

Promoting Educational Attendance in Dorset



2025-2026

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1. Introduction

Our vision for attendance in Dorset

“We want attendance to be everyone’s business and a key feature of all frontline council services and partners’ work so that the children and young people of Dorset have the highest possible school attendance which enables them to be healthy, happy, safe and achieve the best possible outcomes. We want our children to go on to achieve their potential and to lead fulfilling lives.”

Working together to improve school attendance

This document has been written to reflect how Dorset will implement the DfE’s *‘Working together to improve school attendance’* guidance, which became statutory on the 19th August 2024.

In Dorset we believe that attendance is a key element of safety and wellbeing, as well as a key contributor to good educational attainment and life outcomes. We are clear that improving attendance is everyone’s business. We fully recognise that the barriers to accessing education are wide and complex. Relationships are at the heart of everything we do. We come alongside our children, young people, families and settings to understand these barriers, but we do not tolerate poor attendance and aspire to high standards of attendance from all of our children and young people.

We understand that improving attendance is part of wider school improvement such as curriculum, culture and ethos. We want our schools to be inclusive places where all our children and young people feel they belong, are safe, cared for and valued.

Our work is shaped by the following commitments. We will:

- Ensure that attendance is everyone’s business.
- Ensure that attendance is a key feature of all frontline council and services and partners’ work.
- Work in partnership with young people, parents, schools, health, youth justice service, police and other partners
- Embrace new ways of working to support and enable innovative practice.
- Commit to identify and understand barriers to attendance in Dorset.
- Commit to provide good quality services.
- Commit to early identification and support.

Our Dorset Attendance Strategy and Plan can be found at [Dorset Council Attendance Strategy and Plan 2023 - Dorset Council](#)

2. Guidance and Legislation: Helpful Links

Department for Education (DfE)

- The DfE's latest guidance on school attendance
[Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance)
(publishing.service.gov.uk)
- CME Statutory Guidance for Schools
[Stat guidance template \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/publications/cme-statutory-guidance-for-schools/cme-statutory-guidance-for-schools)
- Supporting Children and young people at School with Medical Conditions
[Supporting children and young people with medical conditions at school - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-children-and-young-people-with-medical-conditions-at-school/supporting-children-and-young-people-with-medical-conditions-at-school)
(www.gov.uk)
- Children with health needs
[Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-for-children-with-health-needs-who-cannot-attend-school/education-for-children-with-health-needs-who-cannot-attend-school)
(www.gov.uk)
- Children with mental health needs
[Mental health issues affecting a child or young person's attendance: guidance for schools - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-issues-affecting-a-child-or-young-persons-attendance-guidance-for-schools/mental-health-issues-affecting-a-child-or-young-persons-attendance-guidance-for-schools) (www.gov.uk)
- Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges
[Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/promoting-and-supporting-mental-health-and-wellbeing-in-schools-and-colleges/promoting-and-supporting-mental-health-and-wellbeing-in-schools-and-colleges)
- Improving attendance: good practice for schools and multi-academy trusts
<https://www.gov.uk/government/case-studies/improving-attendance-good-practice-for-schools-and-multi-academy-trusts>
- Securing Good Attendance and Tackling Persistent Absence
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/securing-good-attendance-and-tackling-persistent-absence/securing-good-attendance-and-tackling-persistent-absence>
- Remote education
[Providing remote education: guidance for schools - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/providing-remote-education-guidance-for-schools/providing-remote-education-guidance-for-schools) (www.gov.uk)
- Reasonable adjustments
[What are reasonable adjustments and how do they help disabled children and young people at school? – The Education Hub](https://blog.gov.uk/what-are-reasonable-adjustments-and-how-do-they-help-disabled-children-and-young-people-at-school/) (blog.gov.uk)
- Penalty notice information for parents.
[Fines for parents for taking children out of school: What you need to know – The Education Hub](https://blog.gov.uk/fines-for-parents-for-taking-children-out-of-school-what-you-need-to-know/) (blog.gov.uk)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
[Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education/keeping-children-safe-in-education) (www.gov.uk)

- Suspension and permanent exclusion guidance
[Suspension and permanent exclusion guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/61212/suspension-and-permanent-exclusion-guidance.pdf)
- Alternative Provision
[Alternative provision - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/alternative-provision)
- Elective Home Education (EHE)
[Elective home education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/elective-home-education)

