Durham and Newcastle Diocesan Learning Trust

Company Number 10847279

Greenhead CE Nursery & Primary School

Attendance and Absence Policy

2025 to 2026

"Every child matters and no child is ever left behind..."

"Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them;

for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs."

Luke 18:15-17

Policy Reviewed and Adopted by Local Academy Council:

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Contents:

Statement of intent

1. Legal framework
2. Roles and responsibilities
3. Definitions
4. Attendance expectations
5. Absence procedures
6. Attendance register
7. Authorising parental absence requests
8. SEND- and health-related absence
9. Leave during lunch times
10. Truancy
11. Missing children
12. Attendance intervention
13. Working with parents or carers to improve attendance
14. Persistent Absence (PA)
15. Legal intervention
16. Monitoring and analysing absence
17. Training of staff
18. Deletion of names from the admission register
19. Monitoring and review

Appendices

A. Attendance Monitoring Procedures

Statement of intent

At the heart of our vision is our commitment to ensure all of our schools are places where children and young people develop and thrive academically, socially, culturally and spiritually. The drive for excellence and effectiveness in our schools is paramount. The enabling of every child to flourish in their potential as a child of God is a sign and expression of the Kingdom and is at the heart of the Trust's distinctive mission.

We believe that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school.

We understand that barriers to attendance are complex, and that some pupils find it harder than others to attend school; therefore, we will continue to prioritise cultivating a safe and supportive environment in our schools, as well as strong and trusting relationships with pupils and parents or carers. We aim for our schools to be recognised by the wider community as a centre of reconciliation and support, in how they act of our attendance and absence policy with compassion for all.

At **Greenhead CE Nursery & Primary School** we take a whole-school approach to securing good attendance and recognise the impact that our efforts in other areas – such as the curriculum, behaviour standards, bullying, SEND support, pastoral support, and the effective use of resources such as pupil premium – can have on improving pupil attendance.

We are committed to:

- Promoting and modelling high attendance and its benefits.
- Ensuring equality and fairness for all.
- Ensuring this attendance policy is clear and easily understood by staff, pupils and parents or carers.
- Intervening early and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.
- Building strong relationships with families to overcome barriers to attendance.
- Working collaboratively with other schools in the DNDLT and in the local area, as well as other agencies.
- Ensuring parents or carers follow the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any SEND they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- Regularly monitoring and analysing attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require more support.

The school's attendance lead is **name of staff member**, and can be contacted via **greenhead@westtynefederation.uk**. Staff, parents or carers and pupils will be expected to contact the attendance lead for queries or concerns about attendance.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996 and 2002
- The Children Act 1989
- The Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003
- The Sentencing Act 2020
- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- The Education (Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders) (England) Regulations 2007
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007, as amended
- The Education (Information about Individual Pupils) (England) Regulations) 2013
- The Children and Young Persons Act 1933 and 1963
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)
- The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- DfE (2024) 'Working together to improve school attendance'
- DfE (2025) 'Keeping children safe in education 2025'
- DfE (2025) 'Children missing education'
- DfE (2024) 'Sharing daily pupil attendance data'
- DfE (2024) 'Providing remote education'
- DfE (2024) 'Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy

- Children's Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy.

2. Roles and responsibilities

The academy council has overall responsibility for:

- Monitoring the implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Promoting the importance of good attendance through the school's vision and policies.
- Working with the SLT to set goals for attendance and providing support and challenge around delivery against those goals.
- Regularly reviewing attendance data.
- Sharing effective practice on attendance management and improvement across DNDLT schools.
- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.
- Having regard to 'Keeping children safe in education' when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Ensuring school staff receive adequate training on attendance

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Appointing a member of the SLT to the lead on attendance.
- Ensuring all parents or carers are aware of the school's attendance expectations and procedures.
- Ensuring that every pupil has access to full-time education and will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence.

Staff are responsible for:

- Following this policy and ensuring pupils do so too.
- Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.

- Where designated, taking the attendance register at the relevant times during the school day.

The attendance lead is responsible for:

- The overall strategic approach to attendance in school.
- Developing a clear vision for improving attendance.
- Monitoring attendance and the impact of interventions.
- Analysing attendance data and identifying areas of intervention and improvement.
- Communicating with pupils and parents or carers with regard to attendance.
- Leading a compassionate approach when listening to parents and pupils regarding barriers to attendance.
- Following up on incidents of persistent poor attendance.
- Enforcing attendance through statutory interventions in cases of persistent poor attendance where other support has not succeeded.
- Informing the LA of any pupil being deleted from the admission and attendance registers.

