Attendance Policy

Policy Information	
Policy Owner	Headteachers
Issue Version	V2
Approving Committee	Education, Safeguarding and Wellbeing Committee
Adopted Date	December 2023
Review Cycle	Bi-Annual
Last Review Date	October 2023
Next Review Date	July 2025

Adoption of the Policy

This Policy has been adopted and reviewed by the Trustees of Transforming Futures Trust

Signed: **Date: 19.12.23**

Version Control Amendments

Version No	Date	Summary of Changes
2	October 2023	Minor Updates

1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

    a. Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence.

    b. Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled.

    c. Acting early to address patterns of absence.

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

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of [Working together to improve school attendance (publishing.service.gov.uk)](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

    a. Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)

    b. Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)

    c. Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)

    d. [The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006](#) (and [2010](#), [2011](#), [2013](#), [2016](#) amendments)

    e. [The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013](#)

    f. This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

    g. This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on: [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](#)

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The Education, Safeguarding and Wellbeing Committee

The Education, Safeguarding and Wellbeing Committee is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the Trust at least on a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

3.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

    a. Implementation of this policy at the school.

    b. Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to Trustees.

    c. Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils.

    d. Referring any persistent absence to the Education Welfare Officer.

3.3 Attendance Monitoring in Schools

The school:

a. Monitors attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level.

b. Reports concerns about attendance to the headteacher.

c. Works with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence.

d. Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues.

e. Makes referrals to other agencies for support with mental health or other issues which may be having a negative impact on a pupil's attendance.

3.4 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance using the Trust MIS System, which includes lesson as well as AM/PM marks.

3.5 Administrators

Administrators are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the Trust MIS system.

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register and place all pupils onto this register.

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 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 keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

The electronic register is to be completed at the start of each morning session and once during each afternoon session. These are the AM and PM marks.

4.2   Unplanned absence

Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence before the school day starts or as soon as practically possible and should also phone before the school day starts on each day of any subsequent days.

Absence due to illness will be 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 parents 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 and parents will be notified of this in advance.

If the child has previously been issued a medical evidence notice letter due to concerns about poor attendance, then all absences will be recorded as unauthorised unless medical evidence is supplied.

4.3   Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences. However, we encourage parents 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.

Please notify the school about any planned absences for appointments by telephoning the school and send in a copy of the appointment card/letter at your earliest convenience.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance.

4.4   Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code. A pupil who arrives after the register has closed will either be marked as late or absence dependent upon the circumstances following investigation.

If school transport is responsible for a child's lateness then this will be taken into account. If there is a repeated concern then the school will take this up with the relevant transport officer.

4.5   Following up absence

The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

4.6   Reporting to parents

The school will report the percentage attendance of children. The specific method for this reporting may be different in each school. A full attendance breakdown report is available to parents at any time upon request.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to pupils during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

a. Illness and medical/dental appointments

b. 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.

c. 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.

d. Death of a close family member.

The school does not consider the following as valid reasons for authorised absence:

a. Lack of transport to school, for example if your child has been excluded from school transport or if they have missed the bus/taxi.
b. Truancy.
c. Staying home because another family member is sick.
d. Holidays/days out.

5.3 Legal sanctions

The local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance.

Each Academy within the Trust has implemented different strategies for promoting attendance that is suitable for their setting. The Headteacher is responsible for deciding and implementing these strategies.

7. Attendance monitoring

There are different methods for attendance monitoring in each school, in accordance with the type of settings.

All absence is monitored and the schools work with parents and the Education Welfare Officer to understand and discuss the reasons and provide support.

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

Appendix 1: Attendance Codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school

W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no

		reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day