Dorset Council

- Dorset Council's penalty notice code of conduct.
[Children's Services code of conduct for the issue of fixed penalty notices - Dorset Council](https://www.dorsetcc.gov.uk/childrens-services/code-of-conduct-for-the-issue-of-fixed-penalty-notice/)
- Dorset's All Children in Education (ACE) system
[Home - ACE \(dorsetcc.local\)](https://www.dorsetcc.gov.uk/all-children-in-education/)
- Dorset Council's Physical and Medical Needs Service (PMNS)
[Physical and medical needs service \(PMNS\) | Dorset Nexus](https://www.dorsetcc.gov.uk/physical-and-medical-needs-service/)
- Dorset Council section 19 Policy Education Act 1996

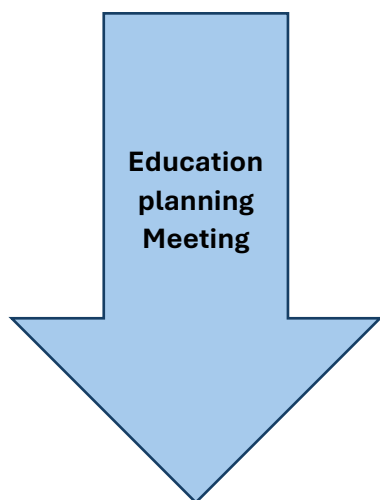
Other

- Education Act
[Education Act 2011 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/25/contents)
- Public Health Dorset – Information for schools
- [Public health information for schools - Public Health Dorset - Dorset Council](https://www.dorsetcc.gov.uk/public-health/information-for-schools/)
- Attendance Interventions and Rapid Evidence Assessment
[Attendance interventions rapid evidence assessment | EEF \(educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk\)](https://www.eef.org.uk/attendance-interventions-rapid-evidence-assessment/)
- Working with parents to support children's learning
[https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/eef-guidance-reports/supporting-parents/EEF Parental Engagement Guidance Report.pdf?v=1635355222](https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/eef-guidance-reports/supporting-parents/EEF_Parental_Engagement_Guidance_Report.pdf?v=1635355222)
- Reasonable adjustments
[guidance-reasonable-adjustments-for-disabled-children and young people-in-england 0.docx \(live.com\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/61212/guidance-reasonable-adjustments-for-disabled-children-and-young-people-in-england_0.docx)

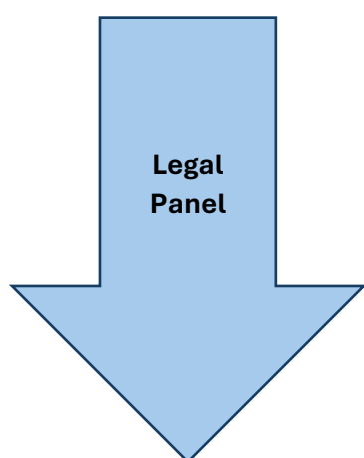
3. Inclusion Lead and School Meeting Flow Chart



1. Each school will have a link Inclusion Lead who will meet with a school representative each half term for a Targeted Support Meeting (or termly depending on need).
2. The school representative should be someone with responsibility for attendance who has the authority to agree to actions for children who are severely or persistently absent.
3. Targeted Support Meetings are multi professionals' meetings, this is to ensure the meetings are efficient and effective. Professionals which are invited and should prioritise attending are Family Worker, Targeted Youth Worker, Specialist Teacher, Educational Psychologist or SEND.
4. The purpose of the meeting is set out in the DfE's 'Working together to improve school attendance' guidance and includes: Build strong relationships and work collaboratively; identify and agree actions for severely absent children and young people, agree approaches for persistently absent children and young people where they have barriers to attendance that require a multi-agency response; agree which agency will act as the lead practitioner and conduct data analysis.
5. Appendix one contains the template that Inclusion Leads will use for the meeting, and they will share the completed one with you within 14 days of the meeting.



