

CITY OF ROCHESTER SCHOOL
ATTENDANCE AND CHILDREN ABSENT FROM EDUCATION POLICY

This policy, which applies to the whole school, and upon request a copy (which can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required) may be obtained from the School Office. This policy is also publicly available on the school website

In City of Rochester School, the term 'staff' is inclusive of all staff and it also applies to students on placement, contractors, agency staff, volunteers, the Trustees and Board of Trustees.

Legal Status:

- Complies with Part 3, paragraph 17. Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations currently in force
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations, Part 3, paragraph 15 currently in force
- Children Missing in Education guidance.

Applies to: The whole school, all staff (teaching and support staff), the Proprietor, volunteers and pupils on placement in the school. This guidance should be read alongside the statutory guidance documents on children missing education, supporting pupils with medical conditions at school, education for children with health needs who cannot attend school, suspensions and exclusions, alternative provision, Keeping Children Safe in Education and Working together to improve school attendance.

Monitoring and Review: This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Headteacher. The Headteacher and the Chair of Trustees undertakes a review of this policy and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later from the date shown below, or earlier if changes in legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.

Signed:

Date Reviewed: September 2024

Date of Next Review: September 2025

Version No. 8



Alicja Emmett
Headteacher



Kirstine Boon
Chair of Trustees

Introduction: We expect all children on roll to attend at least 96% of the time, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend and to put in place appropriate procedures. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children. The Headteacher is responsible for making sure the school keeps Admission and Attendance registers in accordance with the regulatory requirements. For all pupils of compulsory school age our attendance register records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised. The Headteacher also ensures that a compliant admissions register is kept. The school calendar and dates when the school is open can be accessed from our website. Parents are notified of school emergency closures for such things as extreme weather by telephone.

The Role of the Parents: The law entitles every child of compulsory school age (5-16) to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational needs they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child received that education either by attendance at school or by education otherwise than at school.

Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or having permission for an absence in advance such as a medical appointment (where proof of appointment should be provided). Request for leave forms should be completed and returned to school in advance for the Headteachers approval for all other absence requests (please note these are exceptional circumstances).

Where a child is too ill to attend school, parents should notify the school by 8:00 am on the day of any absence that has not been pre-arranged either by phone/voice message or email, providing details of the reason for the absence.

The Role of the School: Improving attendance is everyone's business. The barriers to accessing education are wide and complex both within and beyond the school gates and are often specific to individual pupils and families. The foundation of securing good attendance is that the school is a calm, orderly, safe and supportive environment where all pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn. Some pupils find it harder than others to attend school and therefore at all stages of improving attendance, schools and partners should work with pupils and parents to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place. City of Rochester School has a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance and have a dedicated Senior Leader – Kelly Lovell – Assistant Headteacher & DSL who holds overall responsibility for championing and Improving attendance with the assistance of Sheila Humphrey – Registrar & DDSL. We will proactively develop strategies to support pupils at risk of or with low attendance and forms part of the 'School Development Plan (SDP).

If a child is absent from school due to an accident/serious illness for an increased length of time, the school will work with parents to ensure that the child receives a suitable education when too unwell to attend school and, where appropriate, is successfully re-integrated back into school once they are well enough to be.

Attendance Plans and Mental Health Attendance & Wellbeing Plans are in place for students to monitor attendance and meetings held to discuss and implement strategies to encourage improved attendance.

Admission Register: This gives particular information about pupils who are currently registered as attending City of Rochester School. For the purposes of day-to-day management of the school the admission register may be contained within the school database. The register will comprise information that is compliant with regulations set out in the education (pupil registration) (England) regulations currently in force. For each pupil, the admission register will contain:

- name in full;
- gender;
- name and address of every person known to the school to be a parent or guardian of the pupil (and an indication of the parent with whom the pupil normally resides);
- Two emergency telephone numbers are held so parents/carers can be contacted in an emergency.
- day, month and year of birth;
- day, month and year of admission or re-admission to the school;
- name and address of the school last attended, if any and
- leaving date and ongoing placement.

Attendance Register: The School is required to ensure that the attendance register for all pupils on the school roll is taken twice a day – once at the start of the morning session and at the start of the afternoon session. Each pupil must be marked on the register in one of the following categories (in line with DfE Working together to improve school attendance 19th August 2024):

- Present
- Engaged in an approved educational activity away from the school site (approved by the head teacher and supervised by a person approved by the head teacher, including sporting activities, educational visits or residential trips) etc
- Absent
- Unable to attend through exceptional circumstances (unavoidable closure of the school site or part of it)
- Taking authorised absence (granted leave of absence by the head teacher or a person acting on their behalf, unable to attend by reason of sickness or unavoidable cause, observing a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs etc
- Taking unauthorised absence (if no reason is established when the register is taken, the entry may be corrected later when the reason is established).