Pupils are responsible for:

- Attending their lessons and any agreed activities when at school.
- Arriving punctually to lessons when at school.
- Engaging in any support provided by the school to improve attendance.

Parents or carers are responsible for:

- Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.
- Providing the school with more than one emergency contact number.
- Updating the school if their details change.
- The attendance of their children at school.
- Promoting good attendance with their children.
- Proactively engaging with any attendance support offered by the school and the LA.
- Notifying the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent.
- Requesting leave of absence only in exceptional circumstances, and in advance.
- Booking any medical appointments around school where possible.
- Engaging in any family-based support implemented by the school to improve attendance.

3. Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

Absence:

- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Not attending school for any reason

Authorised absence:

- Code C1: Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad
- Code M: Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment
- Code J1: Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
- Code S: Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination
- Code X: Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
- Code C2: Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to part-time timetable
- Code D: Dual registered at another school
- Code C: Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances
- Code T: Parent travelling for occupational purposes
- Code R: Religious observance
- Code I: Illness (not medical or dental appointment)
- Code E: Suspended or permanently excluded

Unauthorised absence:

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

  Unauthorised absence would include:-

  - Parents or carers keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason
  - Truancy before or during the school day
  - Absences which have never been properly explained
  - Arrival at school after the register has closed
  - Absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays

- Absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed
- Leaving school for no reason during the day

Persistent absence (PA):

- Missing 10 percent or more of schooling across the year for any reason- equivalent to one day or more a fortnight across a full school year

4. Attendance expectations

The school has high expectations for pupils' attendance and punctuality, and ensures that these expectations are communicated regularly to parents or carers and pupils.

Pupils will be expected to attend school punctually every day they are required to be at school, for the full day.

The school day starts at 08.45 and pupils will be in their classroom, ready to begin lessons at this time; therefore, pupils will be expected to be on the school site by **08.40**. Pupils will have a morning break 10.40, which will last until **10.57**, and a lunch break at **12.00**, which will last until **12.57** pupils will be expected to have returned from each break and be ready to recommence learning at the stated times.

Registers will be taken as follows throughout the school day:

- The morning register will be marked by **08.45 am**. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time. Pupils attending after this time will receive a mark to show that they were on site, but this will count as a late mark
- The morning register will close at **09.30 am**. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they do not attend school before this time
- The afternoon register will be marked by **13.00 pm**. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time
- The afternoon register will close at **13.15 pm**. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they are not present

Parents/carers and where appropriate pupils will be encouraged to communicate any concerns related to attendance and absence as soon as possible to the relevant member of staff.

5. Absence procedures

[Amend this section in line with the day-to-day absence procedures in your school. The following section is an example of a good practice absence procedure.

Parents or carers will be required to contact the school office via telephone before **9:00am** on the first day of their child's absence – they will be expected to provide an explanation for the absence and an estimation of how long the absence will last, e.g. one school day.

Where a pupil is absent, and their parent has not contacted the school by **the close of the morning register** to report the absence, administrative staff will contact the parent by **telephone call** as soon as is practicable on the first day that they do not attend school.

The school will always follow up any absences in order to:

- Ascertain the reason for the absence.
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is being taken.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
- Identify the correct code to use to enter the data onto the school census system.

Where a pupil is absent for more than **three** school days in a row, or more than **14 sessions / 7 school days** in **one term**, the pupil's parent will be expected to provide a signed letter with an explanation for the absence(s).

The school will not request medical evidence in most circumstances where a pupil is absent due to illness; however, the school reserves the right to request supporting evidence where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness.

In the case of PA, arrangements will be made for parents or carers to speak to the attendance lead. The school will inform the LA, on a **termly** basis, of the details of pupils who fail to attend regularly, or who have missed 10 school days or more without authorisation.

Where a pupil has not returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence, or is absent from school without authorisation for 20 consecutive school days, the school will remove the pupil from the admissions register if the school and the LA have failed to establish the whereabouts of the pupil after making reasonable enquiries.

Schools are required to notify the Local Authority of all pupils who fail to attend school regularly or who have been absent for a continuous period of 10 school days where this absence has not been authorised. The school will provide the LA with the names and addresses of all pupils of compulsory school age who fail to attend school regularly or who have been absent for a continuous period of ten school days, where their absence has been recorded using one or more of the unauthorised absence codes (G, N, O, and/or U), as defined in national attendance guidance. The school will agree the frequency of these attendance returns with the LA, ensuring that they are submitted no less frequently than once per calendar month. If a pupil's attendance drops below **90 percent**, a formal meeting will be arranged between the attendance lead and the pupil's parent or carer.

