for a reason that is not covered by another leave of absence code.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Pregnant students

Leave for maternity is treated like any other leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. Schools are expected to act reasonably and grant a sufficient period of leave from school, taking into consideration the specific facts and circumstances of each case. Ultimately, it is at the school's discretion how much leave to grant.

Absent - other authorised reasons

Relevant regulation 10(4) Table 3

Code T: Parent travelling for occupational purposes

The student is a mobile child and their parent(s) is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the student is travelling with them. A mobile child is a child of compulsory school age who has no fixed abode and whose parent(s) is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require them to travel from place to place.

Schools should not unnecessarily ask for proof that the parent is travelling for occupational purposes, this should only happen when there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the reason for absence given. If there is doubt over the reason given, the school may ask for proof that the family are required to travel for occupational purposes during the period of absence.

To help ensure continuity of education for students, when their parent(s) is travelling for occupational purposes in England, it is expected that the student should attend a school where their parent(s) is travelling and be dual registered at that school and their main school.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Whilst for statistical purposes this is counted as authorised absence, if a student's attendance was to fall below an acceptable level consideration may be given to attendance enforcement.

Defence in the law

Parents can in some circumstances, present a defence against prosecution, under section 444(6) of the Education Act 1996. This defence applies where the child has no fixed abode, and the parent can prove that they are engaged in a trade or business that requires them to travel from place to place and that the child has been attending school as regularly as the trade or business permits. If the child is aged 6 or older, the parent must also prove that the child has attended school for at least 200 sessions in the preceding 12 months. This is in addition to the requirement to prove that the child has attended as regularly as the trade or

business permits, which means that if the trade or business permits the child to attend for more than 200 sessions, they should do so.

Code R: Religious observance

The student is absent on a day that is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body the parent(s) belong to (not the parents themselves).

As a general rule, 'a day exclusively set apart for religious observance' is a day when the student's parents would be expected by the religious body to which they belong to stay away from their employment in order to record the occasion. If in doubt, schools should seek advice from the parent's religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance.

If a religious body sets apart a single day for a religious observance and the parent applies for more than one day, the school may only record one day using this code; the rest of the time would need a leave of absence, and this is granted at the school's discretion as set out under Code C.

Schools and local authorities may seek to minimise the adverse effects of religious observance on a student's attendance and attainment by considering approaches such as:

- Setting term dates around days for religious observance;
- Working with local faith groups to develop guidance on absence for religious observance;
- Taking INSET days that coincide with religious observance days; and
- Providing individual support for students who miss sessions on days exclusively set apart for religious observance.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Code I: Illness (not medical or dental appointment)

The student is unable to attend due to illness (both physical and mental health related). Schools should advise parents to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness.

Schools are not expected to routinely request that parents provide medical evidence to support illness absences. Schools should only request reasonable medical evidence in cases where they need clarification to accurately record absence in the attendance register – i.e. making a decision that code I is the absence code that accurately describes the reason the student is not in school for the session in question. In the majority of cases a parent's notification that their child is too ill to attend school will be that evidence and can be accepted without question or concern. Only where the school has genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness should medical evidence be requested to support the absence.

Where medical evidence is deemed necessary, schools should not be rigid about the form of evidence requested and should speak to the family about what evidence is available. Schools should be mindful that requesting additional medical evidence unnecessarily places pressure on health professionals, their staff and their appointment system, particularly if the illness is one that does not require treatment by a health professional.

Where a parent cannot provide evidence in the form requested but can provide other evidence, schools should take this into account. Where a parent cannot provide any written evidence the school should have a conversation with the parent and student, if appropriate, which may in itself serve as the necessary evidence to record the absence.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Code E: Suspended or permanently excluded

The student is suspended from school or permanently excluded from school on disciplinary grounds, but their name is still entered in the admission register, and no alternative provision has been made for the student to continue their education.

When a student of compulsory school age is suspended or permanently excluded on disciplinary grounds from a maintained school, student referral unit, academy, city technology college, or city college for the technology of the arts, alternative provision must be arranged from the sixth consecutive school day of any suspension or permanent exclusion. Where the student is attending alternative provision, for the session in question, schools should record this using the appropriate attendance code in regulation 10(3) Table 2 or if the student is attending another school at which they are a registered student, schools should record this using code D (dual registered at another school).

