Trust Attendance Policy

The Bridge School

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Approved by:	Education Committee
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Policy Information:

Date of last review	New policy	Review period	Annually
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Policy owner	Trust Safeguarding & Attendance Lead	Date of next review	October 2027

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Introduction & Ethos

Forward Education Trust is committed to making school attendance a whole-school priority, fully integrated with every aspect of school improvement rather than treated as a stand-alone administrative task. We use an Inclusive Attendance model to support children and families to connect, belong and thrive — built on child-centred action, evidence-informed practice, and a shared understanding of everyone's role in promoting excellent attendance.

Attendance concerns will be explored through a holistic assessment of need and not solely through attendance percentages. The Trust recognises that attendance barriers can arise from a range of factors, including medical, developmental, sensory, communication, emotional, practical and environmental needs. These will be considered when planning support to improve attendance and engagement.

Attendance cannot be considered in isolation. The Department for Education's statutory guidance connects effective attendance practice directly with curriculum, behaviour, bullying, SEND support, pastoral provision, mental health and wellbeing, safeguarding, disadvantage and the effective use of resources including pupil premium. This policy is written on that basis: attendance is treated as an output of the whole school system, not a separate compliance exercise.

Our attendance strategy reflects the DfE's attendance framework:

- Expect attendance
- Monitor attendance
- Listen to and understand barriers
- Facilitate support
- Formalise support where required
- Enforce only where support has been exhausted or is not engaged with

The Inclusive Attendance Model

Our attendance work sits across six connected domains of practice. Rather than a stand-alone attendance procedure, these domains ensure the provision of professional learning, evidence-based practice, and exemplary leadership and management are integrated into everything we do.

Equity, equality, inclusion	**Understanding attendance barriers**	**A systems approach**
Mental health & resilience	**Curriculum & teaching**	**Identify specialist pathway**

Statutory Context

This policy meets the requirements of Working Together to Improve School Attendance (July 2026), the Department for Education's statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and Local Authorities. It should be read alongside statutory guidance on children missing education, pupils with medical conditions, children unable to attend because of health needs, suspension and permanent exclusion, alternative provision, and Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Our approach: from universal provision to legal intervention

Rather than building this policy primarily around percentages, letters and sanctions, we structure our attendance work as a graduated, multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) — right support, right time, for every child and young person.

A Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) is an educational framework that offers a structured approach to addressing children's diverse needs. It involves delivering interventions and support in a tiered manner, with each tier representing a different level of intensity and targeted assistance. The diagram below sets out the model at a glance; the table that follow set out how we put it into practice day to day.

INCLUSIVE ATTENDANCE: A MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORT

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

	TIER 1 UNIVERSAL SUPPORT	TIER 2 TARGETED SUPPORT	TIER 3 SPECIALIST SUPPORT
WHO?	All children and young people	Children and young people at risk of poor attendance (PA)	Children and young people with persistent absence (PA) or severe absence (SA)
FOCUS	**Prevention** Build positive attendance and strong foundations	**Early intervention** Reduce risk factors and prevent escalation	**Intensive support** Address complex needs and remove multiple barriers
APPROACH	**Whole school approach** High-quality teaching, inclusive environment and strong relationships	**Targeted and individualised** Identify barriers and provide early support	**Individualised & multi-agency** Specialist support and personalised pathways
EXAMPLES	**Examples** • Positive attendance culture • Belonging and inclusion • Family and community engagement • Attendance monitoring • Early identification of concerns	**Examples** • Attendance plans • Mentoring and coaching • Parental meetings • Targeted pastoral support • Small group interventions	**Examples** • Multi-agency working • Personalised timetables • Therapeutic and wellbeing support • Alternative provision • Specialist interventions
GOAL	**Goal** Prevent absence and promote attendance for all	**Goal** Reduce risk, improve attendance and strengthen engagement	**Goal** Re-engage and reintegrate for sustainable attendance and outcomes

PROMOTE	SUPPORT	SPECIALIST

WORKING TOGETHER · EARLY HELP · THE RIGHT SUPPORT AT THE RIGHT TIME

Role of teaching and non-teaching staff	Role of children and young people	Role of parents and carers	Role of external agencies (and trust, where applicable)
• Use data proactively • Identify children and young people at risk	• Participate in targeted interventions	• Work with school • Understand and share attendance barriers • Engage with support	• Provide timely support • Share resources widely

• Work with families • Implement daily strategies • Monitor pupil progress • Recognise achievements regularly	• Recognise own achievements • Share worries with staff • Stay engaged in school • Help and support others • Understand missed days	• Prevent escalation • Communicate with school	• Collaborate with schools • Strengthen multi-agency efforts • Train staff effectively • Support and challenge the school

FOUNDATIONS ACROSS ALL TIERS				
STRONG RELATIONSHIPS Trust, connection and understanding	**BELONGING** Every child feels seen and valued	**LIFE SATISFACTION** Wellbeing, hope and aspirations	**RISK & PROTECTIVE FACTORS** Understand and respond to individual needs	**ATTENDANCE DATA** Use data to inform actions and decisions

EVERY CHILD · EVERY DAY · EVERY OPPORTUNITY

From three tiers to five practical stages

In day-to-day case management, universal, targeted and specialist support are worked through in five connected stages — adding an explicit identification-and-understanding-barriers stage between universal and targeted support and separating legal intervention out as the last-resort stage it is, used only once every reasonable step above it has been tried.

