

Church Crookham Junior School

Attendance Policy

Name of School	Church Crookham Junior School
Date of Issue	Autumn 2024

Introduction

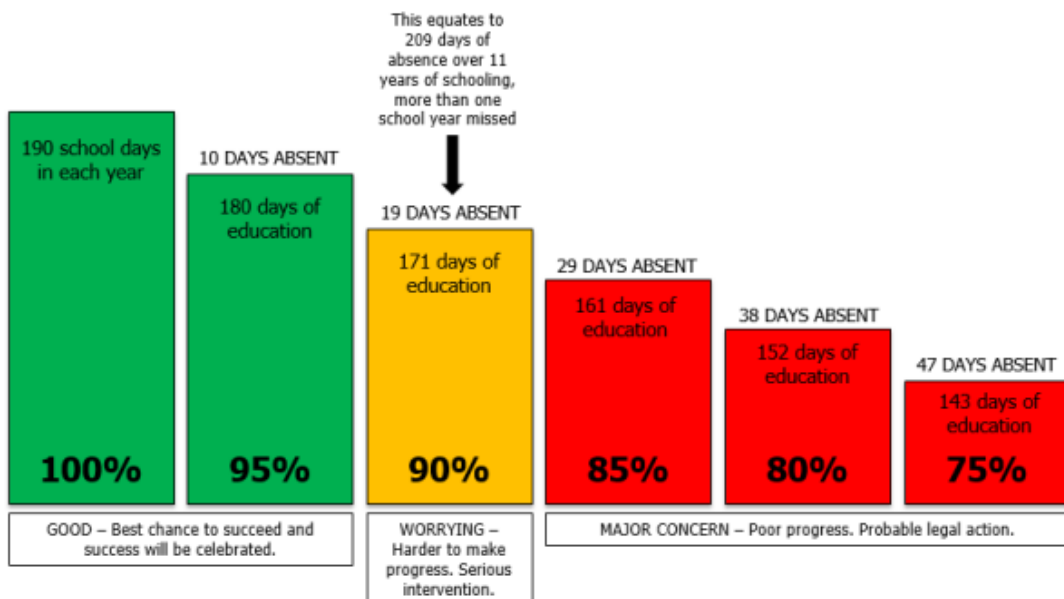
Our school is ambitious for our pupils “Achievement by All” lies at the heart of children doing well in all aspects of their learning and personal development. The five core values at our school of kindness, respect, imagining, resilience and reflection helps children to understand about themselves and others as learners and promotes high standards. If children are not in school they are not learning, developing skills in their learning and personal development and this ultimately affects their progress and their own wellbeing.

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education’s (DfE’s) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#), through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- 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 also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

95% as a minimum and above is an acceptable level for a child’s progress not to be adversely affected. A 90% attendance rate results in 19 days of lost education, with 29 days lost at 85% and with 80% equating to a half-term of learning missed. The graph below shows what all schools expect in terms of good attendance – 90% attendance is not good enough, it needs to be 95% and above.



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We ask parents/carers to think about the importance of good attendance (95%+) and encourage their child to attend every day unless they are clearly very unwell. We also ask parents/carers to refrain from taking their children out of school for holidays as these are not authorised. Equally, if pupils are in school they are safe and not in danger of being exploited by other members of the public.

It is important that we all work together to achieve good attendance and we strongly ask parents/carers to support us and support the procedures of good attendance that are outlined in this document.

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) 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 3 of the [Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment](#)

It also refers to:

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

Roles and Responsibilities	
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The governing body

The governing board is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, 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

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- 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
- Governors monitor pupil attendance through reports in the Curriculum Committee, where attendance for the whole school and groups of children is shared and discussed.

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 fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising to be able to do so
- Working with the parents of pupils who may have more complex issues related to attendance, such as those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) in order to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils, 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

The Designated Senior leaders Responsible for Attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data benchmarking to identify areas of focus for improvement

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- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Implementing strategies for working with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- Ensuring that any child who has a Social Worker (subject to Child Protection Plan, Child in Need Plan, are looked after or Section 17/47 investigations) who emerging pattern of attendance is likely to lead to persistent absenteeism to contact the Social Worker/CAST Team and cfmt@hants.gov.uk

Class Teachers

Teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis and engaging in training around attendance to help secure good attendance for all pupils.

Whilst this policy is about children physically being present in school, we recognize that school attendance is about children being engaged in their learning and school life.

Admin Team

The Admin Team will:

- Check registers and take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Check the codings for absence are accurate (see Appendix)
- Engage in training on attendance and

Parents/Carers

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/Carers are expected to:

- make sure their child attends everyday on time
- call the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence or report their absence via email to adminoffice@crookham-jun.hants.sch.uk
- 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
- seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance through school
- keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or local authority

Recording Attendance	
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We will keep an electronic attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

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We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second 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 an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
- 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 3.20pm.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.50am in each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.50am and will be kept open until 9am. The register for the second session will be taken at either 1.55pm or 1.20pm and will be kept open for ten minutes after the register has been taken.

