



With Love We Flourish

Attendance Policy

Author

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'Let all that you do be done in love'

1 Corinthians 16:14

Nurturing individuals to be the best they can be in an inclusive environment where they feel valued, respected and know they belong.

National guidance

This policy was drawn up adhering to the DfE statutory guidance regarding attendance at school (see [here](#)). We also adhere to the linked 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, and Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Working collaboratively with our Wheatley Partnership primary and secondary schools (WALP)

This policy has been developed with all primary schools and Wheatley Park secondary school in order for us to work consistently with families across our group of schools.

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Our vision

‘Let all that you do be done in love’
1 Corinthians 16:14

Nurturing individuals to be the best they can be in an inclusive environment where they feel valued, respected and know they belong.

Opportunity for All
Working together
Loving to Learn
Supporting, Sharing, Serving

Good attendance begins with Great Milton being somewhere every pupil enjoys learning in a safe, calm and nurturing environment. Therefore, we maintain high standards of behaviour based on the expectations that students are always Ready, Respectful and Responsible - our ‘Three Rs’. This provides the conditions for all pupils to flourish.

With this in mind, improving attendance is everyone’s business at Great Milton. We work hard to build a culture of community and belonging for students and work hard to overcome any barriers to attendance. We want every pupil to feel well cared for all the time as a prerequisite for effective learning to take place.

As part of this work we always look to build strong relationships and work jointly with families, listening to and understanding barriers to attendance and working in partnership with families to remove them. This means children 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 being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

With these high expectations and culture of belonging students are able to be here to be **happy, healthy** and **successful**.

Developing and maintaining a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance

Building good attendance is an integral part of Great Milton’s ethos and culture. As such we:

- Ensure this policy is easily accessible to leaders, staff, pupils, and parents, including being published on the school’s website (see here). Parents are sent it with initial information when pupils join the school and reminded of it at the beginning of each school year and when it is updated.
- We review and update the policy as necessary, as the barriers to attendance evolve quickly. In doing so, we seek the views of pupils and parents.
- Recognise the importance of having good attendance, alongside good behaviour is a central part of our values and day to day life.
- Recognise that absence is a symptom and that improving pupil’s attendance is part of improving the pupil’s overall welfare.
- Recognise improving attendance is a school leadership issue and have a designated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance in school and liaising with pupils, parents and external agencies where needed.
- Make sure all teaching and non-teaching staff know the importance of good attendance, are consistent in their communication with pupils and parents, and receive the training and professional development they need.
- Make sure attendance support and improvement is appropriately resourced, including where applicable through effective use of pupil premium funding. This includes our attendance and pastoral support staff who work in partnership with families, the local authority’s School Attendance Support Team and other partners.
- Set high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils and communicate these regularly to pupils and

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parents through all available channels.

- Visibly demonstrate the benefits of good attendance throughout school life. This includes in displays, assemblies and in registration periods.
- Recognise that attendance is never 'solved' and is a continuous process by regularly reviewing and updating messages, processes, and strategies.
- Recognise children missing education can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, sexual abuse and child sexual and criminal exploitation.

Section 3: Attendance Expectations

We aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a 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 being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

We aim for all students to achieve over 97% attendance each academic year. This equates to attending at least 184 days of the 190 that students are expected in school (or 368 of the 380 attendance sessions).

Our Headteacher proactively manages and looks to improve attendance across the school ultimately supported by the effective work of all staff.

To achieve good attendance involves us successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance, at home, in school or more broadly. To achieve this we always aim to work collaboratively with families and local partners using a 'support first' approach.

We rigorously monitor pupil attendance each week to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.

When a pattern is spotted we discuss with pupils and parents to listen to and understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them. Removing these barriers in school and helping pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.

Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, we will work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through an 'attendance contract'.

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, we will enforce attendance through statutory intervention: a penalty notice in line with the National Framework or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

Section 4: Celebrating Good Attendance

We visibly demonstrate the benefits of good attendance throughout school life at Great Milton. We use our 'attendance ladder' to visualise the importance of pupil attendance with our target for all pupils to be in the 'Green Group' (Over 97%).