Where a pupil does not return from a period of leave or has a continuous period of absence, the school will work jointly with the LA to carry out reasonable enquiries under the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 to establish the pupil's whereabouts. In conducting these enquiries, the school and it's LA will liaise with the Home LA. If, following these enquiries, the pupil's name is removed from the school's admission register, the Home LA will be expected to investigate whether the pupil should be classified as a child missing education.

It is important for parents and carers to be aware that any parent/carer who has parental responsibility for a child or who lives with and cares for the child (e.g. a step parent) could be subject to enforcement action (penalty notice or prosecution) where the child is absent from school without permission.

6. Attendance register

The school uses **Scholar Pack/Arbor** to keep attendance registers to ensure they are as accurate as possible and can be easily analysed and shared with the appropriate authorities.

Designated staff members will take the attendance register **at the start of each school day** and **at the start of the afternoon session**. This register will record whether pupils are:

- Present.
- Absent.
- Attending an approved educational visit.
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

The school will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:

- # = planned whole school closure
- / = Present in the morning
- \ = Present in the afternoon
- L = Late arrival before the register has closed
- C = Leave of absence granted by the school for exceptional circumstances
- S = Study leave
- C1 = Leave of absence for participating in a regulated performance or employment abroad
- C2 = Leave of absence for part-time pupils
- E = Suspended or permanently excluded but no alternative provision made
- J1 = Leave of absence for job or education interviews
- I = Illness
- M = Medical or dental appointments
- K = Attending provision arranged by the LA
- R = Religious observance
- B = Off-site education activity
- G = Unauthorised holiday
- O = Unauthorised absence
- U = Arrived after registration closed
- N = Reason not yet provided
- X = Not required to be in school
- T = Traveller absence
- Q = Absent due to a lack of access arrangements or due to the pupil having to attend a school that does not qualify for travel arrangements and is more than walking distance from where they live.
- V = Educational visit or trip
- P = Participating in a supervised sporting activity, with supervision being physically provided by an appropriately trained and knowledgeable person
- D = Dual registered – at another educational establishment

- W = Attending work experience
- Y1 = Absent due to their regular transport not being available
- Y2 = Absent due to travel disruption
- Y3 = Absent due to part of the school premises being closed
- Y4 = Absent due to the school site being closed
- Y5 = Absent due to being in criminal justice detention
- Y6 = Absent due to public health guidance or law, despite the pupil being well enough to attend
- Y7 = Absent due to any other unavoidable cause, the nature of which must be documented by the school.
- Z = Pupil not on admission register

When the school has planned in advance to be fully or partially closed, the code '#' will be used for the relevant pupils who are absent. This code will also be used to record year groups who are not due to attend because the school has set different term dates for different years, e.g. induction days.

Where there is more than one afternoon session, and therefore the attendance register is taken more than once in the same afternoon, the school will use the codes from the last afternoon session as the basis for its statistical attendance data.

Pupils who are absent from school but are receiving remote education for any reason will be marked as absent in the register.

All amendments made to the attendance register will include the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date of amendment and the name and role of the person who made the amendment.

Every entry received into the attendance register will be preserved for **three years** after the date on which the entry was made.

7. Authorising parental absence requests

Parents or carers will be required to request certain types of absence in advance. All requests for absence will be handled by the headteacher – the decision to grant or refuse the request will be at the sole discretion of the headteacher, taking the best interests of the pupil and the impact on the pupil's education into account. The headteacher's decision is not subject to appeal; however, the school will be sympathetic to requests for absence by parents or carers, and will not deny any request without good reason.

Leave of absence

The school will only grant a pupil a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. In order to have requests for a leave of absence considered, the school will expect parents or carers to contact the headteacher **in writing** at least **two weeks** prior to the proposed start date of the leave of absence, providing the reason for the proposed absence and the dates during which the absence would be expected to occur.