If a pupil is absent, the register must say whether or not the absence has been authorised by the school (parents cannot authorise absence – it is the school that decides how to classify absences). Authorised absence is where the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as satisfactory justification of absence (e.g. illness). All other absences are treated as unauthorised. Authorised absences include: medical or dental appointments, days of religious observance, visits to future schools, exclusion, family bereavement and special occasions (e.g. weddings). All requests for absence must be made in writing to the Headteacher giving the school plenty of time to consider the request. If a pupil is absent without explanation when the register is called, school staff will normally contact the parents the same day whenever possible. The absence will be treated as unauthorised unless an explanation is offered as satisfactory justification for absence.

The school day operates from 08:45 with lesson starting at 09:00 until 15:15. The school register remains open until 09:30 (30 minutes after lessons officially start), after which point an absence will be recorded in line with the absence codes outlined in this document. However, there are exceptions to this rule where the school has received prior notification that a pupil cannot be in school before the deadline of 09:30 due to family circumstances or that there has been an issue with the LA transport. The same 30 minute window will apply in the afternoon when the register will close at 13:45. Allowances will be made if the pupil is:

- A carer
- If attendance is identified on their EHCP
- There is a medical reason identified on their EHCP – for example the taking of medication and issues related to sleeping patterns

Failure to Attend School: If a pupil fails to regularly attend school, we will work closely with the parents, pupil and school to resolve issues and develop strategies to improve attendance. Pupils showing patterns of non-attendance will be placed onto a Parental Support Plan (see Appendix 1) and could eventually be referred to the Attendance Advisory Service to Schools and Academies (AASSA) Medway Local Authority if the attendance has not improved after a meeting with parents and after a series of interventions have taken place.

Failure to Attend School – Mental Health: In February 2023 the Department for Education (DfE) produced a paper ‘Summary of responsibilities where mental health issue is affecting attendance’

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-issues-affecting-a-pupils-attendance-guidance-for-schools?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm_source=efc14339-2f45-4fff-98b6-95753f662fbd&utm_content=daily

City of Rochester School takes mental health very seriously and we will work with parents and pupils to improve

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City of Rochester School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. It is our aim that all pupils fulfil their potential

attendance and may include referrals to in-school or external professional support and additional pastoral support. Pupils showing patterns of non-attendance where it is deemed due to a mental health issue will be placed on a Mental Health Issues Affecting Attendance Plan (see Appendix 2)

The school is required to inform the LA if a pupil fails to attend regularly. Independent schools have a legal duty to report certain attendance issues to their local authority: These include: 10 days of unauthorised absence other than for reasons of sickness or leave of absence, failure to attend regularly, additions to the attendance register within 5 days and deletion from the school register under the 15 grounds identified by Children Absent from Education September 2016 Annex A. In this last case, independent schools are required to report the circumstances as soon as possible to the local authority (LA) in which the pupil lives.

Definitions Authorised absence: An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent. For example, if a child has been unwell, the parent writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence. Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority.

Definitions Unauthorised absence: An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from our school without the permission of both the school and a parent. Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

If a child is absent: When a child is absent unexpectedly, the registrar will record the absence in the register and will inform the welfare team. A telephone call is made to the parents/carers to ascertain the reason for the absence on the morning of the absence. A note, email or telephone call should be sent/made to the school office prior to the day of absence e.g. if a child has a medical appointment, for which evidence will be requested. Where a pupil has been absent, or sick, or missing for 3 consecutive days, a member of the welfare team will do an unannounced visit to the home, so we are able to physically see and talk directly to the child. Visits will continue every 3 days thereafter until the pupil is back in school

Requests for leave of absence: We believe that children need to be in school for all sessions so that they can make the most progress possible. However, we do understand that there are circumstances under which a parent may legitimately request leave of absence for a child. We expect parents to contact the school at least a week in advance. The school will, under exceptional circumstances, grant a leave of absence in term time.

Holiday: The Government and Local Authority states that Head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless in exceptional circumstances. Although we sympathise with your situation, unfortunately it is not exceptional, Pupils at City of Rochester School enjoy 15 weeks holiday from school. We therefore naturally expect parents to take their family holiday in the normal school holiday periods. If your decision remains unchanged and you decide to take your child out of school, it will be recorded as unauthorised. and may be subject to a penalty notice.

From September 2013, the DfE amended the Education (penalty notices) (England) Regulations 2007, so that each parent/carer who receives a Penalty Notice for taking their child out of school during term time has to pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. Please be aware, non-payment of penalty notices will result in Court proceedings.

In line with our school attendance policy, the Attendance Advisory Service for School and Academies (AASSA) issue penalty notices after the holiday is taken to each parent/carer per child.

If you wish to appeal the decision and you feel that the reason for leave of absence fulfils the exceptional circumstances criteria, then you should write to me upon receipt of this letter.