This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Absent - unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause

Relevant regulation 10(4) Table 3

Code Q: Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements

Relevant regulation 10(4), (12) and (13).

Code Q is only used where a student is absent because the local authority has a legal duty to arrange home-to-school travel for the student and they have not done so, or because the student has no choice but to attend a school that does not qualify for such travel arrangements and is more than walking distance from where they live. These circumstances are set out in law but in summary are where:

- the local authority has a duty to arrange the student's home to school travel and has not; or
- the student is registered at a private school that is beyond walking distance from the student's home and the local authority has not arranged boarding for them or enabled them to go to a state school nearer to their home; or
- the student lives in Wales and a Welsh local authority has a duty to provide home to school travel and has not. 13 372. This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance.

Code Y1: Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available

The student is unable to attend because the school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport to and from the school that is normally provided for the student by the school or local authority is not available.

Walking distance in relation to a child under the age of 8, means 2 miles, and for a child of 8 or above, means 3 miles. In each case measured by the nearest available route.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance.

Code Y2: Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel

The student is unable to attend the school because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national, or international emergency.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance.

Code Y3: Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed

Part of the school premises is unavoidably out of use and the student is one of those that the school considers cannot practicably be accommodated in those part of the premises that remain in use.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance.

Code Y4: Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed

Relevant regulation 10(10).

Where a school was planned to be open for a session, but the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather), the attendance register is not taken as usual because there is no school session. Instead, every student listed in the admission register at the time must be recorded with code Y4 to record the fact that the school is closed.

This code may not be used for any planned closure such as weekends or holidays.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance.

Code Y5: Unable to attend as student is in criminal justice detention

Relevant regulation 10(14)

The student is unable to attend the school because they are:

- in police detention;
- remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or
- detained under a sentence of detention.

If a student is remanded to local authority accommodation, they should attend school as normal where possible and where it is not possible any absence should be recorded using the appropriate code.

A student's absence should be recorded under code Y7 (Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause) if they are unable to attend because they are serving a community based (i.e. non-detained) part of a sentence of detention, referral order, or youth rehabilitation order that requires them to be absent during the school day

Schools are expected to communicate with the student's Youth Offending Team worker while the student is in custody and remains on the school roll to discuss the student's educational needs, progress and return to the school upon their release where appropriate. Education is a key part of effective resettlement; therefore, it is important that schools maintain contact with the Youth Offending Team throughout the sentence to support the child's resettlement where appropriate.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance.

Code Y6: Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law

The student is well enough to attend (otherwise Code I would have been recorded) but there are Government rules or guidance to limit the spread of infection or disease which say they should not attend.

Meaning, the student's travel to or attendance at the school would be:

- contrary to any guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of infection or disease published by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care (or the

equivalent in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland), or
- prohibited by any legislation relating to the incidence or transmission of infection or disease.

Code Y7: Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause

An unavoidable cause, that is not covered by one of the other 'unable to attend' codes detailed above, is preventing the student from attending the school.

This code should be used only where something in the nature of an emergency has prevented the student from attending the session in question. The unavoidable cause must be something that affects the student, not the parent. The fact that a parent has done all they can to secure the attendance of the student at school does not, in itself, mean the student has been prevented by unavoidable cause.

Schools must also record the nature of the unavoidable cause (regulation 10(6)), examples are:

- Bail conditions (that prevent the student from attending the school or being present in the area where the school is situated)
- Court attendance (where the student is legally required to attend Court)

This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance.

Absent - unauthorised absence

Code G: Holiday not granted by the school

The school has not granted a leave of absence and the student is absent for the purpose of a holiday.

A school cannot grant a leave of absence retrospectively. If the parent did not apply in advance, leave of absence should not be granted.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as unauthorised absence.

Code N: Reason for absence not yet established

Schools must follow up all unexplained and unexpected absence in a timely manner. Every effort should be made to establish the reason for a student's absence. When the reason for absence has not yet been established before the register closes, the absence must be recorded with code N.