We use this attendance information every week to update the school website and to praise individuals and classes verbally for good attendance or for improved attendance.

Rewards & Events

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We are mindful that in primary school, pupil attendance is out of their control. For this reason, we do not publicly reward pupils for good attendance. Instead, we send termly emails home to give recognition to those parents who have committed to >96% attendance.

Section 5: Day to day processes

5.1 Recording attendance

Registers are legal records and we must preserve every entry in the attendance or admission register for 6 years from the date the data was entered.

We take the attendance register at the start of each morning session of each school day and once at the beginning of the afternoon session. On each occasion we must record whether each registered pupil is physically present in school or, if not, the reason they are not in school by using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from [regulation 10](#) of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

This means that any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised, as an approved educational activity (attendance out of school) or unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

Only the Headteacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

Any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days will be reported to the Local Authority. This is a legal requirement. The school will include details of the action that they have taken to address the absence.

5.2 Lateness/punctuality

Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 8.45am and will close at **9.10am**. The registers will remain open for a further 5 minutes i.e. until **9.15am**.

Pupils arriving after the start of school but before the end of the registration period will be treated for statistical purposes, as present, but will be coded as late (L) before registers close.

Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence (U) unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. an early morning medical appointment. In such cases the appropriate absence code will be entered.

The afternoon registration will be taken after lunch break has ended: 1.05pm.

Pupils arriving late to school (once the gates are locked) must be signed in by their parent/carer at reception. If this is after 9.15am, this will be recorded as unauthorised (U) unless a reasonable explanation is given. Persistent lateness will lead to a meeting to discuss ways school can support getting to school on time.

Please see section 11 for details of when a Penalty Notice will be considered if your child is recorded with unauthorised absences due to arriving after the start to school.

5.3 What to do if my child is absent?

First Day Absence

If your child is unable to attend due to illness (both physical and mental health related) parents should notify us on the first day the child is unable to attend. Parents are expected to contact the school before 9.00am on the first day of absence and each subsequent absence using ParentMail, emailing the school office or phoning the school office.

Please note that we must provide the local authority with the full name and address of all pupils of compulsory school age who have been recorded with code I (illness) and who the school has reasonable grounds to believe will miss 15 days consecutively

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or cumulatively because of sickness. This is to help the school and local authority to agree any provision needed to ensure continuity of education for pupils who cannot attend because of health needs, in line with the statutory guidance on education for [children with health needs who cannot attend school](#).

We do not routinely expect parents to provide medical evidence to support illness absences. Instead we will only request medical evidence in cases where clarification is required 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.

If no contact is made the school attendance officer will phone the parent/s to ascertain the reason for their absence. When the reason for absence has been established the attendance officer will record this on the student’s attendance record and apply the appropriate code.

Alongside these measures, in order to support students to be happy, healthy and successful we call home, when possible, each day for any pupil absence. The call provides a further opportunity to build the relationship between home and the school. It will include, for example, making sure parents/ carers have a back-up plan if their child misses school transport.

(note: Notes from daily calls are recorded centrally here with information then transferred to our MIS by the attendance team. If a pupil is absent for 3 consecutive days this information is also added by the staff member making the call to CPOMS.)

Where absence is recorded as unexplained in the attendance register, the correct code will be inputted as soon as the reason is ascertained, but no later than 5 working days after the session.

Frequent Absence

In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve any concerns with parents/carers.

Where incidents of poor attendance and/or lateness are identified through monitoring parents/carers will be notified in writing that this is a cause for concern. If this continues, the school will invite parents/carers in to discuss causes and ways forward.

Ten days’ absence

We have a legal duty to report the absence of any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days. If the child is not seen and contact has not been established with the named parent/carer then the local authority is notified that the child is at risk of being missing. So please help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have at least two up-to-date contact names and numbers. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.

Section 6: What can I do to encourage my child to attend school?

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:
Ensure their child attends every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies.	Have a clear school attendance policy on the school website which all staff, pupils and parents understand.
Notify the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent (e.g. sickness).	Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance.
Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance.	Accurately complete admission and attendance registers.
Book any medical appointments around the school day where possible.	Have robust daily processes to follow up absence.