An Absence Request Form (Appendix 4) asking for such an absence should be collected from the school office and returned to This will then be passed along with the child's current attendance data to the Headteacher for a decision, in line with the following guidelines:

- Absence Request Form sent home
- Absence request Form completed by parent/carer and returned to school
- Along with the current attendance data for the student, this will be passed to the Headteacher for a decision. A letter will be sent home confirming if the absence has been authorised or not
- If authorised – a letter will be sent home confirming that under exceptional circumstances the absence has, on this occasion, been authorised.

If Unauthorised – a letter will be sent home confirming that we are unable to authorise the absence and that if the child is not present in school on these dates, they will be marked as unauthorised and may be issued with a penalty notice via AASSA.

If the child is not present in school for the dates that absence was requested, then a letter will be sent to parents confirming that the AASSA have been sent all the information in relation to the absence for the issue of a Penalty Notice

Long-term Absence: When children have an illness that means they will be away from our school for over five days, the school will do all it can to send material home and provide access to online learning and/or provide an outreach teacher so that they can keep up with their schoolwork. The child will still be marked as absent if they are not on the premises.

Repeated Unauthorised Absences: The school will contact the parent of any child who has an unauthorised absence. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parents will be asked to visit the school and discuss how we can support each other in moving forward.

Pupils showing patterns of non-attendance will be placed onto a Parental Support Plan and could eventually be referred to the Attendance Advisory Service to Schools and Academies (AASSA) Medway Local Authority if the attendance has not improved after a meeting with parents and after a series of interventions have taken place. Parents/carers will be prosecuted as an absolute last resort for their child's poor school attendance. In the event of all efforts undertaken by the school, AASSA and any other external agencies, if applicable, have failed to achieve a sustained improvement in school attendance and in turn parent/careers failure to ensure their child's right to an education.

Monitoring of Attendance

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to monitor overall attendance and seek to ensure that the attendance figures are as they should be. The school keeps accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of five years. The school Registrar together with the Pupil Wellbeing Coordinators are responsible for monitoring attendance in their class and for following up absences in the appropriate way. Any ongoing absences, 'Lates' or Unauthorised Absences for holidays is followed up as quickly as possible. If there is concern about a child's absence, the teacher will contact the school office who in turn will attempt to contact the parents. City of Rochester School values attendance at school and pupils with 96%+ attendance in the academic school year are presented with a certificate and receive a reward. Termly attendance certificates are awarded at end of term assemblies. Awards are also given to pupils for whom attendance is identified as a barrier on their EHCP and where progress is made.

Grounds for notification to Local Authority for Additions/Deletions from City of Rochester School Admission Register (Annex A: taken from Children Absent From Education 2016):

Our staff will follow the school's safeguarding policy for dealing with children who are absent, particularly on repeat occasions. They should act to identify any risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse or exploitation. The school will put in place appropriate safeguarding policies, procedures and responses for children who are absent from

education, particularly on repeat occasions. Staff are alert to signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage. More information can be found in 'Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care' and KCSIE (DfE: September 2022). That guidance is still the same.

Children being withdrawn from school:

If a child is withdrawn from the school, all efforts will be made to identify the school to which the child is being admitted; their confidential educational and child protection records will be sent separately. If the parent/guardian/carer fails to provide information regarding the new school, an urgent referral will be made to Children's Services. Educational records sent to our school concerning a child who is not registered by the parent will be returned and the school advised to refer to their Local Authority Education Welfare Service. **A child's name will only be removed from the School's Admission Register in accordance with the Child Registration Regulations. Further information is contained in our Admissions Policy.**

We also understand our duty to provide information to the local authority for standard transitions if requested.

We also appreciate that there is an overlap with *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (KCSIE 20202) which recognises children who are absent from education as a safeguarding issue particularly when a child leaves with no known destination. We inform the local authority where the child is normally resident. We also retain the right to cease the placement and/or call an early annual review to give notice of placement. In this circumstance it would be after discussion with parents, the school and the local authority.

We recognise that from September 2019 (due to the absence of illness or unavoidable cause) that we have the right to delete a pupil for non-return within 10 school days after authorised leave of 10 school days or more, or after 20 school days unauthorised absence but this does not arise until City of Rochester School and the local authority have jointly made reasonable enquiries as to the pupil's whereabouts and failed. As such, City of Rochester School recognises that it is a criminal offence not to report, as required.