STAGE 1 Universal Provision – All pupils, every day

- High-quality, inclusive teaching and a curriculum that engages every learner
- A culture of belonging, strong relationships and consistent, positive behaviour management
- Accurate, consistent registration and whole-school attendance monitoring
- Clear communication with families about expectations and support available

STAGE 2 Identification & Understanding Barriers – Spotting concerns early and asking why

- Regular analysis of attendance data at whole-school, group and individual level
- Priority cohorts identified: SEND, disadvantaged, young carers, children with a social worker, previously looked after
- Understanding the specific barrier behind the absence, not just the percentage
- Early, non-judgemental conversations with pupils and families

STAGE 3 Early & Targeted Support – Pupils at risk of persistent absence

- Individual attendance support plans, agreed with the family
- Mentoring, pastoral check-ins and small-group interventions
- Reasonable adjustments for SEND, medical need or other identified barriers
- Regular review with the family of what is working

STAGE 4 Intensive & Multi-Agency Support – Persistent or severe absence

- Multi-agency planning — Local Authority, social care, health and other partners as needed
- Personalised, evidence-informed plans addressing complex or multiple barriers
- Attendance contracts as a supportive, non-punitive route where engagement has stalled
- Considered as part of a reintegration or re-engagement plan, not a stand-alone response

STAGE 5 Legal Intervention – Only where all reasonable support has been tried

- Education Supervision Order considered only once voluntary support has been exhausted
- Penalty notices issued in line with the national framework and Local Authority code of conduct
- Prosecution as a last resort, following the Local Authority's statutory process
- Legal routes never replace, and are never used instead of, addressing the underlying barrier

Promoting & Recognising Good Attendance

Good and regular attendance is promoted through everyday culture and belonging, not primarily through prizes or sanctions. The approach of the Trust is focused on recognition being positive, consistent and inclusive of pupils facing additional barriers, so that no pupil is disadvantaged by circumstances outside their control.

- Attendance is talked about positively and often, by teaching and non-teaching staff alike, as part of everyday relationships rather than only at data points.
- Individual, class and whole-school achievements are recognised regularly — including meaningful improvement from a pupil's own starting point, not only high overall percentages.
- Recognition avoids approaches that could stigmatise, single out or financially disadvantage pupils with a legitimate reason for absence, such as a disability, medical condition or caring responsibility.
- Pupils and families are told clearly why attendance matters for learning, wellbeing and life chances — not only that it is a rule to be followed.
- Parents, carers and — where the school is part of a multi-academy trust — the trust are kept informed of how the school promotes attendance, alongside its data and its support offer.

For details of our recognition and reward approach to attendance, please see Appendix 3.

Roles & Responsibilities

Ensuring good attendance is the responsibility of everyone within the school community. The table below provides an overview of responsibilities:

Who	Key responsibilities for attendance
Parents and carers	• Are expected to establish a daily routine that supports regular, punctual attendance. • Ensure their child attends regularly and arrives on time, in line with school registration requirements. • To communicate promptly with the school about absence and notify the school on the first day of absence and provide the reason. • Request leave of absence in advance and understand that term-time leave is only granted in exceptional circumstances. • Work with the school to understand and address any barrier to attendance. • To engage with meetings and support offered.

	• To understand that term-time leave of absence is granted only in exceptional circumstances, assessed individually.
Pupils	• Attend school regularly and arrive on time, so far as is reasonably within their control. • Are supported to understand the value of attending school regularly and on time. • Are encouraged and supported to communicate difficulties to a trusted adult. • Are encouraged and supported to engage with the support that is put in place for them. • Are supported to understand that where a barrier to attendance exists, it is the adults around them who hold primary responsibility for removing it.
Class teachers teaching assistants, learning mentors, pastoral staff, office and administrative staff, lunch supervisors and site staff	• Take an accurate register at the same time for all pupils, every session (Classroom lead). • Know their pupils well enough to notice a change in attendance early (Staff in regular contact with pupils). • Report concerns promptly to the Attendance Champion or designated safeguarding lead. • Apply reasonable adjustments for pupils with SEND, medical needs or other identified barriers (Staff in regular contact with pupils. • Monitor daily attendance, promote punctuality, and take immediate action (Staff in regular contact with pupils. • Identify early patterns of poor attendance or lateness (Staff in regular contact with pupils. • Maintain open communication with families and provide the academic and emotional support that helps a pupil overcome a barrier to attending (Staff in regular contact with pupils. • Are alert to safeguarding concerns connected to attendance and know how to report them.
Senior Attendance Champion / senior leaders	• Lead by example, the day-to-day implementation of this policy, and support staff to implement the whole-school attendance strategy. • Analyse attendance data regularly, by cohort and by individual pupil, and target support accordingly to identify trends and those requiring early intervention and support. • Ensure staff receive the training they need, and that safeguarding and attendance systems are properly connected. • Ensure staff receive appropriate professional development and give particular attention to vulnerable pupils — including those with medical conditions, SEND, those using specialist transport, awaiting placement review or safeguarding concerns. • Report to senior leaders, the Trust Safeguarding & Attendance lead and the local authority on attendance, impact and priority cohorts. • Set the tone for the school's attendance culture. • Apply this policy consistently and fairly, and work with the designated safeguarding lead where attendance concerns raise child protection issues.