Section 7: How Great Milton supports families with school attendance

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Our support first approach is based on building strong relationships and working jointly with families. We treat all pupils and parents with dignity and staff should model respectful relationships to build a positive relationship between home and school that can be the foundation of good attendance.

In working in partnership with parents, we discuss the link between attendance and attainment and wider wellbeing, and challenge parents' views where they have misconceptions about what 'good' attendance looks like.

Through our regular analysis of individual level attendance if we identify pupils who need support we will take the following steps:

In the first instance:

1. Inform families that we are concerned about a child's absence through our 'notice to improve/ attendance stage 1' letter, offering the opportunity to talk to us in order for us to further understand the barriers to attendance the pupil or family is experiencing.
2. Where a pattern of absence is at risk of becoming, or becomes, problematic schools should draw on these relationships and listen to and understand the barriers to attendance the pupil or family is experiencing.
3. Support pupils and parents by working together to address any in-school barriers to attendance.
4. Where barriers are outside of the school's control, all partners should work together to support pupils and parents to access any support they may need voluntarily. As a minimum, this should include meeting with pupils and parents at risk of persistent or severe absence to understand barriers to being in school and agreeing actions or interventions to address them. This may include referrals to services and organisations that can provide support. These actions should be regularly discussed and reviewed together with pupils and families.

Where absence intensifies, so will the support provided with us working in tandem with the local authority and other relevant partners:

1. Persistent and severe absence: where absence escalates and pupils miss 10% or more of school (equivalent to 1 day or more a fortnight across a full school year), schools and local authorities are expected to work together to put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re engage these pupils.
2. If the needs and barriers are individual to the pupil this may include provision of mentoring, 1-2-1 tuition or out of hours learning, or where appropriate an education, health and care plan or alternative provision.
3. Where the needs are wider and a whole family response is more appropriate, this is likely to include a voluntary early help assessment.
4. Where engagement in support is proving challenging, schools should hold more formal conversations with the parents (and pupil where they are old enough to understand). This is likely to be led by the headteacher and may include the school's point of contact in the local authority School Attendance Support Team. These meetings should clearly explain the consequences of persistent and severe absence to the pupil and family and the potential need for legal intervention in future, but should also be an opportunity to continue to listen to and understand the barriers to attendance and explain the help that is available to avoid those consequences.

Where voluntary support has not been effective and/or has not been engaged with we work with the local authority to:

1. Put formal support in place in the form of an attendance contract or an education supervision order (see section 10 for more details)
2. Issue a Notice to Improve and/or penalty notice where support would not be appropriate or has not been successful or engaged with and it is likely to change the parents' behaviour.
3. Intensify support through statutory children's social care involvement where there are safeguarding concerns, especially where absence becomes severe (below 50% attendance).
4. Prosecute parents where all other routes have failed or are not deemed appropriate. This could include making the case for a community or parenting order where the parent is convicted to secure engagement with support.

Where interventions are failing, all parties should work together to identify the reasons why and either adjust or change the approach. In very few cases will all options have been exhausted therefore partners are expected to work together to continue offering new approaches. If a particular form of support is refused or does not work initially, schools and partners are expected to provide further opportunities to engage in that support, try something else or ultimately take legal action if support is not

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appropriate.

Through this process we:

- Ensure that the best placed person in the school works alongside and supports the family and wherever possible is kept consistent.
- Will take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for absence and understand the importance of school as a place of safety and support rather than reaching immediately for punitive approaches.

Section 8: Pupils absent from school due to mental or physical ill health

Many children will experience normal but difficult emotions that make them nervous about attending school, such as worries about friendships, schoolwork, assessments or variable moods. It is important to note that these pupils are still expected to attend school regularly - in many instances, attendance at school may serve to help with the underlying issue as being away from school might exacerbate it, and a prolonged period of absence may heighten anxious feelings about attending in future.