Any requests for leave during term time will be considered on an individual basis and the pupil's previous attendance record will be considered. Where the absence is granted, the headteacher will determine the length of time that the pupil can be away from school. The school is **not likely** to grant leaves of absence for the purposes of family holidays. Schools are no longer able school to record an absence as '*authorised holiday*' and DfE guidance states:-

"*Generally, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance". (Working Together to Improve School Attendance, 2024)*

Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:

- Immediately before and during statutory assessment periods
- When a pupil's attendance record shows any unauthorised absence
- Where a pupil's authorised absence record is already above **10 percent** for any reason

If term-time leave is not granted, taking a pupil out of school will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and may result in sanctions, such as a penalty notice. The school cannot grant leaves of absence retrospectively; therefore, any absences that were not approved by the school in advance will be marked as unauthorised.

Illness and healthcare appointments (I/M)

Parents or carers will be expected to make medical or dental appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, parents or carers will be expected to obtain approval for their child's absence to attend such appointments as far in advance as is practicable. Parents or carers will be responsible for ensuring their child misses only the amount of time necessary to attend the appointment.

Performances and activities, including paid work (C1)

The school will have the discretion to grant leave of absence during school hours for pupils to undertake employment, whether paid or unpaid, in accordance with the relevant legislation.

While not required to follow Regulation 11 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, the school will nonetheless record such absences using the appropriate code, where a pupil is participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad under a valid licence or exemption as outlined below.

This code will be recorded as an authorised absence for statistical purposes.

The school will ensure that all pupils engaging in performances or activities, whether they receive payment or not, which require them to be absent from school, understand that they will be required to obtain a licence from the LA which authorises the school's absence(s).

Additional arrangements will be made by the school for pupils engaging in performances or activities that require them to be absent from school to ensure they do not fall behind in their education – this may involve private teaching. These arrangements will be approved by the LA who will ensure that the arrangements are suitable for the pupil.

The pupil will receive education that, when taken together over the term of the licence, amounts to a minimum of three hours per day that the pupil would be required to attend a school maintained by the LA issuing the licence. This requirement will be met by ensuring a pupil receives an education:

- For not less than six hours a week; and
- During each complete period of four weeks (or if there is a period of less than four weeks, then during that period), for periods of time not less than three hours a day; and
- On days where the pupil would be required to attend school if they were attending a school maintained by the LA; and
- For not more than five hours on any such day.

Where a licence has been granted by the LA and it specifies dates of absence, no further authorisation will be needed from the school. Where an application does not specify dates, and it has been approved by the LA, it is at the discretion of the headteacher to authorise the leave of absence for each day. The headteacher will not authorise any absences which would mean that a pupil's attendance would fall below **96 percent**. Where a licence has not been obtained, the headteacher will not authorise any absence for a performance or activity.

Religious observance (R)

Parents or carers will be expected to request absence for religious observance at least **two weeks** advance.

The school will only accept requests from parents or carers for absence on grounds of religious observance for days that are exclusively set apart for religious observance by the relevant religious body. The school will define this as a day where the pupil's parents or carers would be expected by an established religious body to stay away from their employment to mark the occasion.

The school may seek advice from the religious body in question where there is doubt over the request.

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence (T)

Where a pupil's parent belongs to a community covered by this code and is travelling for occupational purposes, the parent will be expected to request a leave of absence for their child at least **two weeks** in advance. Absences will not be granted for pupils from these communities under this code for reasons other than travel for occupational purposes.

8. SEND- and health-related absences

The school recognises that pupils with SEND and/or health conditions, including mental health issues, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers, and will incorporate robust procedures to support pupils who find attending school difficult.

In line with the SEND Policy and Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy, the school will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for disabled pupils to reduce barriers to attendance,

in line with any EHC plans or IHPs that have been implemented. The school will secure additional support from external partners to help bolster attendance where appropriate.

Where the school has concerns that a pupil's non-attendance may be related to mental health issues, parents or carers will be contacted to discuss the issue and whether there are any contributory factors to their child's lack of attendance. Where staff have a mental health concern about a pupil that is also a safeguarding concern, they will inform the DSL and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will be followed. All pupils will be supported with their mental health in accordance with the school's Children's Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy.

If a pupil is unable to attend school for long periods of time due to their health, the school will:

- Inform the LA if a pupil is likely to be away from the school for more than 15 school days.
- Provide the LA with information about the pupil's needs, capabilities and programme of work.
- Help the pupil reintegrate at school when they return.
- Make sure the pupil is kept informed about school events and clubs.
- Encourage the pupil to stay in contact with other pupils during their absence.

The school will incorporate an action plan to help any pupils with SEND and/or health issues cope with the stress and anxiety that attending school may cause them. Such plans will be regularly monitored and reviewed until the pupil is attending school as normal and there has been signs of significant improvement.