	• Ensure legal compliance and are vigilant for safeguarding concerns connected to attendance. • Ensure there are regular meetings to explore attendance data and safeguarding concerns.
Designated Safeguarding Lead	• Ensure unexplained or extended absence is treated as a possible safeguarding signal, not only a data point. • Lead escalation to children's social care, the Local Authority or other agencies where required. • Work with the Attendance team so that safeguarding and attendance information is shared without delay.
SENCO	• Ensure attendance barriers linked to SEND are understood and addressed through the graduated response. • Advise on reasonable adjustments to attendance strategies for individual pupils. • Work with families and external professionals to remove barriers rather than manage their consequences. • To have an overview of interventions appropriate for pupils needs.
Trust Board	• Scrutinise attendance culture, practice and procedures as a strategic priority, offering rigorous challenge and oversight in line with national statutory guidelines and government targets • Ensure staff receive adequate attendance-related training and share effective practice with other schools.
Local Authority	• Provide strategic leadership and support to schools in improving attendance. • Lead statutory functions including Children Missing Education, School Attendance Orders and penalty notices. • Work with schools and partners to identify and support pupils and families who need it most.

Safeguarding & Attendance

The principle - Unexplained or extended absence is one of the clearest safeguarding signals a school receives. It is treated as a possible safeguarding concern first, and an attendance statistic second.

This connection runs through the whole of this policy, not only this section. Staff at every level are expected to understand the relationship between attendance and:

- Unexplained or repeated absence, and children missing education.
- Vulnerability, exploitation, neglect and domestic abuse.
- Contextual safeguarding — risks pupils may face outside the school gates.
- Children with a social worker, on a child protection plan, or previously looked after.
- Share information with the attendance and safeguarding team, without delay.
- Ensure the same-day follow-up on unexplained absence, and clear escalation routes.

This policy operates in line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education*, which applies the same core safeguarding expectations to all staff, and the Department for Education's guidance on attendance

responsibilities, recognising the close relationship between attendance, wellbeing and safeguarding.

At Forward Education Trust , the Trust's Attendance Safeguarding Protocols are applied to pupils with social care involvement and to those for whom safeguarding concerns have been identified - *See Appendix 5: FET Attendance Safeguarding Protocols*.

SEND & Inclusion

For many pupils with special educational needs and disabilities, poor attendance is not a behaviour or motivation issue — it is a sign that a need is not being met. This policy requires reasonable adjustments, not punitive responses, wherever absence relates to unmet need.

- Attendance barriers relating to SEND are addressed through the graduated response — assess, plan, do, review.
- The SENCo is involved wherever a pupil's SEND may be contributing to their absence.
- Attendance is explicitly addressed within EHC plans and support plans, so families understand what is available.
- Reasonable adjustments are reviewed regularly, not fixed once and left unchanged.
- Where absence may be linked to SEND, disability, anxiety, medical needs or unmet need, the school will ensure robust assessment, reasonable adjustments and evidence of support are in place before considering formal attendance measures. Any statutory action will take account of the school's duties under the Equality Act 2010 and SEND Code of Practice.

Disadvantage and pupil premium

Disadvantage funding is only as effective as the gap it closes. Where disadvantage is linked to an attendance barrier, that link is made explicit — from identified barrier to evidence-informed activity, to the school's published pupil premium strategy, to measured impact.

Our pupil premium strategy statement, published annually, sets out how pupil premium funding is used to support attendance for disadvantaged pupils. It is available on each school's website.

Young carers

Young carers are identified explicitly, rather than absorbed into a general category of "vulnerable pupils". Staff are alert to the specific pressures young carers face, and attendance support is shaped around their caring responsibilities rather than assuming non-attendance reflects a lack of engagement.

This sits alongside our approach to other cohorts known to be at greater risk of poor attendance: children in need, children on a child protection plan, looked-after children, and care leavers — reflecting the Department for Education's non-statutory guidance on improving the attendance of children with a social worker.

Medical conditions and health needs

Pupils with medical conditions are supported through individual healthcare plans, reasonable support, and clear communication with health professionals — so that a medical condition does not, in itself, become an unnecessary barrier to attendance.

Where a pupil is unable to attend school because of health needs and absence reaches, or is expected to reach, 15 school days — whether consecutive or cumulative — the school works with the Local Authority to arrange suitable alternative education under section 19 of the Education Act 1996, with a clear plan for reintegration. However, the school will not wait for 15 days to begin planning support where absence is expected to reach this threshold.