In cases of both long term physical or mental ill health, school staff are not expected to diagnose or treat physical or mental health conditions, but we will work together with families and other agencies with the aim of ensuring regular attendance for every pupil. This will include:

- Facilitating any relevant pastoral support with the clear aim of improving attendance as much as possible whilst supporting the underlying health issue.
- Considering adjustments to practice and policies to help meet the needs of pupils who are struggling to attend school, as well as making formal reasonable adjustments under section 20 of the Equality Act 2010 where a pupil has a disability. Any adjustments will be agreed by, and regularly reviewed, with the pupil and their parents.
- Ensuring joined up pastoral care is in place where needed and consider whether a time-limited phased return to school would be appropriate, for example for those affected by anxious feelings about school attendance.
- Making a sickness return to the local authority if a pupil is recorded in the attendance register as absent using code I (unable to attend because of sickness) and there are reasonable grounds to believe the pupil will have to miss 15 consecutive school days or more for illness or the pupil's total number of school days missed during the current school year because of illness (whether consecutive or cumulative) will reach or exceed 15 school days.

For pupils with special educational needs and disabilities, we will:

- Work in partnership with parents to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities, including, where applicable, ensuring the provision outlined in the pupil's education, health and care plan is accessed.
- Work in partnership families to help support routines where school transport is regularly being missed and work with other partners to encourage the scheduling of additional support interventions or medical appointments outside of the main school day.
- Establish strategies for removing the in-school barriers these pupils face, including considering support or reasonable adjustments for uniform, transport, routines, access to support in school and lunchtime arrangements.
- Consider adjustments to practice and policies to help meet the needs of pupils who are struggling to attend school, as well as making formal reasonable adjustments under section 20 of the Equality Act 2010 where a pupil has a disability. Any adjustments should be agreed by, and regularly reviewed with the pupil and their parents.
- Ensure joined up pastoral care is in place where needed and consider whether a time-limited phased return to school would be appropriate.

Attendance is everyone's business so in many of these cases we will not be able to fully support a pupil without the assistance of a range of other agencies. We will:

- Make use of school nursing services and mental health support teams where they are available.
- Consider whether additional support from other external partners (including the local authority, children and young people's mental health services, GPs or other health services) would be appropriate and make referrals.
- Where external support is provided, work together with those services to deliver any subsequent support.

If the child has an education health and care plan, school staff should:

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- Communicate with the local authority where a pupil's attendance falls or they become aware of barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs.
- Where possible agree adjustments to its policies and practices that are consistent with the special educational provision set out in the education health and care plan in collaboration with parents.
- Where needed work with the local authority to review and amend the education health and care plan to incorporate the additional or different attendance support identified.

Medical evidence for recording absences should only be needed in a minority of cases. Where a pupil's health need means they need reasonable adjustments or support because it is complex or long term, schools can seek medical evidence to better understand the needs of the pupil and identify the most suitable provision in line with the statutory guidance in [supporting pupils at school with medical conditions](#) or [arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs](#)

Section 9: Regularly analyse attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require support with their attendance and put effective strategies in place

At Great Milton regular data analysis through Integris allows us to monitor and analyse weekly attendance patterns and trends and deliver intervention support in a targeted way to pupils and families.

This analysis is used to provide regular attendance reports to tutors to facilitate discussions with pupils.

We undertake fortnightly individual level analysis to identify pupils who need support and focus staff efforts on developing targeted actions for those cases. This focuses on all severities of absence to identify pupils who can be supported earlier before patterns become entrenched.

Thorough analysis is conducted each half term through our headteacher's report to governors to identify patterns and trends. This includes analysis of pupils and cohorts and identifies patterns in uses of certain codes, days of poor attendance and where appropriate, subjects which have low lesson attendance.

This analysis is benchmarked at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement.

This report identifies the specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance. The impact of these strategies is monitored with feedback provided in the same reports to evaluate the approaches and inform future strategies.

Section 10: Attendance legal intervention

As stated above, as absence is so often a symptom of wider issues a family is facing we always work together with other local partners to understand the barriers to attendance and provide support.

Where that is not successful, or is not engaged with, the law protects pupils' right to an education and provides a range of legal interventions to formalise attendance improvement efforts, and where all other avenues have been exhausted, enforce it through prosecuting parents. Attendance legal intervention can only be used for pupils of compulsory school age with decisions being made on an individual case by case basis.