- Each school will hold an Education planning Meeting termly (half termly if needed).
- The school should invite the parents of child being discussed, the child (if appropriate) as well as any other relevant professionals.
- The school representative should be someone with responsibility for attendance who has the authority to agree to actions for children who are severely or persistently absent.
- The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss barriers to Education (i.e attendance, behaviour, medical etc) and agree actions to put in place to overcome them.
- Schools should inform Inclusion Leads of the children to be discussed using the proforma in appendix 2. This will enable Inclusion Leads to be fully prepared for the meeting.
- Minutes of the meeting should be recorded by the school using the template in appendix 3.
- A child may be discussed at Education planning Meeting more than once.
- When all supportive avenues for attendance have been tried a Notice To Improve can be issued through the Education planning meeting. School will be responsible for writing this up, they will then send to Inclusion lead to sign and send to Penalty Notice team to send to parents. This will give a period between 4-6 weeks for improvement, along with support to be achieved. A review date for the end of the Notice to Improve will be set. A notice to improve can be repeated / extended if progress has been made.
- If no significant improvement in attendance has been achieved a team manager will attend the review meeting where a decision regarding issuing a penalty notice will be made.



- If further advice or different legal intervention may be required then the Inclusion lead will take the case to Dorset Council's Legal Panel that meets weekly.
- Attendees will include a paralegal, Service Manager for Learning and Belonging, Team Manager for Learning and Belonging and Inclusion Leads.
- SEND colleagues and social care colleagues will be invited where appropriate.
- The school's link Inclusion Lead will inform the school of the outcome of legal panel's discussion within 48 hours.

4. Dorset Education Board Attendance (Task and Finish) Group

Attendance is a standing item on Dorset Education Board's agenda. The Attendance (Task and Finish) Group is a sub-group of the Dorset Education Board that has been meeting, with the Head of Children Thriving in Education as Chair, over the academic year 2024/25. The purposes of the Attendance Group is to:

- Monitor the implementation of the DfE's 'Working together to improve school attendance' statutory guidance.
- Monitor the implementation of Dorset's attendance strategy, plan, guidance, and processes.
- Provide an opportunity to discuss whether the intention of Dorset's attendance strategy is being implemented in practice and give attendees an opportunity to give feedback on how processes are working.
- Be an opportunity to share what is happening in localities and any support that is becoming available.

The Group invites representatives from multi-academy trusts, schools, health, Dorset-Parent Carer Council and Dorset's Learning and Belonging Teams and has met half-termly. All members of the group receive notes and actions to ensure all stakeholders are informed priorities and progress irrespective of attendance.

Work that it has undertaken over the academic year 2024/25 in partnership with all of the above representatives has included:

- In depth analysis, with the help of Dorset Council's Assessment Adviser, of the nature of Attendance across Dorset and in the different Localities in order to identify Dorset-wide and Locality-specific strengths and areas for improvement
- Identifying the causes of Persistent and Severe Absence across Dorset followed by sharing of strategies and interventions that has helped to reduce Persistent and Severe Absence including:
 - Locality-based strategies
 - Specific academy trusts practice
 - Schools, DPCC and Inclusion Leads actions and interventions
 - Emotionally Based School Avoidance – The Dorset Approach
- Working with Group representatives to draw up a parent friendly, easy to read and understand Dorset Council Attendance policy and process
- Data has been used to invite schools to present case studies where there has been an improvement in their attendance performance
- Sharing good practice raised through Locality Attendance Meetings and picked up by Inclusion Leads in linking with schools