Mental health and wellbeing

Mental health difficulties do not mean attendance stops being important — but the response to them must be individualised, supportive and appropriately adjusted, never a standard sanction applied regardless of cause. Staff are trained to recognise early signs of anxiety, emotionally based school avoidance, low mood or other difficulty that may affect attendance, and to work with pupils, families and, where needed, external agencies.

Behaviour and culture

Behaviour and attendance are closely linked: a pupil who does not feel safe, or does not feel they belong, is far less likely to want to attend. Our Behaviour and Relationships Policy and this attendance policy are designed to work together — building a culture of clear expectations, strong relationships, effective SEND support, and safe environments, and avoiding any practice that unintentionally pushes a vulnerable pupil away from school.

Curriculum, teaching and RSHE

Attendance is not only secured at the school gate — it is won or lost lesson by lesson. An engaging, accessible curriculum, high-quality adaptive teaching, and strong teacher-pupil relationships are treated as universal attendance provision, not an optional extra. This reflects the Teachers' Standards, and the Inclusive Mainstream Fund's requirement for high-quality adaptive teaching with a curriculum designed for all learners.

From September 2026, our Relationships, Sex and Health Education provision, including Health Education, contributes to the preventative side of attendance — building the health literacy, relationships and sense of wellbeing that underpin a pupil's sense of belonging in school.

Home-to-school travel

Transport is recognised as a genuine potential barrier to attendance, not assumed to reflect parental unwillingness. This is particularly relevant for pupils with SEND, those living furthest from school, families on a low income, pupils with mobility needs, and those attending specialist provision. Any transport-related barrier identified is addressed alongside the Local Authority's home-to-school travel duties.

Using data to target improvement

Attendance data is analysed regularly at whole-school, year-group, demographic and individual pupil level, benchmarked against national and Local Authority comparators. Particular attention is given to:

- Pupils with SEND, and those eligible for free school meals or pupil premium.
- Year groups of concern.
- Looked-after children, previously looked-after children and care leavers.
- Pupils with an allocated social worker or known to children's social care.
- Young carers.

- Pupils absent for prolonged or repeated periods, which may indicate a safeguarding concern such as child sexual or criminal exploitation, particularly county lines.
- Pupils at risk of persistent or severe absence.

How we use data: a targeted approach
Using attendance data effectively starts with building a holistic understanding of pupils and families — not simply monitoring a percentage. Our approach follows five connected steps:

1. Build a culture of community and belonging.
2. Communicate effectively with families.
3. Improve universal provision for all pupils.
4. Deliver targeted interventions.
5. Monitor the impact of approaches.

Understanding risk of persistent absence
The two reference tables below help staff translate raw absence figures into an early, consistent view of risk — used alongside professional judgement and the additional factors known about each pupil, never as a mechanical trigger on its own.

Table 1: days absent and risk of persistent absence (PA)

Days absent (cumulative)	Risk of PA level	Additional factors
1 – 4 days	Low (Risk of PA)	ADDITIONAL FACTORS Risk and protective factors, patterns in previous absence, SEND or free-school-meals demographic, and external agency involvement all inform how this risk level is used.
5 – 9 days	Emerging (Risk of PA)	
10 – 14 days	Moderate (Risk of PA)	
15 – 18 days	High (Risk of PA)	
19+ days	Locked into PA	

Table 2: spells of absence and risk of persistent absence (PA)

Number of spells of absence	Risk of PA level
1	Low (Risk of PA)
2	Low (Risk of PA)
3	Moderate (Risk of PA)
4	Moderate (Risk of PA)
5	High (Risk of PA)
6 or above	High (Risk of PA)

Persistent and severe absence — definitions
A pupil is considered persistently absent (PA) when their attendance rate is 90% or below — that is, they have missed 10% or more of possible school sessions. A pupil is considered severely absent (SA) when they are absent from school more than they are present, missing 50% or more of possible sessions. Severely absent pupils are likely to need the most intensive, multi-agency support.

Leave of absence, illness and remote education
- Leave of absence - Requests for leave of absence must be made in writing at least 10 school days in advance. Term-time leave is only authorised in exceptional circumstances,

and every request is considered individually on its own facts — this school does not operate a blanket or automatic policy for any category of request, in line with the July 2026 Working Together guidance.

- Illness absence - Where a pupil is absent due to illness, the school does not request medical evidence as a matter of routine. Evidence may be requested where it is reasonable and appropriate to do so — for example, where a pattern of illness absence is of concern, or where evidence would support a wider plan of support.

- Remote education - Remote education is not treated as an equal alternative to attendance. It is used only as a last resort, once it is clear a pupil cannot attend school, and — where used for an individual pupil — it forms part of a reintegration plan that is reviewed regularly. A pupil receiving remote education because they are absent is still recorded as absent.

Authorised Absence
Authorised absences may include illness, medical or dental appointments that cannot be arranged outside school hours, recognised religious or cultural observances, and exceptional family emergencies, where appropriate authorisation has been granted by the school.