We make use of the full range of legal interventions rather than relying solely on penalty notices or prosecution, deciding whether to use them in an individual case after considering the individual circumstances of a family. These are:

10.1 Attendance contracts

An attendance contract is a formal written agreement between a parent and the school to address irregular attendance at school or alternative provision. An attendance contract is not legally binding but allows a more formal route to secure engagement with support where a voluntary early help plan has not worked or is not deemed appropriate. An attendance contract is not a punitive tool, it is intended to provide support and offer an alternative to prosecution. Parents cannot be compelled to enter an attendance contract, and they cannot be agreed in a parent's absence.

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There is no obligation on the school to offer an attendance contract, and it may not be appropriate in every instance, but an attendance contract will always be explored before moving forward to an education supervision order or prosecution.

The aim from the outset should be for the parent(s), and the pupil when they are old enough, the school and the local authority to work in partnership.

Where we decide to use an attendance contract, a meeting will be arranged with the parent(s) and the pupil. The invitation to this meeting will be sent in writing.

The meeting will explain the purpose of an attendance contract and why using one would be beneficial in the family's circumstances. The parent(s) will be asked to outline their views on the pupil's attendance at school, any underlying issues and how they believe these should be addressed. The meeting will also allow them to share their views on the idea of an attendance contract and what type of support they think would be helpful to secure the pupil's regular attendance.

Attendance contracts do not have a minimum or maximum duration. Each individual attendance contract should set out the duration it will be in place, and most are for between 3 and 12 months but can be longer if needed.

Where a parent fails to attend the meeting without good reason or notification, further attempts should be made to contact them and arrange another meeting with all attempts at support being recorded.

One attendance contract may be arranged with all parents, or in circumstances where it is desirable to have different requirements for each parent then separate attendance contracts for each parent will be arranged.

10.2 Non-compliance with an attendance contract

We will work in partnership with the parent to gain their cooperation and compliance throughout the attendance contract process.

Where a parent does not comply with the requirements set out in the attendance contract, the lead practitioner should contact the parent and seek an explanation and decide whether it is reasonable, and the attendance contract remains useful. If the explanation shows that the attendance contract is proving difficult to comply with through no fault of the parent, then a meeting should be arranged with the parent to review and amend it.

Where no explanation is given, or the lead practitioner is not satisfied with the explanation, they will serve the parent with a warning to explain that the attendance contract is not working and may be terminated, and another course of action pursued, if the parent does not engage. This will be in the form of a letter, with a record of it being duly kept.

If there are further instances of non-compliance, the lead practitioner will arrange a meeting with the parent to review the attendance contract and discuss how it can be made to work.

Following this meeting, the school and/or local authority should decide whether the noncompliance is undermining the contract to the extent that it is no longer useful in which case an alternative course of action (such as a different legal intervention) would need to be decided upon. The decision and reasons will be recorded.

If the pupil's irregular attendance continues or escalates to the point where prosecution is deemed appropriate any failure or refusal may be presented as evidence in the case. It is therefore important that any non-compliance with the contract is recorded so that it can be presented in court if necessary.

Section 11: Penalty Notices

Penalty notices are issued to parents as an alternative to prosecution where they have failed to ensure that their child of compulsory school age regularly attends the school where they are registered or, in certain cases, at a place where alternative provision is provided.

Penalty notices can be used by Great Milton where the pupil's absence has been recorded with one or more of the unauthorised codes (see section 14 on unauthorised absences) and that absence(s) constitutes an offence. A penalty notice can be issued to each parent liable for the offence or offences. They should usually only be issued to the parent or parents who have allowed the absence (regardless of which parent has applied for a leave of absence).

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11.1 National threshold when it is appropriate to issue a penalty notice

We consider whether a penalty notice is appropriate in each individual case where one of our pupils reaches the national threshold for considering a penalty notice.

The threshold is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks. A school week means any week in which there is at least one school session. This can be met with any combination of unauthorised absence (e.g. 4 sessions of holiday taken in term time plus 6 sessions of arriving late after the register closes all within 10 school weeks). These sessions can be consecutive (e.g. 10 sessions of holiday in one week) or not (e.g. 6 sessions of unauthorised absence taken in 1 week and 1 per week for the next 4 weeks). The period of 10 school weeks can also span different terms or school years (e.g. 2 sessions of unauthorised absence in the Summer Term and a further 8 within the Autumn Term).