Unplanned Absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence or as soon as practically possible by calling or emailing the school office.

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

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide 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.

Planned Absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary. The pupil's parent/carer must

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also apply for types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. An absence request form must be completed for ahead of a pupil not attending school. These can be found on the school website.

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

Lateness is monitored by checking the attendance registers.

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/carer 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 will also email the contacts asking for contact to be made. If there is no response, then a home visit will be undertaken. If there is no response then a decision may be made to contact the police and/or Children's Services
- 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 should be no later than 5 working days after the session
- Where appropriate support would be offered to the pupil and parent to help improve attendance and if any other support is needed from other agencies, then necessary referrals would also be made
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving Hampshire Legal Intervention Team or may issue a notice to improve, penalty notice as appropriate.

Reporting to Parents/Carers

The school will inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels through the annual report to parents. Parents can access their child's attendance on the parent app from Arbor.

Authorised and Unauthorised Absence	
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Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will allow pupils to be absent during term time for certain educational activities or to attend other school settings.

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](#).

A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for. The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as situations where are rare and likely to have a leave of absence which has not been issued/requested in previous years for this pupil. These could include, but are not limited to:

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- close family bereavement or funeral
- wedding of a close family member
- religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision
- Absence to spend time with family if there is a parent who is a serving member of the military and has been deployed/likely to be deployed
- Attending entrance exams to schools or visits to future schools
- medical appointments or hospital stays that cannot be scheduled outside of school hours (please note that proof medical appointments will be requested and that standard appointments, such as for a normal eye check up at the opticians, will not qualify as a medical appointment)

Other significant family events or emergencies will be approved where the headteacher deems the request to be exceptional.

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

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. In some cases, it may be appropriate to review an application with the Designated Safeguarding Leads or with the Local Authority, especially for more complex or borderline cases, to ensure fair and equitable decision-making.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at two weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school website. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

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

- Illness and medical/dental appointments
- religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision
- absence to spend time with family if there is a parent who is a serving member of the military and has been deployed/likely to be deployed
- if the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

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- 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
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as the school premises being closed due to an emergency

Legal Sanctions

Our school will make use of the full range of 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.

Penalty Notices

The headteacher (or someone authorised by them), local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

If the school issues a penalty notice, it will check with the local authority before doing so, and send it a copy of any penalty notice issued.

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)
- 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.

Notices 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.

Notices 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.

They 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 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

Strategies for Promoting Attendance	
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At our school we promote a positive, safe welcoming environment where students feel supported and eager to attend and we pride ourselves on our positive relationships between pupils and staff. We encourage pupils to engage in school life through extracurricular activities, clubs, and events that make them feel connected to the school community. We also promote our school values of kindness, respect, imagination, resilience and reflections and have a strong curriculum and a range of additional interventions (see our SEND Information Report). Strategies for supporting pupils These all help to engage our pupils so they feel safe and comfortable attending school.

As a school, we continue to review how to strengthen our school culture by regularly reinforcing our school values and ensuring enrichment opportunities are high on our agenda for all pupils.

At school we monitor pupil attendance and look to engage pupils and parents as attendance reaches 90% or less and look to see what further support maybe needed to help the pupil attend school more frequently. These will be taken on a case by case basis.

We review the impact of our attendance strategies and make adjustments, as necessary.

Supporting Pupils who are Absent or Returning to School	
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In rare cases, some pupils may have had a sustained period of absence due to either:

- having complex barriers to attendance
- being absent due to the pupil having mental or physical health of SEND needs
- being absence after a lengthy or unavoidable periods of absence

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Often these situations require a bespoke approach and may require reasonable adjustments, additional support and regular review meetings with the parent/carer and, in some cases, other agencies. The school has strong partnerships with the local authority, health services and other agencies to ensure coordinated support is in place. It is essential to involve the pupils and families in the design and review of personalised support plans, including any reasonable adjustments, to ensure they are meaningful and effective.

Where a pupil has an education health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that related to the pupil's needs, the school may inform the local authority.

Throughout all stages of supporting any pupil whose attendance needs to improve, all procedures, meetings and communication is documented by the school. Some of this will include notes in Arbor, other records will be kept in CPOMs.

Monitoring Attendance	
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At our school we will:

- 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

Our school will also 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 body through curriculum committee meetings.

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

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- 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 above)

Equalities	
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This policy is applied fairly and consistently, considering the individual needs of pupils and their families who have specific barriers to attendance.

Links with other Policies/Documents	
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This policy links to the following policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policies
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy and Information Report
- <https://www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/behaviour-attendance-parents>

Appendix: Attendance Codes	
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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
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		

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Code	Definition	Scenario
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
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

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Code	Definition	Scenario
		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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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