Appendix 1

Attending the school – Absence Codes – August 2024

Relevant regulation 10(2) Table 1

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

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

290. This code is classified for statistical purposes as attending

Code L: Late arrival before the register is closed

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

292. This code is classified for statistical purposes as attending.

Attending a place other than the school

Relevant regulation 10(3) Table 2

Code K: Attending education provision arranged by the local authority

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

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

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

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

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

Code V: Attending an educational visit or trip

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

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

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

Code P: Participating in a sporting activity

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

301. A pupil can only be recorded as attending a place for an approved educational activity if:
- the place is somewhere other than the school, another school where the pupil is registered, or a place where educational provision has been arranged for the pupil by a local authority under section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996 or sections 42(2) or 61(1) of the Children and Families Act 2014;
 - the activity is of an educational nature;
 - the school has approved the pupil's attendance at the place for the activity; and
 - the activity is supervised by a person considered by the school to have the appropriate skills, training, experience and knowledge to ensure that the activity takes place safely and fulfils the educational purpose for which the pupil's attendance has been approved. Supervision means the pupil is physically supervised by someone who meets this definition.
302. If schools have concerns about the appropriateness of an activity, they can seek advice from the sports' national governing body. The final decision on approving the activity, however, rests with the school and they should take the effect on the pupil's general education into account.
303. Schools have responsibilities for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils attending an approved educational activity. The school will need to be satisfied that appropriate measures have been taken to safeguard the pupil. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the sporting activity notifies the school of any absence by the pupil. The school must record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.
304. This code is classified for statistical purposes as attending an approved educational activity.

Code W: Attending work experience

305. The pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is work experience provided under arrangements made by a local authority or the school as part of the pupil's education. The work experience must take place during the session for which it is recorded.
306. A pupil can only be recorded as attending a place for an approved educational activity if:
- the place is somewhere other than the school, another school where the pupil is registered, or a place where educational provision has been arranged for the pupil by a local authority under section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996 or sections 42(2) or 61(1) of the Children and Families Act 2014;
 - the activity is of an educational nature;
 - the school has approved the pupil's attendance at the place for the activity; and
 - the activity is supervised by a person considered by the school to have the appropriate skills, training, experience and knowledge to ensure that the activity takes place safely and fulfils the educational purpose for which the pupil's attendance has been approved. Supervision means the pupil is physically supervised by someone who meets this definition.
307. Schools have responsibilities for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils attending an approved educational activity. The school will need to be satisfied that appropriate measures have been taken to safeguard the pupil. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the work experience notifies the school of any absence by the pupil. The school must record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.
308. This code is classified for statistical purposes as attending an approved educational activity.

Code B: Attending any other approved educational activity

309. The pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience. The educational activity must take place during the session for which it is recorded.
310. A pupil can only be recorded as attending a place for an approved educational activity if:
- the place is somewhere other than the school, another school where the pupil is registered, or a place where educational provision has been arranged for the pupil by a local authority under section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996 or sections 42(2) or 61(1) of the Children and Families Act 2014;
 - the activity is of an educational nature;
 - the school has approved the pupil's attendance at the place for the activity; and

- the activity is supervised by a person considered by the school to have the appropriate skills, training, experience and knowledge to ensure that the activity takes place safely and fulfils the educational purpose for which the pupil's attendance has been approved. Supervision means the pupil is physically supervised by someone who meets this definition.

311. Schools must also record the nature of the approved educational activity (regulation 10(5)), examples are:
- attending transition days at other schools;
 - attending courses at college;
 - attending unregistered alternative provision arranged by the school.
312. Schools have responsibilities for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils attending an approved educational activity. The school will need to be satisfied that appropriate measures have been taken to safeguard the pupil. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the educational activity notifies the school of any absences by the pupil. The school must record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.
313. This code is classified for statistical purposes as attending an approved educational activity.

Absent - leave of absence

Relevant regulation 10(4) Table 3

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

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

315. All schools can grant leaves of absence for pupils to undertake employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours. Schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority can only do so in the following circumstances (under regulation 11(2)):
- Where the local authority have granted a licence for the pupil to take part in a performance regulated by section 37(2) of the Children and Young Persons Act 1963.
 - Where a pupil does not need a licence for such a performance because an exception applies under section 37(3) of the Children and Young Persons Act 1963, including where a Body of Persons Approval (BOPA) covering the pupil has been issued by the local authority in whose area the performance will take place or the Secretary of State.
 - Where a Justice of the Peace has given the pupil a licence to go abroad for a performance or other regulated purpose under section 25(2) of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933.
316. Schools should be sympathetic to requests for leave of absence that are supported by a licence issued by a local authority or a BOPA; as long as the school remains satisfied that this will not have a negative effect on a pupil's education. Where a local authority licence specifies the dates that a pupil is to be away from school to perform, the school should record the absence for those days as if a leave of absence had been applied for and granted. Where the terms of the local authority licence do not specify dates, however, or where a BOPA or other exemption or licence from a Justice of the Peace applies, it is at the discretion of the school to grant leave of absence.
317. Schools that are not required to follow regulation 11, must still use this code to record a pupil who is absent with leave for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or work abroad under a licence or exemption as described above.
318. This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