When we become aware that the threshold has been met, we make the following considerations to decide whether to issue a penalty notice in each individual case:

Is support appropriate in this case?

If yes, we will continue with the existing support without a penalty notice or issue a Notice to Improve if that support is not working or is not being engaged with. A penalty notice can be issued if either has not worked.

If no, for example a holiday in term time, a penalty notice will be issued subject to the other conditions below.

- Is a penalty notice the best available tool to improve attendance and change parental behaviour for this particular family or would further support or one of the other legal interventions be more appropriate?
- Is issuing a penalty notice in this case appropriate after considering any obligations under the Equality Act 2010 such as where a pupil has a disability?

If the answer to either of the above two questions is yes, then a penalty notice will be issued. If not, another tool or legal intervention should be used to improve attendance.

Please note:

- The National Framework does not prevent a penalty notice from being used in other cases where an offence has been committed but before doing so authorised officers are expected to make the same considerations as set out above.
- If in an individual case we believe a penalty notice would be appropriate, we retain the discretion to issue one before the threshold is met. This might apply for example, where parents are deliberately avoiding the national threshold by taking several term time holidays below threshold, or for repeated absence for birthdays or other family events.

11.2 Notices to improve

A Notice to Improve is a final opportunity for a parent to engage in support and improve attendance before a penalty notice is issued. If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate but offers of support have not been engaged with by the parent or have not worked, a Notice to Improve should usually be sent to give parents a final chance to engage in support.

A Notice to Improve does not need to be issued in cases where support is not appropriate and an authorised officer can choose not to use one in any case, including cases where support is appropriate but they do not expect a Notice to Improve would have any behavioural impact (e.g. because the parent has already received one for a similar offence).

Where they are used, it should be clear that it is the most appropriate intervention to change parental behaviour and in making the decision to use an intervention, headteachers and local authority officers should have regard to their safeguarding duties as set out in the statutory guidance on Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Section 12: Part-time timetables

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. In some circumstances their education may be provided partially at school and partially at another educational setting or through education otherwise than at a school in line with section 19 of the Education Act 1996 or section 42 or 61 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Time away from school to receive education in other ways will be recorded in the attendance register using the appropriate codes.

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In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for us to provide a pupil of compulsory school age with less than full-time education through a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending school or another setting full-time and a part-time timetable is used to help the pupil access as much education as possible. A part-time timetable will not be used to manage a pupil's behaviour.

A part-time timetable will:

- Have the agreement of both the school and the parent the pupil normally lives with.
- Have a clear ambition and be part of the pupil's wider support, health care or reintegration plan.
- Have regular review dates which include the pupil and their parents to ensure it is only in place for the shortest time necessary.
- Have a proposed end date that takes into account the circumstances of the pupil, after which the pupil is expected to attend full-time, either at school or alternative provision. It can, however, be extended as part of the regular review process. In some limited cases, a pupil with a long-term health condition may require a part time timetable for a prolonged period.

Where the pupil has a social worker, we will keep them informed and involved in the process.

If the pupil has an education health and care plan, we will discuss the part-time timetable with the local authority so that any support package that is in place can be reviewed as swiftly as possible.

In agreeing to a part-time timetable, we have agreed to a pupil being absent from school for part of the week or day and therefore must record the absence accordingly (normally using code X or C2 - see section 14 for full details of absence codes).

For students attending alternative provision, this may include 'remote education'. In such cases [this non statutory guidance](#) for schools is followed including absence being recorded as 'authorised'.