Where absence is recorded as code N (reason not yet established) in the attendance register, the correct absence code should be entered as soon as the reason is ascertained, but no more than 5 school days after the session (regulation 10(7) to (9)). Code N must not therefore be left on the student's attendance record indefinitely; if a reason for absence cannot be established within 5 school days, schools must amend the student's record to Code O.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as unauthorised absence. Code O: Absent in other

Code O: Absent in other or unknown circumstances

Where no reason for absence is established or the school is not satisfied that the reason given is one that would be recorded using one of the codes statistically classified as authorised.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as unauthorised absence.

Code U: Arrived in school after registration closed

Relevant regulation 10(7) and (8)

Where a student has arrived late after the register has closed but before the end of session.

Schools should actively discourage late arrival, be alert to patterns of late arrival and seek an explanation from the parent. All schools are expected to set out in their attendance policy the length of time the register will be open, after which a student will be recorded as absent. This should be the same for every session and not longer than 30 minutes.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as unauthorised absence.

Administrative codes Code Z: Prospective student not on admission register

To enable schools to set up registers in advance of students joining the school to ease administration burdens.

Most school admissions involve the school or admission authority offering a place to the parent of the prospective student (or, in the case of admission to sixth form, the prospective student). An offer of a place is not an agreement. Before a student can be registered at a school the parent (or prospective student) must have accepted the offer, either by agreeing the starting day in advance or by the fact of the student attending the school on that day. In the normal admissions round, when parents have accepted the school place and starting day offered, the local authority can communicate that agreement to schools on behalf of the parent. This can also be the case where the local authority coordinate in-year applications for school places.

Schools must enter students' names on the admission register on the first day that the school and a person with control of the student's attendance have agreed that the student will attend the school. If no date has been agreed or notified, the student's name must be entered on the first day they attend the school. Names must be added before or at the beginning of the first session on that day.

If a student fails to attend on the agreed starting day, the school must follow this up and try to establish the reason for absence.

This code is not collected for statistical purposes.

Code #: Planned whole school closure

Whole school closures that are known and planned in advance such as:

- days between terms;
- half terms;
- occasional days (for example, bank holidays);
- weekends (where it is required by the management information system);
- up to 5 non-educational days; and
- use of the whole school as a polling station.

This code is not collected for statistical purposes.

The Abbey

Appendix 5: WS Absence Actions

At the SS, the Assistant Directors/Directors (As Dir/Dir) should look at the attendance data weekly and use available context and their judgement to decide upon which interventions to deploy. This role is done by the Assistant Heads (AH) at the JS. Many will be delegated to Tutors in their team. A set of loose guidelines are included for certain scenarios. All interventions should be recorded on CPOMS.

Absence scenario	**Action**	**Notes**
Student is ill/absent for three consecutive days	**Tutor/Form Teacher** to call/email home to enquire about wellbeing or support needed.	Not a guideline, must be done.
Individual unauthorised/explained lesson absences flagged	**Tutor/Form Teacher** to speak with student about whereabouts and reasons for absences, offering support if required.	If truancy is identified refer to As Dir/Dir.
During first half term, absence slips below 90%, or below 95% for the remainder of the year	**Tutor/Form Teacher** to both talk to student when possible and call/email home to see if there are any issues that are impacting upon attendance that the school can support.	
During first half term, absence slips below 85%, or below 90% in the remainder of the year	**As Dir/Dir/AH** to contact parents and/or arrange a meeting with parent, student and **Tutor/Form Teacher** where possible, to discuss attendance concerns and identify issues that the school can support.	Attendance contract can be issued at this stage at the SS.
Attendance slips below 85%	**As Dir/Dir/AH** to meet with student and family**.** Attendance contract must be issued at the SS at this stage. Discussion of short-term changes to timetable can be had.	

Attendance slips below 80%	**As Dir/Dir/AH** requests a follow up meeting with family (and **Deputy Head** at SS) to offer support with attendance but potentially discuss referral to LA and long term future of studies at The Abbey.	
Attendance slips below 60% or ten consecutive days of unauthorised absence.	Referral to LA made, by **Deputy Head/AH**	
Unauthorised and unexplained (by parents) absence	Treated as a disciplinary issue by **As Dir/Director/AH**	See Behaviour and Discipline policy
Repeated unauthorised absence	Investigated by **As Dir/Director/AH** and dealt with as a serious disciplinary issue by the **Deputy Head/Head of JS**	See Behaviour and Discipline policy