Unauthorised Absence
Unauthorised absences may include absences where no satisfactory explanation has been provided, arrival after the register has closed, absences for shopping, caring for siblings, birthdays or other non-essential activities, and term-time holidays or day trips that have not been authorised by the school.

Support Before Sanction
Legal routes are used only where genuine, sustained support has not resolved a pattern of absence — never as a first response. Response to patterns of absence may include:

- Attendance contract or support plan — Contract - a formal, voluntary agreement between parents and the school or Local Authority, offering support as an alternative to prosecution. Support plan — a structured plan developed with the pupil and family to include their voice, identify barriers to attendance, explores protective factors, set clear agreed actions, and outline the support, and monitoring arrangements needed to improve attendance and sustain engagement in education.
- Notice to Improve — a formal written notice, issued before any penalty notice, giving the family a set period in which to improve attendance with continued support.
- Education Supervision Order (ESO) — considered only once voluntary support and attendance contracts have been exhausted, and only where it would benefit the pupil and parent.
- Penalty notices — issued in line with the national framework for penalty notices and the Local Authority's code of conduct, and only where a Notice to Improve has not resulted in the necessary improvement.
- Parenting Order — may be sought by the Local Authority where parental engagement with support has not improved a pattern of absence.
- Prosecution — a last resort, led by the Local Authority, for failure to secure regular attendance or comply with a School Attendance Order or Education Supervision Order.

Children missing education and removal from roll

Persistent or unexplained absence can, in some circumstances, lead to a child being identified as missing education. This school follows the strengthened Children Missing Education statutory guidance (September 2025) and works with the Local Authority to track and support any pupil who may be missing education, before any consideration of removal from roll.

- Child missing education

1. School undertakes reasonable enquiries to locate the child and family. This may include telephone calls, emails, letters, home visits, checking contacts, and liaising with other professionals.
2. If the child's whereabouts remain unknown, the school submits a CME referral to the Children Missing Education Service using the Local Authority referral form. Referrals should be sent securely via email.
3. The CME team carries out further checks and investigations, working with other agencies and local authorities where appropriate to establish the child's location and educational provision.
4. Schools must not remove a pupil from roll until the appropriate CME process has been followed and advice has been obtained from the CME team.
5. If the child is located, arrangements are made to ensure they are receiving suitable education, whether through a new school placement or another lawful form of education.

- Unlawful Practice

Informal or unofficial exclusion — removing a pupil from roll or asking a family to keep a pupil at home, outside of the formal, recorded process — is unlawful and is never used by this school.

- Removal from roll procedures

Before removing a pupil from roll, schools must complete reasonable enquiries to establish the child's whereabouts, make a referral to the Local Authorities CME Service where appropriate, and ensure all statutory requirements for deletion from the admission register have been met.

1. Undertake reasonable enquiries to locate the child and family, including calls, emails, letters, emergency contacts, home visits, and liaison with other agencies.
2. Make a referral to the Children Missing Education (CME) Service if the child's whereabouts remain unknown. The referral should be sent securely to cme@birmingham.gov.uk.
3. Do not remove the pupil from roll before consulting the CME team and completing the appropriate statutory process. Schools are specifically advised to contact CME before deletion from the register.
4. Once the legal grounds for deletion under the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 have been met and the necessary enquiries completed, the school can remove the pupil from roll and notify the local authority as required.

- Elective Home Education

Where a parent elects to home educate a child with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), the school must notify the Local Authority and follow local procedures. Pupils attending a special school must not be removed from roll until Local Authority consent has been obtained. The EHCP remains in place and continues to be maintained and reviewed by the Local Authority.

1. The parent submits a request for Elective Home Education (EHE).
2. The school meets with the parent/carer to discuss the EHE process, expectations, and available support.
3. The school considers any safeguarding concerns, attendance issues, or welfare considerations.
4. The school notifies the Local Authority and relevant SEND/EHCP teams.
5. For pupils attending a special school, the Local Authority must consider the request and provide consent before the pupil can be removed from roll.
6. The pupil must remain on roll until Local Authority consent has been received and the school has been advised that removal from roll can proceed.
7. The EHCP remains in force and continues to be maintained and reviewed by the Local Authority.

Alternative provision

Where a pupil attends alternative provision, the commissioning school retains responsibility for monitoring attendance, safeguarding and quality, and for planning reintegration. Dual registration is used and monitored appropriately.

Following the July 2026 update to statutory guidance on suspension and permanent exclusion, alternative provision is arranged within six school days of a suspension, using the correct attendance code, with attendance monitored closely on a pupil's return and a clear reintegration plan in place. Off rolling is not practised by this school.

Governance

Working Together to Improve School Attendance sets out a specific chapter for governing Trust Boards where a school is part of a multi-academy trust. Forward Education's Trust Board, is expected to:

- Recognise attendance as a strategic priority, promoted through ethos and policy, not only through this document.
- Ensure senior leaders fulfil their statutory attendance responsibilities.
- Regularly review and challenge attendance data, with particular attention to priority cohorts and persistent or severe absence.
- Ensure Governors and staff receive adequate attendance training.
- Share effective attendance practice with other schools, as part of wider system leadership.