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

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

- 320. Schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority can only grant leave of absence for this under regulation 11(11), where an application is made in advance by a parent the pupil normally lives with (or the pupil if they will be over compulsory school age by the time of the absence), and the school is satisfied that, based on the individual facts of the case, there are exceptional circumstances which justify the leave.
- 321. Schools that are not required to follow regulation 11, must still use this code to record a leave of absence has been granted for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment.
- 322. If a pupil is present at registration but then leaves the school to attend a medical or dental appointment during the session in question, no absence needs be recorded for that session.
- 323. This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

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

- 324. Schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority can grant leave of absence, under regulation 11(4), where an application has been made in advance by the parent who the pupil normally lives with (or the pupil if they will be over compulsory school age by the time of the absence) and the leave is to enable the pupil to attend an interview for employment or admission to another educational institution.
- 325. Schools that are not required to follow regulation 11, must still use this code to record a leave of absence has been granted for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational establishment.
- 326. This interview must take place during the session for which it is recorded.
- 327. This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

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

- 328. Schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority can grant leave of absence, under regulation 11(5), for a pupil to study for a public examination where the leave has been agreed in advance with a parent who the pupil normally lives with (or the pupil if they will be over compulsory school age by the time of the absence).
- 329. Study leave should not be granted by default once tuition of the exam syllabus is complete and should be used sparingly. If schools do decide to grant study leave, provision must still be made available for those pupils who want to continue to come into school to revise.
- 330. Schools that are not required to follow regulation 11, must still use this code to record when a pupil is absent with leave that has been granted for the purpose of studying for a public examination.
- 331. This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

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

- 332. Schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority can grant a leave of absence, under regulation 11(7) or (8) for a pupil not of compulsory school age to attend school part-time.
- 333. Schools that are not required to follow regulation 11, must still use this code to record when a pupil is absent with leave because their timetable does not require them to attend.
- 334. Where the pupil is absent when timetabled to attend the school, the absence must be recorded using the appropriate absence code not code X.
- 335. This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance.

Under compulsory school age

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

Over compulsory school age

337. Where a sixth form pupil's timetable does not require them to be on site for every session of the week, a school maintained by a local authority or a special school not maintained by a local authority may give leave of absence. The times and dates when the pupil is expected to attend the school must be agreed with the parent with whom the pupil normally lives with or the pupil.

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

338. All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs in line with paragraphs 65 – 70.

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

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

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

342. This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Code D: Dual registered at another school

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

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

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

Code C: Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance

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

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

- 348. Schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority can only grant such a leave of absence under regulation 11(11), where an application is made in advance by a parent the pupil normally lives with (or the pupil if they will be over compulsory school age by the time of the absence).
- 349. Generally a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance.
- 350. Schools that are not required to follow regulation 11, must still use this code to record where a pupil is absent with leave for a reason that is not covered by another leave of absence code.
- 351. This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Pregnant pupils

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

Absent - other authorised reasons

Relevant regulation 10(4) Table 3

Code T: Parent travelling for occupational purposes

- 353. The pupil is a mobile child and their parent(s) is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with them. A mobile child is a child of compulsory school age who has no fixed abode and whose parent(s) is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require them to travel from place to place.
- 354. Schools should not unnecessarily ask for proof that the parent is travelling for occupational purposes, this should only happen when there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the reason for absence given. If there is doubt over the reason given, the school may ask for proof that the family are required to travel for occupational purposes during the period of absence.
- 355. To help ensure continuity of education for pupils, when their parent(s) is travelling for occupational purposes in England, it is expected that the pupil should attend a school where their parent(s) is travelling and be dual registered at that school and their main school.
- 356. This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.
- 357. Whilst for statistical purposes this is counted as authorised absence, if a pupil's attendance was to fall below an acceptable level consideration may be given to attendance enforcement.

Defence in the law

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

Code R: Religious observance

- 359. The pupil is absent on a day that is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body the parent(s) belong to (not the parents themselves). 360. As a general rule, 'a day exclusively set apart for religious observance' is a day when the pupil's parents would be expected by the religious body to which they belong to stay away from their employment in order to record the occasion. If in doubt, schools should seek advice from the parent's religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance.