To support the attendance of pupils with SEND and/or health issues, the school will consider:

- Holding termly meetings to evaluate any implemented reasonable adjustments.
- Incorporating a pastoral support plan.
- Carrying out strengths and difficulties questionnaire.
- Identifying pupils' unmet needs through the Common Assessment Framework.
- Using an internal or external specialist.
- Enabling a pupil to have a reduced timetable.
- Ensuring a pupil can have somewhere quiet to spend lunch and breaktimes.
- Implementing a system whereby pupils can request to leave a classroom if they feel they need time out.
- Temporary late starts or early finishes.
- Phased returns to school where there has been a long absence.
- Small group work or on-to-one lessons.
- Tailored support to meet their individual needs.

9. Leave during lunch times

[Schools should amend the following section or remove to suit their school's specific rules and circumstances. Example text has been provided.]

Parents or carers may be permitted to take their child away from the school premises during lunch times with permission from the headteacher – it is at the headteacher's discretion as to whether a pupil will be allowed to leave the premises.

Parents or carers will submit a written request, outlining the reasons for their child to leave the premises during lunch time – this request will be submitted to the headteacher. The headteacher will consider the request and will invite the parent into the school for a discussion regarding any concerns, as well as the timely return of their child at the end of lunch time and their child's behaviour when not on the school premises. The headteacher reserves the right to grant or refuse a request and will inform the parent in writing of their decision within **one week** of the request.

Where permission has been granted, the headteacher will ensure a photo lunchtime pass is printed for the pupil and will include the pupil's name on the off-site register.

Pupils will leave the school premises within **10 minutes** of the start of lunch and will return no later than **5 minutes** before the end of lunch.

Parents or carers will be required to meet their child **at the school office** when taking them off the premises – the pupil will be signed out and back in using the lunch time register **at the school office**. A member of staff will be available **at the school office** before the pupil leaves the premises and upon their return to sign them back in. No pupil will leave the premises before the member of staff **at the school office** has given their permission.

The headteacher reserves the right to withdraw their permission at any time – this may occur, for example, where there are attendance concerns. Any decision to withdraw permission will be in writing, explaining the reasons for the headteacher's decision. If permission is withdrawn, parents or carers will not be entitled to appeal the decision. Parents or carers will be able to withdraw their request at any time – the request will be submitted in writing to the headteacher.

Permission will be updated on a **termly** basis – letters will be sent to parents or carers at the beginning of each term to confirm whether they would like their request to continue.

10. Truancy

Truancy will be considered as any absence of part, or all, of one or more days from school, during which the school has not been notified of the cause behind such absence.

All staff will be actively engaged in supporting the regular attendance of pupils, and understand the importance of continuity in each pupil's learning.

All pupils are expected to be in their classes by **08.45am** and **13:00pm**, where the teacher will record the attendance electronically. Any pupil with permission to leave the school during the day must sign out at the **school office** and sign back in again on their return.

Immediate action will be taken when there are any concerns that a pupil might be truanting. If truancy is suspected, the headteacher is notified, and they will contact the parent in order to assess the reasons behind the pupil not attending school.

The following procedures will be taken in the event of a truancy:

- In the first instance, a letter of warning will be sent to the parents or carers of the pupil, informing them of the truancy and stating that any future occurrences could result in further action being taken.
- If any further truancy occurs, then the school will consider issuing a penalty notice.
- A penalty notice will be issued where there is overt truancy, inappropriate parentally-condoned absence, excessive holidays in term-time and persistent late arrival at school.

The DSL will be involved where an instance of truancy may be linked to a safeguarding concern. Any safeguarding concerns will be dealt with in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

11. Missing children

Pupils will not be permitted to leave the school premises during the school day unless they have permission from the school. The following procedures will be taken in the event of a pupil going missing whilst at school:

- The member of staff who has noticed the missing pupil will inform the headteacher immediately.
- The office staff will also be informed as they will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search.
- A member of staff will stay with the rest of the class, and all other available members of staff will conduct a thorough search of the school premises as directed by the headteacher.
- The following areas will be systematically searched:
    - All classrooms
    - All toilets
    - The library
    - Any outbuildings
    - The school grounds
- Available staff will begin a search of the area immediately outside of the school premises, and will take a mobile phone with them so they can be contacted.
- If the pupil has not been found after **10 minutes**, then the parents or carers of the pupil will be notified.
- The school will attempt to contact parents or carers using the emergency contact numbers provided.
- If the parents or carers have had no contact from the pupil, and the emergency contacts list has been exhausted, the police will be contacted.
- The missing pupil's teacher will fill in an incident form, describing all circumstances leading up to the pupil going missing.