5. Locality Attendance Network Meetings

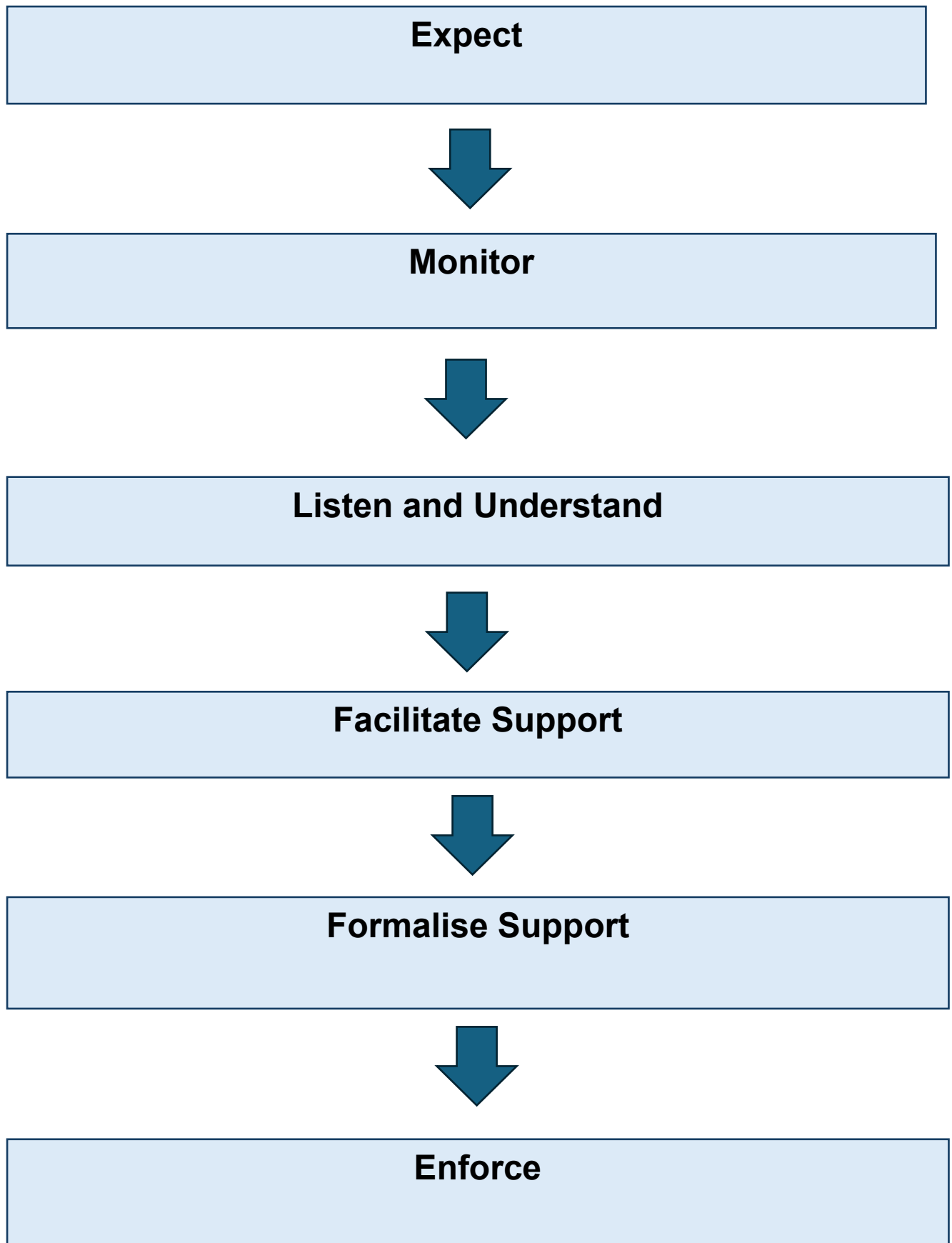
The DfE's 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance (August 2024) states that Local Authorities should provide opportunities for all schools (regardless of type) to regularly come together to share effective attendance practice.

These opportunities have, over the academic year 2024/25, been set up in different forms in the different Localities across Dorset, the main focus being on keeping the profile of the importance of attendance high on schools and partners' agendas and also sharing good practice with others.