361. If a religious body sets apart a single day for a religious observance and the parent applies for more than one day, the school may only record one day using this code; the rest of the time would need a leave of absence, and this is granted at the school's discretion as set out under Code C.
362. Schools and local authorities may seek to minimise the adverse effects of religious observance on a pupil's attendance and attainment by considering approaches such as:
- Setting term dates around days for religious observance;
 - Working with local faith groups to develop guidance on absence for religious observance;
 - Taking INSET days that coincide with religious observance days; and
 - Providing individual support for pupils who miss sessions on days exclusively set apart for religious observance.
363. This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Code I: Illness (not medical or dental appointment)

364. The pupil is unable to attend due to illness (both physical and mental health related). Schools should advise parents to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness.
365. Schools are not expected to routinely request that parents provide medical evidence to support illness absences. Schools should only request reasonable medical evidence in cases where they need clarification to accurately record absence in the attendance register – i.e. making a decision that code I is the absence code that accurately describes the reason the pupil is not in school for the session in question. In the majority of cases a parent's notification that their child is too ill to attend school will be that evidence and can be accepted without question or concern. Only where the school has genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness should medical evidence be requested to support the absence.
366. Where medical evidence is deemed necessary, schools should not be rigid about the form of evidence requested and should speak to the family about what evidence is available. Schools should be mindful that requesting additional medical evidence unnecessarily places pressure on health professionals, their staff and their appointment system, particularly if the illness is one that does not require treatment by a health professional. Where a parent cannot provide evidence in the form requested but can provide other evidence, schools should take this into account. Where a parent cannot provide any written evidence the school should have a conversation with the parent and pupil, if appropriate, which may in itself serve as the necessary evidence to record the absence.
367. This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Code E: Suspended or permanently excluded

368. The pupil is suspended from school or permanently excluded from school on disciplinary grounds, but their name is still entered in the admission register, and no alternative provision has been made for the pupil to continue their education.
369. When a pupil of compulsory school age is suspended or permanently excluded on disciplinary grounds from a maintained school, pupil referral unit, academy, city technology college, or city college for the technology of the arts, alternative provision must be arranged from the sixth consecutive school day of any suspension or permanent exclusion. Where the pupil is attending alternative provision, for the session in question, schools should record this using the appropriate attendance code in regulation 10(3) Table 2 or if the pupil is attending another school at which they are a registered pupil, schools should record this using code D (dual registered at another school).
370. This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Absent - unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause

Relevant regulation 10(4) Table 3

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

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

371. Code Q is only used where a pupil is absent because the local authority has a legal duty to arrange home-to-school travel for the pupil and they have not done so, or because the pupil has no choice but to attend a school that does not qualify for such travel arrangements and is more than walking distance from where they live. These circumstances are set out in law but in summary are where:
- the local authority has a duty to arrange the pupil's home to school travel and has not; or
 - the pupil is registered at a private school that is beyond walking distance from the pupil's home and the local authority has not arranged boarding for them or enabled them to go to a state school nearer to their home; or
 - the pupil lives in Wales and a Welsh local authority has a duty to provide home to school travel and has not.
372. This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance.

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

373. The pupil is unable to attend because the school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport to and from the school that is normally provided for the pupil by the school or local authority is not available.
374. Walking distance in relation to a child under the age of 8, means 2 miles, and for a child of 8 or above, means 3 miles. In each case measured by the nearest available route.
375. This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance.

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

376. The pupil is unable to attend the school because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national, or international emergency.
377. This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance.
- Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008 (legislation.gov.uk)

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

378. Part of the school premises is unavoidably out of use and the pupil is one of those that the school considers cannot practicably be accommodated in those part of the premises that remain in use.
379. This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance.

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

Relevant regulation 10(10)

380. Where a school was planned to be open for a session, but the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather), the attendance register is not taken as usual because there is no school session. Instead, every pupil listed in the admission register at the time must be recorded with code Y4 to record the fact that the school is closed.
381. This code may not be used for any planned closure such as weekends or holidays.
382. This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance.

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

Relevant regulation 10(14)

383. The pupil is unable to attend the school because they are:
- in police detention,
 - remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or
 - detained under a sentence of detention.
384. If a pupil is remanded to local authority accommodation, they should attend school as normal where possible and where it is not possible any absence should be recorded using the appropriate code.
385. A pupil's absence should be recorded under code Y7 (Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause) if they are unable to attend because they are serving a community based (i.e. non-detained) part of a sentence of detention, referral order, or youth rehabilitation order that requires them to be absent during the school day.
386. Schools are expected to communicate with the pupil's Youth Offending Team worker while the pupil is in custody and remains on the school roll to discuss the pupil's educational needs, progress and return to the school upon their release where appropriate. Education is a key part of effective resettlement, therefore it is important that schools maintain contact with the Youth Offending Team throughout the sentence to support the child's resettlement where appropriate.
387. This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance.

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

388. The pupil is well enough to attend (otherwise Code I would have been recorded) but there are Government rules or guidance to limit the spread of infection or disease which say they should not attend.
389. Meaning, the pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be:
- contrary to any guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of infection or disease published by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care (or the equivalent in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland), or
 - prohibited by any legislation relating to the incidence or transmission of infection or disease.