Section 13: Request for leave of absence

The Headteacher can grant a leave of absence when a pupil needs to be absent from school with permission. Great Milton restricts leave of absence in line with DfE policy to the specific circumstances set out in regulation 11 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. These circumstances are:

- **Taking part in a regulated performance or employment abroad:** in line with a licence issued by a local authority or Justice of the Peace or a body of persons approval (BOPA).
- **Attending an interview:** for entry into another educational institution or for future employment where requested in advance by a parent the pupil normally lives with.
- **A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable:** where the pupil is of compulsory school age, both the parent who the pupil normally lives with and school agree the pupil should temporarily be educated on a part-time basis for exceptional reasons and have agreed the times and dates when the pupil will be expected to attend school as part of that timetable.
- **Exceptional circumstances:** All schools can grant a leave of absence for other exceptional circumstances at their discretion. it must be requested in advance by a parent who the pupil normally lives with. The Headteacher will consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.
- **Study leave:** for public examinations, as agreed in advance with a parent the pupil normally lives with. Please note this does not include any internal examinations such as mocks as study leave should not be granted in such cases.

Great Milton does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance. Leave of absence will also not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

To request a leave of absence parents must ask in the office for a form and return it to the office.

Section 14: The difference between authorised and unauthorised absence

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On each occasion the register is taken, the appropriate national attendance and absence code must be entered for every pupil (of both compulsory and non-compulsory school age) whose name is listed in the admission register at the time.

The codes enable schools to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way and are used to collect statistics. The data helps schools, local authorities, and the government gain a greater understanding of the delivery of education and the level of, and reason for, absence.

Please note it is the school that decides whether to accept the reasons given by the child and/or their parents/carers for their absence.

The codes are summarised below:

Attending the school

1. Code / \: Present at the school / = morning session \ = afternoon session
2. Code U: Late arrival after the register is closed

Attending a place other than the school

1. Code K: Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
2. Code V: Attending an educational visit or trip
3. Code P: Participating in a sporting activity
4. Code W: Attending work experience
5. Code B: Attending any other approved educational activity
6. Code D: Dual registered at another school

As set out in the DfE's guidance on '[Providing remote education](#)', pupils who are absent from school and receiving remote education still need to be recorded as absent using the most appropriate absence code. Schools should keep a record of, and monitor pupil's engagement with remote education, but this is not formally tracked in the attendance register.

Absent - leave of absence

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

1. Code C1: Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.
2. Code M: Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment
3. Code J1: Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
4. Code S: Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination
5. Code X: Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
6. Code C2: Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
7. Code C: Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance

Absent - other authorised reasons

1. Code T: Parent travelling for occupational purposes
2. Code R: Religious observance
3. Code I: Illness (not medical or dental appointment)
4. Code E: Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made

Absent - unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause

1. Code Q: Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements
2. Code Y1: Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
3. Code Y2: Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
4. Code Y3: Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
5. Code Y4: Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
6. Code Y5: Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
7. Code Y6: Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law

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

Absent - unauthorised absence

A student's absence is recorded as unauthorised in the following cases:

- Code G: Holiday not granted by the school
- Code N: Reason for absence not yet established (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.
- Code O: Absent in other or unknown circumstances
- Code U: Arrived in school after registration closed

Administrative codes

- Code Z: Prospective pupil not on admission register
- Code #: Planned whole school closure

Section 15: Sharing of attendance information

We share daily attendance data to the Secretary of State through our electronic management information system containing the required information that can be accessed by DfE

In addition, as legally required, we share information from our registers with the local authority, As a minimum this includes:

- New Pupil and Deletion returns: notifying the local authority when a pupil's name is added to or deleted from the school admission register outside of standard transition times.
- Attendance returns: providing the local authority with the names and addresses of all pupils of compulsory school age who fail to attend school regularly or have been absent for a continuous period of ten school days where their absence has been recorded with one or more of the codes statistically classified as unauthorised (G, N, O, and/or U). Local authorities must agree This is no less frequently than once per calendar month.
- Sickness returns: providing the local authority with the full name and address of all pupils of compulsory school age who have been recorded with code I (illness) and who the school has reasonable grounds to believe will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness. Only one sickness return is required for a continuous period of sickness in a school year. This is to help the school and local authority to agree any provision needed to ensure continuity of education for pupils who cannot attend because of health needs, in line with the statutory guidance on education for [children with health needs who cannot attend school](#).

Finally, to facilitate effective working across the local authority area, we inform a pupil's social worker and/or youth offending team worker if there are unexplained absences from school.

Appendices:

- Great Milton Attendance Ladder.
- Absence Request Form.