Professional development for all staff

The Trust Board and senior leaders assure themselves that staff receive adequate attendance training, in line with statutory expectations and Ofsted's evidence base linking attendance to the Teachers' Standards and staff expertise. Development includes:

- Inclusive attendance accredited training delivered across the academic year.
- Induction training on this policy and on attendance codes for all new staff.
- Whole-staff development on the link between attendance, safeguarding, SEND and wellbeing.
- Role-specific development for the Attendance Champion and pastoral staff.

- Updates whenever national or local guidance changes.
- Sufficient expertise for staff undertaking targeted or intensive attendance work.

Linked policies and review

This policy should be read alongside:

- Behaviour and Relationship Policy
- Teaching and learning policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection policy
- SEND policy / information report
- Pupil premium strategy

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner where statutory guidance changes.

Legislative and statutory framework

This policy is underpinned by the following documents.

Document	Status	Relevance to this policy
Working Together to Improve School Attendance (July 2026)	*Statutory*	The core attendance framework for schools and Local Authorities.
School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024	*Law*	Registers, attendance codes, deletion from roll and dual registration.
Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)	*Statutory*	Safeguarding duties, including the link between absence and safeguarding.
Children Missing Education (September 2025)	*Statutory*	Identifying and responding to children missing education; removal from roll.
SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years	*Statutory guidance*	Reasonable adjustments, the graduated response and SENCo involvement.
Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions	*Statutory guidance*	Individual healthcare plans and medical absence.
Education for Children with Health Needs who Cannot Attend School	*Statutory guidance (LAs)*	Section 19 provision for long-term or recurring absence.
Suspension and Permanent Exclusion (July 2026)	*Statutory guidance*	Coding, sixth-day provision, reintegration and off-rolling.
Alternative Provision	*Statutory guidance*	Commissioning AP, dual registration, monitoring and safeguarding.
Home-to-School Travel (May 2026)	*Statutory guidance (LAs)*	Transport as a potential barrier to attendance.
Relationships, Sex and Health Education / Health Education (from September 2026)	*Statutory*	Preventative, curriculum-based contribution to wellbeing and belonging.

National Curriculum	*Statutory (maintained schools)*	Access, engagement and relevance of what is taught.
Teachers' Standards	*Statutory force*	Workforce responsibility for relationships, adaptive teaching and identifying concerns.
Inclusive Mainstream Fund 2026 to 2027 (incl. support for school leaders)	*Conditions of grant / guidance*	Belonging and attendance as one of seven principles of inclusive practice.
Pupil Premium 2026 to 2027	*Funding conditions / guidance*	Linking disadvantage, attendance barriers and the pupil premium strategy.
Improving the Attendance of Children with a Social Worker (March 2026)	*Non-statutory*	Children in need, child protection plans, looked-after children, care leavers and young carers.
Behaviour in Schools	*DfE guidance*	Culture, relationships, SEND and avoiding practices that push pupils away from school.
Providing Remote Education	*Non-statutory*	Remote education as a last resort, and as part of a reintegration plan.
Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools	*DfE guidance*	Whole-school culture, early identification and working with external agencies.

Appendix 1: School contact details

Key Contacts Detail	
Headteacher	Andrew Seager 0121 464 8265
Senior Attendance Champion	Sarah Fleming 01214648265
Designated Safeguarding Lead & Prevent Lead	Andrew Seager 0121 464 8265
Attendance Officer/Admin	Sarah Fleming 01214648265
SENCO	Sarah Fleming 01214648265
Pupil Premium Lead	Andrew Seager 0121 464 8265
Young Carers Lead	Sarah Fleming 01214648265
Mental Health Lead	Andrew Seager 0121 464 8265
LA Child Missing Education Team	Service Telephone: 0121 303 4983 Email: cme@birmingham.gov.uk
LA Elective Home Education	Telephone: 0121 464 7215 Email: home.education@birmingham.gov.uk
Family Help Team/Early Help Team/ Strengthening Families Team	Sutton Hub Network Our Place Support, Farthing Lane, Sutton Coldfield, B72 1RN Email: enquiries@ourplacesupport.org Phone: 0121 354 4080 Sutton Hub Network Holland House, Holland Road, Sutton Coldfield, B12 8NN Email: nharte@spurgeons.org Phone: 0121 752 1860
MASH/CASS	Children's Advice and Support Service (CASS) on 0121 303 1888
SENAR/Inclusion Team	SENAR: 0121 675 0345
SENDIASS	sendiass@birmingham.gov.uk 0121 303 5004

Appendix 2: The school day, expectations, procedures & communication

The school day
The school day begins at 9am and ends at 3:20.

Morning registration opens at 9am and closes at 9:25am Afternoon registration opens at 1:15pm and closes at 1:30pm.

Registers are taken consistently, at the same time for all pupils, in line with the July 2026 Working Together guidance. Pupils arriving after the register has closed are marked using the appropriate code - *see Appendix 1: Attendance codes*.

Pupils are expected to arrive in time to be registered before the session begins. A pupil arriving late but before the register closes is marked present using the late code; persistent lateness is followed up in the same way as unexplained absence, since lost learning time matters whether a pupil is absent or simply late.