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

390. An unavoidable cause, that is not covered by one of the other 'unable to attend' codes detailed above, is preventing the pupil from attending the school.
391. This code should be used only where something in the nature of an emergency has prevented the pupil from attending the session in question. The unavoidable cause must be something that affects the pupil, not the parent. The fact that a parent has done all they can to secure the attendance of the pupil at school does not, in itself, mean the pupil has been prevented by unavoidable cause.
392. Schools must also record the nature of the unavoidable cause (regulation 10(6)), examples are:
- Bail conditions (that prevent the pupil from attending the school or being present in the area where the school is situated)
 - Court attendance (where the pupil is legally required to attend Court)
393. This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance.

Absent - unauthorised absence

Code G: Holiday not granted by the school

394. The school has not granted a leave of absence and the pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday.
395. A school cannot grant a leave of absence retrospectively. If the parent did not apply in advance, leave of absence should not be granted.
396. This code is classified for statistical purposes as unauthorised absence.

Code N: Reason for absence not yet established

- 397. Schools must follow up all unexplained and unexpected absence in a timely manner. Every effort should be made to establish the reason for a pupil's absence. When the reason for absence has not yet been established before the register closes, the absence must be recorded with code N.
- 398. Where absence is recorded as code N (reason not yet established) in the attendance register, the correct absence code should be entered as soon as the reason is ascertained, but no more than 5 school days after the session (regulation 10(7) to (9)). Code N must not therefore be left on the pupil's attendance record indefinitely; if a reason for absence cannot be established within 5 school days, schools must amend the pupil's record to Code O.
- 399. This code is classified for statistical purposes as unauthorised absence.

Code O: Absent in other or unknown circumstances

- 400. Where no reason for absence is established or the school is not satisfied that the reason given is one that would be recorded using one of the codes statistically classified as authorised.
- 401. This code is classified for statistical purposes as unauthorised absence.

Code U: Arrived in school after registration closed

Relevant regulation 10(7) and (8)

- 402. Where a pupil has arrived late after the register has closed but before the end of session.
- 403. Schools should actively discourage late arrival, be alert to patterns of late arrival and seek an explanation from the parent. All schools are expected to set out in their attendance policy the length of time the register will be open, after which a pupil will be recorded as absent. This should be the same for every session and not longer than 30 minutes.
- 404. This code is classified for statistical purposes as unauthorised absence.

Administrative codes

Code Z: Prospective pupil not on admission register

- 405. To enable schools to set up registers in advance of pupils joining the school to ease administration burdens.
- 406. Most school admissions involve the school or admission authority offering a place to the parent of the prospective pupil (or, in the case of admission to sixth form, the prospective pupil). An offer of a place is not an agreement. Before a pupil can be registered at a school the parent (or prospective pupil) must have accepted the offer, either by agreeing the starting day in advance or by the fact of the pupil attending the school on that day. In the normal admissions round, when parents have accepted the school place and starting day offered, the local authority can communicate that agreement to schools on behalf of the parent. This can also be the case where the local authority coordinate in-year applications for school places.
- 407. Schools must enter pupils' names on the admission register on the first day that the school and a person with control of the pupil's attendance have agreed that the pupil will attend the school. If no date has been agreed or notified, the pupil's name must be entered on the first day they attend the school. Names must be added before or at the beginning of the first session on that day.
- 408. If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed starting day, the school must follow this up and try to establish the reason for absence.
- 409. This code is not collected for statistical purposes.

Code #: Planned whole school closure

410. Whole school closures that are known and planned in advance such as:
- days between terms;
 - half terms;
 - occasional days (for example, bank holidays);
 - weekends (where it is required by the management information system);
 - up to 5 non-educational days; and
 - use of the whole school as a polling station.
411. This code is not collected for statistical purpose

CITY OF ROCHESTER SCHOOL PARENTAL SUPPORT PLAN

PUPIL NAME:	YEAR GROUP:	PARENT/CARER NAME:	
GENERAL INFORMATION REGARDING FAMILY:			
Does the pupil have siblings? Y/N – IF Y: WHO	Overview of current circumstances at home, presence of adults, employment, housing, health, welfare etc:		
STRENGTHS OF FAMILY UNIT AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS AVAILABLE:		RELEVANCE TO THE PLAN:	
MAIN AREAS OF SUPPORT IDENTIFIED – TICK AS MANY THAT APPLY:			
Mental Health	<input type="radio"/>	Health	<input type="radio"/>
DV	<input type="radio"/>	Housing	<input type="radio"/>
		Attendance	<input type="radio"/>

Managing child(s) behaviour	<input type="radio"/>	Finance	<input type="radio"/>
Understanding autism	<input type="radio"/>	Schooling	<input type="radio"/>

ASSESSMENT OF NEED – include signposting to internal and external provision:
BENEFITS OF INTERVENTIONS:
ATTENDANCE DATA:
Attendance - Start date of Plan-
Term 1 -
Term 2 -
Term 3 -
Term 4 -
Term 5 -
Term 6 -