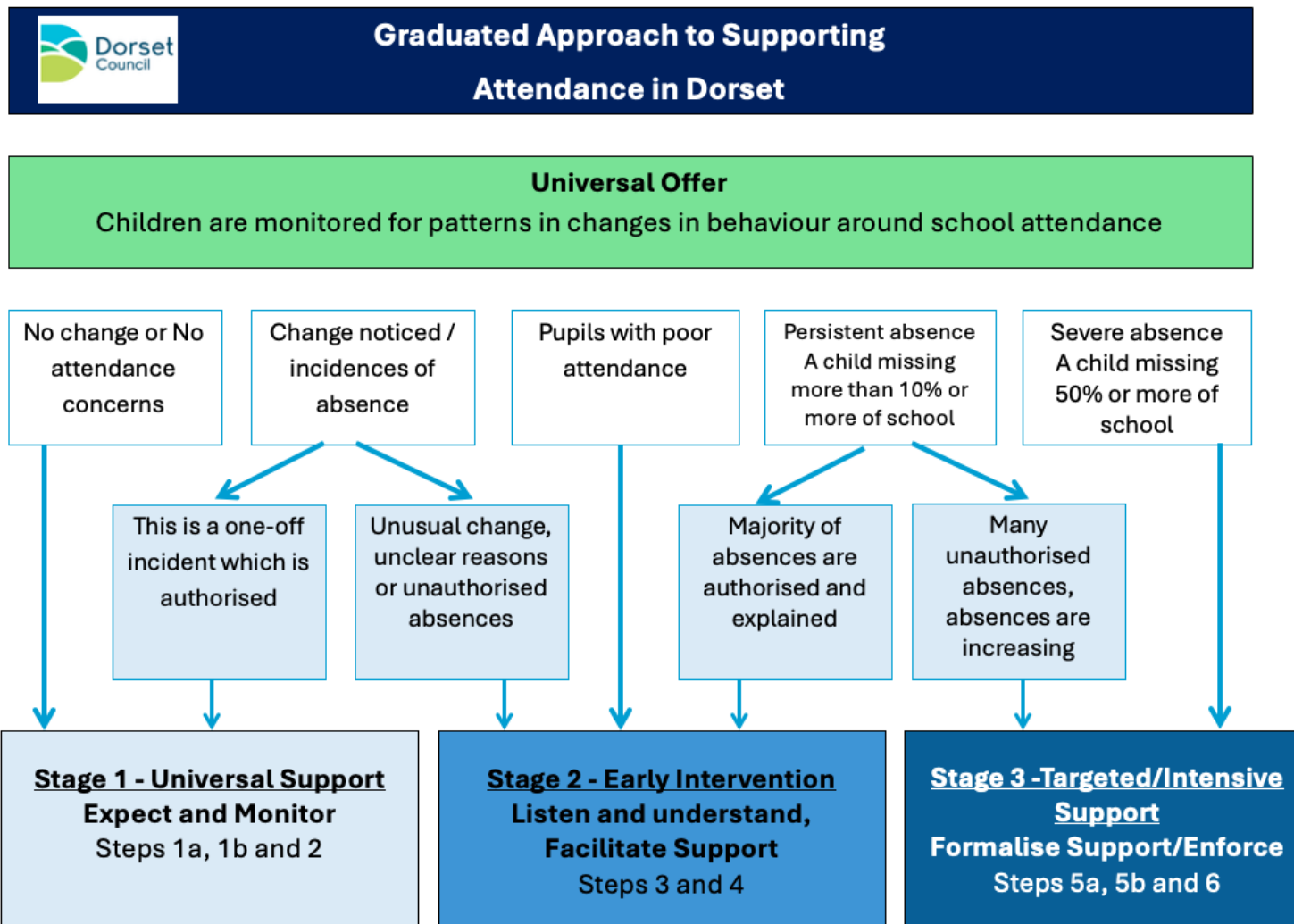
Education Challenge Leads in several Localities run specific Locality Attendance Network meetings. Other Localities have been able to establish regular agenda items on the meetings of their Locality Leaders in Education meetings.

With the help, whenever possible, of real-time data from Orchestra, Inclusion team colleagues share the latest Locality headline percentage attendance data and analyse attendance progress, as well as pick up good practice approaches to share more widely.

6. Overview of Dorset's steps for improving school attendance



7. Dorset's steps for improving school attendance



	AREA	ACTIONS	WHEN
STEP 1a	EXPECT	• School leaders understand that good attendance does not happen in isolation – there is an inter-relationship between attendance and the quality of the school’s curriculum, ethos, behaviour and inclusivity (Securing Good Attendance and Tackling Persistent Absence, OFSTED, February 2022) • Schools build respectful relationships with staff, children and young people, families and other stakeholders in order to secure their trust and engagement. They make sure there is a welcoming and positive culture across the school (Working together to improve school attendance, DfE, August 2024) • The role of school staff is to ensure that the school is a calm, safe, and supportive environment where all pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn, which is the foundation of securing good attendance. Schools will achieve this by promoting children and young people’s mental health and wellbeing through a whole-school approach to pupil mental health, and by developing a trusted relationship with parents/carers and families that involves them in the conversation about the school’s ethos, and emphasises the importance of supporting mental health and regular attendance. (Summary of responsibilities where a mental health issue is affecting attendance DfE February 2023) • School leaders regularly communicate expectations for attendance and punctuality and school performance through their regular channels of communication with staff, children and young people and parents (Working together to improve school attendance, DfE, August 2024) • Aspire to high standards of attendance from all children and young people 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 (Working together to improve school attendance, DfE, August 2024)	All year