Expectations, Absence Procedures & Communication

Attendance Expectations
Parents and carers must telephone the school office on 0121 464 8265 on the first day of absence, giving the reason and anticipated duration. ClassDojo must not be used to report absence or medical appointments.

Punctuality Expectations
Registers are completed by 9:25am. Pupils arriving after 9:25am but before 9:40am receive an L code. Pupils arriving from 9:40am receive a U code, unless another statutory code appropriately explains their absence. The actual arrival time and reason are recorded in Bromcom.

Daily Attendance Procedures
First-day contact: 9:40am–11:00am
A first-day absence text is sent to parents and carers where no reason has been received. Staff telephone families between 9:40am and 11:00am, using the agreed script and alternative contact numbers where necessary.

Where an explanation is received, staff update the register using the appropriate statutory code and record the reason in the Daily Absence Log. Relevant supporting information is uploaded to CPOMS and the pupil's file.

Further enquiries: 11:00am–1:00pm
Where absence remains unexplained, staff make further calls, try emergency contacts and leave a voicemail where possible. All contact attempts, times and outcomes are recorded in Bromcom and the Daily Absence Log on CPOMS.

Unsuccessful contact is referred to the School Attendance Officer or Senior Attendance Champion for further enquiries and risk assessment. The DSL is consulted without delay where there are safeguarding concerns or vulnerabilities.

End-of-day escalation
If the reason remains unknown, the case is passed to the Attendance Officer for continued follow-up. The DSL considers whether a welfare check or other safeguarding action is required. Actions and decisions are recorded on CPOMS, with next steps agreed according to the pupil's circumstances.

Safeguarding action is taken immediately where concerns arise; staff do not wait until a scheduled contact time or a particular day of absence. Pupils with safeguarding plans, social care involvement, significant medical needs, communication difficulties or other vulnerabilities are prioritised.

Transport-related absence is investigated with the family, provider and local authority as appropriate. The statutory attendance code is selected according to the circumstances; code Y1 is used only where its conditions are met.

Third day of absence
On the third consecutive day of absence, the school will make a formal telephone call to the parent or carer to discuss the reason for continued absence, confirm the pupil's wellbeing, identify any support needed and establish an anticipated return date.

Fifth day of absence
On the fifth consecutive day of absence, the school will undertake a home visit or, where appropriate, a virtual welfare call to check the pupil's wellbeing, review barriers to attendance and agree next steps with the family. The approach will take account of the pupil's needs, individual circumstances and any safeguarding concerns.

All contact, outcomes and agreed actions will be recorded. Safeguarding concerns will be acted upon immediately; staff will not wait until the third or fifth day to escalate concerns.

Providing Attendance Information to Parents and Carers
The school shares attendance and punctuality information, expectations and practical advice universally through newsletters and ClassDojo.

As pupils move through the tiers of attendance support, communication becomes increasingly personalised. This includes telephone calls, individual letters, meetings and, where appropriate, home visits or virtual calls. Parents and carers are kept informed of their child's attendance, emerging concerns, agreed support and progress towards individual attendance goals.

Local, up-to-date detail on penalty notice thresholds and amounts are:

The school follows Birmingham City Council's Education Penalty Notice Code of Conduct. A penalty notice is considered when a pupil of compulsory school age has 10 sessions (usually five days) of

unauthorised absence within a rolling 10-school-week period. This includes unauthorised holidays and lateness recorded as code U. Each case is considered individually.
Penalties apply per parent, per child:

- First notice: £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.
- Second notice within three years: £160, payable within 28 days.
- Further offences within that three-year period: alternative legal action, including prosecution, may be considered.

Failure to pay within 28 days may lead to prosecution. The school takes a support-first approach where appropriate, considering individual circumstances and barriers to attendance.

Birmingham's Code of Conduct:
https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/downloads/file/29495/bcc_education_penalty_notice_code_of_conduct_september_2024

Appendix 3: Recognition and reward approach

The Bridge School celebrates attendance through an inclusive approach that recognises individual circumstances, effort and improvement, alongside high attendance. Rewards are not limited to pupils achieving 100% attendance.

Recognition includes:

- Half-termly attendance certificates.
- Termly prizes and an annual special celebration event.
- Class-level recognition through ClassDojo.
- A whole-school attendance race display.
- Attendance updates and celebrations in newsletters.
- Class displays celebrating individual attendance achievements and improvements.