- If the missing pupil has an allocated social worker, is a looked-after child, or has any SEND, then the appropriate personnel will be informed.
- When the pupil has been located, members of staff will care for and talk to the pupil to ensure they are safe and well.
- Parents or carers and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the pupil has been located.

The headteacher will take the appropriate action to ensure that pupils understand they must not leave the premises, and sanctions will be issued if deemed necessary. Appropriate disciplinary procedures will be followed in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

The headteacher will carry out a full investigation and will draw a conclusion as to how the incident occurred. A written report will be produced, and policies and procedures will be reviewed in accordance with the outcome where necessary.

12. Attendance intervention

In order to ensure the school has effective procedures for managing absence, the attendance lead, supported by the SLT, will:

- Establish a range of evidence-based interventions to address barriers to attendance.
- Monitor the implementation and quality of escalation procedures and seek robust evidence of the escalation procedures that work.
- Attend or lead attendance reviews in line with escalation procedures.
- Establish robust escalation procedures which will be initiated before absence becomes a problem by:
  - Sending letters to parents or carers.
  - Having a **weekly** review.
  - Engaging with LA attendance teams.
  - Using fixed penalty notices.
  - Creating attendance clinics.

The school will use attendance data, in line with the 'Monitoring and analysing absence' section of this policy, to develop specific strategies to improve attendance where patterns of absence are emerging. These strategies will be developed on a case-by-case basis, and will consider the particular needs of the pupils whom the intervention is designed to target.

[Schools should amend the following section to include detail of their own attendance reward schemes.]

The school will acknowledge outstanding attendance and punctuality in the following ways:

- **Cinema trip**
- **Postcards home**

13. Working with parents or carers to improve attendance

The school will work to cultivate strong, respectful relationships with parents or carers and families to ensure their trust and engagement. Open and honest communication will be maintained with pupils and their families about the expectations of school life, attendance and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them. The school will liaise with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, e.g. social services.

The school will ensure that there are **two** sets of emergency contact details for each pupil wherever possible to ensure the school has additional options for getting in touch with adults responsible for a pupil where the pupil is absent without notification or authorisation.

The school will ensure that parents or carers are aware of their legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and to facilitate their child's legal right to a full-time education – parents or carers will be made aware that this means their child must attend school every day that it is open, save for in certain circumstances, e.g. sickness or absences that have been authorised by the headteacher in advance. The school will regularly inform parents or carers about their child's levels of attendance, absence and punctuality, and will ensure that parents or carers are aware of the benefits that regular attendance at school can have for their child educationally, socially and developmentally.

If a pattern of absence becomes problematic, the attendance lead will work collaboratively with the pupil and their parents or carers to improve attendance by addressing the specific barriers that prevent the pupil from being able to attend school regularly. The school will always take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for pupil absence and will approach families to offer support.

Where these barriers are related to the pupil's experience in school, e.g. bullying, the attendance lead will work with the headteacher and any relevant school staff, e.g. the DSL and SENCO, to address this. Where the barriers are outside of the school's control, e.g. they are related to issues within the pupil's family, the attendance lead will liaise with any relevant external agencies or authorities, e.g. children's social care or the LA, and will encourage parents or carers to access support that they may need.

14. Persistent Absence

There are various groups of pupils who may be vulnerable to high absence and PA, such as:

- Children in need
- LAC
- Young carers
- Pupils who are eligible for FSM
- Pupils with EAL
- Pupils with SEND
- Pupils who have faced bullying and/or discrimination

- Pupils with mental health issues

The school will use a number of methods to help support pupils at risk of PA to attend school. These include:

- Offering catch-up support to build confidence and bridge gaps.
- Meeting with pupils to discuss patterns of absence, barriers to attendance, and any other problems they may be having.
- Establishing plans to remove barriers and provide additional support.
- Leading **weekly** check-ins to review progress and the impact of support.
- Making regular contact with families to discuss progress.
- Assessing whether an EHC plan or IHP may be appropriate.
- Considering what support for re-engagement might be needed, including for vulnerable groups.

The school will focus particularly on pupils who have rates of absence over 50 percent, and will work to engage all relevant services needed to identify and address the wider barriers to attendance these pupils are facing.