LETTERS /MEETINGS

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CONSEQUENCES IF ISSUES ARE NOT RESOLVED:

Attending school every day = 100% attendance
Attending 4½ days a week = 90% attendance = 4 weeks missed per year
Attending 4 days a week = 80% attendance = more than half a term missed per year.
Attending 3½ days each week = 70% attendance = more than a quarter of the school year missed.
DFE Guideline – 96% Attendance – below 90% = Persistent Absentee



ACTIONS BY WHO AND WHEN:

ACTION:	BY WHO:	REVIEW DATE:	IMPACT:

REVIEW DATE: Ongoing			
SIGNED BY: Kelly Lovell	SIGNED BY: Sheila Humphrey	SIGNED BY: Alison Barton	SIGNED BY: (parent/s)



MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING ATTENDANCE PLAN

CITY OF ROCHESTER SCHOOL - MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES AFFECTING ATTENDANCE		Date:
PUPIL NAME:	YEAR GROUP:	PARENT/CARER NAME:
GENERAL INFORMATION REGARDING MENTAL HEALTH:		
Overview of current circumstances, welfare etc		
SCHOOL STAFF ARE EXPECTED TO:		
Set and maintain high expectations for attendance whilst working with parents/carers to maximise attendance Facilitate support for pupils experiencing mental health issues make appropriate referrals engage with parents to support pupil experiencing anxiety support parents - no need to routinely ask for medical evidence		
PARENTS ARE EXPECTED TO:		
Make sure their child attends school Work with school and other partner organisations to establish a shared understanding of perceived barriers to attendance Proactively engage with any support offered Keep school informed and be open in communication information to aid support Take action to support their child to recognise and manage their social, emotional and mental health wellbeing		

TRUSTEES ARE EXPECTED TO:
Regularly monitor and consider the approach to promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing within the school to understand how it is working satisfy themselves that the building of emotional resilience is sufficiently delivered through the school curriculum and pastoral support, promoting a strong ethos and culture Support the school to take a holistic approach to promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing
LOCAL AUTHORITIES ARE EXPECTED TO:
Work in conjunction with relevant services such as local mental health services and provide access to voluntary sector services and council services where necessary Promote and protect the health and wellbeing of the school-age population Work to signpost schools to support available in the local community and prioritise targeting support for children and young people most in need. Review EHC plans where required
ASSESSMENT OF NEED – include signposting to internal and external provision:
BENEFITS OF INTERVENTIONS:
Promote child/young person’s mental health and wellbeing Increase attendance Engagement with learning
ATTENDANCE DATA:
Attendance - Start date of Plan-
Term 1 -
Term 2 -
Term 3 -
Term 4 -
Term 5 -
Term 6 -

LETTERS /MEETINGS			
ACTIONS BY WHO AND WHEN:			
ACTION:	BY WHO:	REVIEW DATE:	
REVIEW DATE: Ongoing			
SIGNED BY: Kelly Lovell	SIGNED BY: Sheila Humphrey	SIGNED BY: Alison Barton	SIGNED BY: (parent/s)



**ABSENCE REQUEST FORM
(INCLUDING HOLIDAYS DURING TERM TIME)**

NOTES TO PARENTS/CARERS

The Government and Local Authority states that Head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless in exceptional circumstances. The school has an additional 2 week’s holiday in the Academic Year to give parents/carers the choice of a holiday outside of the main holiday times, so any request for absence during term time for a family holiday will not be authorised unless in exceptional circumstances. If your decision remains unchanged and you decide to take your child out of school, it will be recorded as unauthorised. and may be subject to a penalty notice.

If the request is for holiday/days leave in term time you must have Parental Responsibility and be the parent with whom the child normally lives. If you do not have Parental Responsibility and/or normally live with the child, you must seek the consent of the parent who does, and that person should complete this form

When deciding whether to allow term time leave, for any reason, the school will consider: -

- The time and duration of the leave
- Your child’s record of attendance
- Learning that will be missed

WARNING: If the school refuses your request and the child is still taken out of school, this will be recorded as an **unauthorised absence and may be subject to a penalty notice** (please refer to CofR School Attendance and Child Absent from Education Policy)

I wish to apply for

NAME[S] OF CHILD[REN] _____ CLASS _____

_____ CLASS _____

to be authorised as being absent from school from _____ to _____ inclusive

REASON FOR REQUEST FOR ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME:

IF HOLIDAY REQUEST, EXPLAIN THE EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH MEAN THAT THE HOLIDAY CANNOT BE TAKEN DURING A SCHOOL HOLIDAY:

Signature of Parent/Carer _____ Date _____

AUTHORISED The school agrees to your child being absent from school on the specified dates.

Absence dates / / **to** / /

UNAUTHORISED The school does not authorise your request for leave in term time for the following reason:

SIGNED Head Teacher Date