Appendix 4: Attendance codes

Attendance is recorded using the Department for Education's statutory attendance codes, in line with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

Code	Meaning	Category	Notes
**/ **	Present	Present	Pupil present during registration (AM / PM).
L	Late (before registers close)	Present	Arrived after the start of registration but before it closed.
K	Attending LA-arranged education	Authorised	Attending provision arranged by the Local Authority, not the school.
V	Educational visit or trip	Authorised	School-arranged, staff-supervised visit during the recorded session.
P	Sporting activity	Authorised	Approved educational sporting activity, with appropriate supervision.
W	Work experience	Authorised	Approved work experience arranged by the school or Local Authority.
B	Other approved educational activity	Authorised	Any other approved activity outside school premises.
D	Dual registered elsewhere	Authorised	e.g. attending a pupil referral unit, hospital school or special school temporarily.
C1	Regulated performance / employment abroad	Authorised	Leave under a licence or exemption for regulated performance or employment.
M	Medical or dental appointment	Authorised	Prior agreement in place; appointments outside school hours are encouraged where possible.
J	Interview (employment / admission)	Authorised	Interview for employment or admission elsewhere, agreed in advance.
S	Study leave (public examination)	Authorised	Granted sparingly and agreed in advance; provision made for pupils who continue to attend.
X	Non-compulsory school age	Not counted	Pupil below or above compulsory school age, not required to attend.
C2	Part-time timetable (compulsory school age)	Authorised	Temporary, exceptional, agreed with parents.
C	Exceptional circumstances	Authorised	Granted at the school's discretion, assessed individually — never a blanket policy.
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Authorised	Pupil travelling with a parent for trade or business; dual registration encouraged.
R	Religious observance	Authorised	A day exclusively set apart for religious observance.

I	Illness	Authorised	Physical or mental health illness; medical evidence requested only when appropriate, not routinely.
E	Suspended / excluded, no provision yet made	Authorised	Alternative provision must be arranged within six school days.
Q	No access arrangements provided by LA	Not counted	Local Authority has failed to provide agreed access arrangements.
Y1	Transport unavailable	Not counted	School beyond walking distance and usual transport not provided.
Y2	Widespread travel disruption	Not counted	Local, national or international emergency disrupting travel.
Y3	Part of premises closed	Not counted	Pupil cannot be accommodated in the remaining usable space.
Y4	Whole site unexpectedly closed	Not counted	e.g. adverse weather; not used for planned closures.
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Not counted	Police detention, remand or a detention sentence.
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Not counted	Attendance would conflict with public health guidance or legislation.
Y7	Other unavoidable cause	Not counted	Any other unavoidable cause; the reason must be recorded.
G	Holiday not agreed	Unauthorised	Term-time holiday not approved in advance; cannot be granted retrospectively.
N	Reason not yet established	Unauthorised	Amend to code O if the reason is not established within five school days.
O	Absent, reason unknown / not accepted	Unauthorised	No reason given, or the reason does not meet the authorised criteria.
U	Arrived after register closed	Unauthorised	Arrived after the specific time limit for registering attendance.
Z	Prospective pupil, not yet on roll	Administrative	Used to set up registers in advance of official admission.

Appendix 5: FET Safeguarding Attendance Procedures

FET Attendance Safeguarding Protocols

If a child is subject to a CP/CIN plan or you have any concerns about a child's safety, contact the Police for support. If there are other professionals involved with a family i.e. a social worker school must notify them of the absence by day 2. Day 1 & 2 of absence - Follow your schools' procedures.

DAY 3 OF ABSENCE

Repeat 1st day absence procedures & state as part of the schools Attendance Policy, a Welfare Home Visit is to be arranged and conducted due to the pupil(s) not being seen for 3 school days. Visit to be conducted & recorded on the BROMCOM system – **Welfare Home visit completed, pupil seen safe and well, no concerns.** If the pupil is vulnerable or safeguarding concerns are raised the visit is to be recorded on CPOMs. If no one is home, **leave a Welfare Visit slip** explaining the visit & next steps, and ask the family to contact the school ASAP. **HT & DSL to be informed of any concerns raised during the visit.**

DAY 4 OF ABSENCE

If all Parental Responsibility holders are unreachable, the school should contact all listed emergency contacts until a PR holder is reached to arrange a Welfare Home Visit. Once contact is made, the visit must be completed and recorded on BROMCOM. If the pupil is vulnerable or safeguarding concerns are raised the visit is to be recorded on CPOMs. **All forms of contact should be attempted for adults that hold PR** (Dojo, Email, Text, Telephone Call, Letter). **Ensure all attempts to make contact are recorded on CPOMs.**

DAY 5 OF ABSENCE

If no contact is made after 5 school days & no professionals have seen the pupil, **if the family does not have an allocated Social Worker a CASS/MASH referral must be submitted.** If there are other professionals involved i.e. a social worker, school must update them & enquire when the professional last saw the pupil &/or if they are due to see them. If they have seen or are due to see the pupil this must be recorded on CPOMs stating that a professional has confirmed that they have seen the pupil safe and well. Request that the professional puts it in writing by email. **Ensure the CME checklist has been completed. A police welfare visit should be requested.**

DAY 10 OF ABSENCE

School must inform the L.A CME team of any pupil who has been absent for 10 consecutive school days and whose whereabouts remain unknown after reasonable enquiries, (CME checklist).Continue efforts to re-establish contact with the family to complete a Welfare Home Visit and offer support to facilitate the pupil's return to school and follow and record any advice given by the LA teams on CPOMs. **Continue to liaise with CME/Police/CASS/MASH/LA and any other relevant professionals.**

Appendix 6: Daily Attendance Procedures