Where a pupil at risk of PA is also at increased risk of harm, the school will work in conjunction with all relevant authorities, e.g. social services, to support the pupil in line with the school's duty of care. The school will also bear in mind that the continuation of severe PA following intervention may, in itself, constitute neglect, and will escalate any concerns in this regard in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

15. Legal intervention

The school will allow sufficient time for attendance interventions and engagement strategies to improve pupils' attendance; however, where engagement strategies to improve attendance have not had the desired effect after **one term**, the attendance lead will consider:

- Holding a formal meeting with parents or carers and the school's point of contact in the School Attendance Support Team.
- Working with the LA to put a parenting contract or an education supervision order in place.
- Engaging children's social care where there are safeguarding concerns.

Where the above measures are not effective, the headteacher will issue a fixed penalty notice in line with the LA's code of conduct and the new National Framework.

The National Framework for Penalty Notices

The new National Framework introduces a national threshold where schools must consider a fixed penalty notice (fine). This will be met where a pupil has been recorded as having 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in any rolling period of 10 school weeks (including where this period spans different school terms or school years). A session means half a school day (morning or afternoon) so 10 sessions would be equivalent to 5 full school days.

From September 2024, fines charged to parents will be £80 (if paid within 21 days) or £160 (if between 22 and 28 days). Where a second fine is issued to the same parent for the same child, the charge would be £160 to be paid within 28 days. If a fine is not paid the parent would be prosecuted. The fines are per parent per child so this would mean that each parent/carer would receive a separate fine for each child. For example, a family with two parents and two children would receive a total first fine of £320 and a total second fine of £640.

Under the National Framework only 2 fines can be issued to the same parent for the same child within a rolling three-year period. It is important to be aware that as a third fine **cannot** be issued to the same parent for the same child within three years (of the date of the first fine) then prosecution or other legal action would be considered.

Where attendance still does not improve following a fixed penalty notice, the school will work with the LA to take forward attendance prosecution as a last resort. Whilst prosecution is a last resort this could result in fines up to £2500, Parenting or Community Court Orders and even imprisonment in some cases.

Education Supervision Orders (ESOs)

Where interventions have not been successful, an ESO can be an alternative to provide formal legal intervention without criminal prosecution. ESOs are made through the Family or High Court and give the LA a formal role in supporting the pupil and parents to improve their attendance. LAs will issue parents with a notice of the intention to consider an ESO, set up a meeting to discuss with the parent and pupil, and decide whether the case will be taken forward.

Once an ESO is secured, a supervisor from the local authority will decide any actions or requirements. These may include:

- Requiring the parents to attend support meetings.
- Requiring the parents to attend a parenting programme.
- Requiring the parents to access support services.
- Requiring an assessment by an educational psychologist.
- Review meetings involving all parties to be help every 3 months.

Failing to comply with an SEO will result in a fine and decisions will be made about whether further action is required.

16. Monitoring and analysing absence

The attendance lead will monitor and analyse attendance data regularly to ensure that intervention is delivered quickly to address habitual absence at the first signs.

The school will collect data regarding punctuality, truancy, and authorised and unauthorised absence, for:

- The school cohort as a whole.
- Individual year groups.

- Individual pupils.
- Demographic groups, e.g. pupils from different ethnic groups or economic backgrounds.
- Other groups of pupils, e.g. pupils with SEND, LAC and pupils eligible for FSM.
- Pupils at risk of PA.

The attendance lead will conduct a thorough analysis of the above data on a **half-termly, termly and full-year** basis to identify patterns and trends. This will include identifying, for each group:

- Patterns in uses of certain codes.
- Particular days of poor attendance.
- Historic trends of attendance and absence.
- Barriers to attendance.

The attendance lead will provide regular reports to staff across the school to enable them to track the attendance of pupils and to implement attendance procedures. The attendance lead will also be responsible for monitoring how attendance data changes in response to any interventions implemented to increase attendance in future.

The academy council will regularly review attendance data, including examinations of recent and historic trends, and will support the SLT in setting goals and prioritising areas of focus for attendance support based on this data.

The school will also benchmark its attendance data against local-, regional- and national-level data to identify areas of success and areas for improvement and will share practice which has been shown to be effective with other schools.

The board of trustees will ensure staff from different schools within the trust regularly share expertise and collaborate on interventions.

17. Training of staff

The school will recognise that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, staff will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk pupils as part of their induction and refresher training.

The academy council will ensure that teachers and support staff receive training in line with this policy as part of their induction. Following this initial training, staff will receive regular and ongoing training as part of their development.

Training will cover at least the following:

- The importance of good attendance
- That absence is almost invariably a result of wider circumstances
- The legal requirements on schools, e.g. the keeping of registers
- The school's strategies and procedures for monitoring and improving attendance
- The school's procedures for multi-agency working to provide intensive support for pupils who need it

Staff will receive training to ensure they understand that increased absence from school could indicate a safeguarding concern, and know how such concerns should be managed.

18. Deletion of names from the admission register

The school will ensure that it only deletes names from the admission register for a reason set out in regulation 9 of the School Attendance Regulations. A pupil's name will never be removed for any other reason and the school is aware that doing so could constitute off-rolling.

The school will make returns to the LA when pupils' names are deleted from the admission register. This will be with the exception of pupils whose name has been deleted from the register at or after the end of the last term of the school year when they are in the most senior year group, unless the LA has requested this information.

When the school is notifying the LA that a pupil's name is being deleted from the admission register, the following information about the pupil will be provided:

- Full name
- Address
- The full name and address of any parent the pupil normally lives with
- At least one telephone number by which any parent the pupil normally lives with can be contacted in an emergency
- If applicable, the pupil's future address, the full name and address of the parent who the pupil is going to live with and the date the pupil will start living there
- If applicable, the name of the pupil's other school and when the pupil began or will begin to attend the school
- The reason under which the pupil's name has been deleted from the admission register

Names will never be retrospectively deleted from the admission or attendance register – these registers will remain an accurate record of who is a registered pupil and their attendance at any given time. Pupils' attendance will be recorded up until the date that their name is deleted from the admission register.

19. Monitoring and review

Schools should add their own target which increases every year to at least 96% year on year.

If attendance is already above 96% schools can state a higher target.

Attendance and punctuality will be monitored throughout the year. The school's attendance target is 96 **percent**, with an ambition to increase it to **96 percent**– full details of the school's absence levels can be found on the **school website**.

This policy will be reviewed **annually** by the headteacher. The next scheduled review date for this policy is **September 2025.**

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

Attendance Monitoring Procedures

Can be tailored to your own school procedures

Greenhead CE Nursery & Primary School has adopted the following attendance monitoring procedures, to ensure that pupils' attendance meets the expected standard, and effective intervention is provided where pupils' attendance falls below the standard:

1. A spreadsheet is sent to the SLT and attendance lead detailing **weekly** and **annual** attendance to date.
2. Attendance is discussed by classroom teachers and pupils record their attendance in their planners. Any attendance/punctuality trends noticed by classroom teachers are passed immediately to the SLT.
3. Contact is made with parents or carers on the first day of absence for any pupil absence not reported. 'N' codes are used to indicate that the pupil is absent for a reason not yet provided; these N codes are reported to the SLT and attendance lead daily.
4. Contact is made to the parents or carers of any pupils marked using the N code. Any N codes not established after a week are recorded as an unauthorised absence.
5. If a pupil's attendance falls to **96 percent**, the attendance lead speaks to the pupil in school to discuss any issues or problems to ascertain how the school can help to improve their attendance. The attendance lead also makes a phone call home to discuss this with parents or carers, if necessary.
6. If a pupil's attendance falls below **96 percent**, a letter is sent home raising concerns that their attendance has fallen below the school's expected standard. The letter also has an attached leaflet outlining how parents or carers can work with the school and their child to improve attendance.
7. If a pupil's attendance falls below **90 percent**, a letter is sent home explaining that the pupil's attendance is now being monitored, and the attendance lead contacts the parents or carers to discuss this.
8. The pupil's attendance is monitored for **two weeks** and, if attendance does not improve after this time, parents or carers are required to attend a meeting in school with the classroom teacher and set targets for their child. If parents or carers are unwilling to cooperate, or are genuinely unable to attend, a referral may be required to the local education welfare lead (EWO), who will then conduct a home visit.
9. After the **two-week** monitoring period, and if targets are met, a letter is sent home from the SLT to congratulate the pupil and their parents or carers on improving attendance. Monitoring and communication with the parents or carers continues until attendance stabilises to **96 percent**.
10. If targets are not met, the classroom teacher makes a referral to the EWO. Education welfare protocol is followed, and a parental contract is drawn up. A **four-week** monitoring period is established and, if there are no improvements, a final written warning is issued to the parents or carers if there is no improvement after an additional **four weeks**, a fixed-penalty notice is issued (see paragraph 15, 'Legal Intervention' of this Attendance Policy).