STEP 1b	EXPECT	- Schools engage with feeder schools or organisations to access absence information to identify target cohorts prior to transfer (Working together to improve school attendance, DfE, August 2024) - Schools deliver clear messages about the benefits of regular attendance on educational and well-being outcomes to new children and young people and families through their prospectus and transition events - Ensure the school attendance policy is up-to-date and clear to all children and young people, parents and staff. The policy should be based on the expectation set out in '<i>Working together to improve school attendance</i>' (DfE, August 2024) - Send Attendance Letter 1 – New School Year (appendix 5)	Prior to the start of the academic year/start of the academic year
STEP 2	MONITOR	- Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched (Working together to improve school attendance, DfE, August 2024) - Discuss at termly Targeted Support Meeting (TSM) with Inclusion Lead - Send Attendance Letter 2 – Half-termly Attendance Letter (appendix 5)	All year
STEP 3	LISTEN AND UNDERSTAND	- When a pattern is spotted, discuss with children and young people and parents to listen to understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them (Working together to improve school attendance, DfE, August 2024) - Where a child or young person has social, emotional and mental health need this needs to be recognised and any associated anxiety about attending should be mitigated as much as possible by creating a plan to implement reasonable adjustments to alleviate specific barriers to attendance. Making use of the	Attendance is becoming a concern

		guidance, training and resources available to schools to identify causes of Emotionally Based Avoidance Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) Dorset Nexus. These adjustments should be agreed by and regularly reviewed with all parties, including parents/carers. (Summary of responsibilities where a mental health issue is affecting attendance DfE February 2023) • Listen to children and young people and parents carefully to find out why they are not attending well enough. Listen, understand, empathise and support – but do not tolerate (Securing Good Attendance and Tackling Persistent Absence, OFSTED, February 2022) • Ensure appropriate support which considers individual needs is put in place for children and young people who are experiencing difficulties attending school – take into consideration the vulnerability of some children and young people and the ways in which this might contribute to absence • Liaise with the schools that the children and young people’ siblings attend - ‘Primary and secondary school leaders working together can be powerful in finding out why issues are arising when children and young people from the same family have poor attendance.’ (Securing Good Attendance and Tackling Persistent Absence, OFSTED, February 2022) • Call parents and send Attendance Letter 3 – Initial Attendance Concerns (appendix 5) • Record any contact with child or young person/parent/carers and log details of communication • Agree review period - The school should determine the review period at the start of the process (recommendation is 20 days)	
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		• School to arrange a meeting with parents/carers and child or young person to discuss attendance concerns/needs. • Send parents Attendance Letter 5 – Invitation to Attendance Meeting • Child or young person, parent and school agree on appropriate support or intervention at the meeting. School could use an attendance contract (appendix 4). Those present will need to know that information may be used as evidence if legal intervention is pursued • Agree review period with child or young person and parents - The school should determine the review period at the start of the process (recommended review period is 20 school days but the school should monitor at least weekly) • School to follow up with parents if they fail to attend • School to make a record of all contact with parents/interventions • School to bring the information about the child/young person for discussion at the termly/half termly (upper/secondary and middle schools) termly (first and primary schools) targeted support meeting that takes place with the Inclusion Lead • Provide tailored praise and encouragement when children and young people attend (Working together to improve school attendance, DfE, August 2024) • Send parents Attendance Letter 4 – Attendance Improvement (appendix 5)	Where there is improvement
STEP 5b	FORMALISE SUPPORT	• Where there is no improvement following the Attendance Meeting, the school should arrange an Education planning Meeting (usually held at school) including	Where there is no improvement

		the following attendees: school staff, Inclusion Lead, parents, child or young person, other professionals if relevant • Send parents Attendance Letter 6 – Invitation to Education planning Meeting. Also send a PACE warning leaflet (appendix 9) if appropriate (school to discuss with Inclusion Lead if required) • School to inform the Inclusion Lead of the children and young people they wish to bring to Education planning Meeting (1 week before the date of the panel) and complete the Education planning Information Check List (appendix 2) • School to take minutes and distribute them to all attendee's including parents/carers • Agree review period with child or young person and parents - (recommended review period is 20 school days but the school should monitor at least weekly) • Schools are responsible for the arranging, chairing, and minute/note taking for all meetings • NB. If parents/carers fail to attend the Education planning, the discussion and decisions on next steps will still take place. Outcomes will be communicated to parents/carers by letter. • Send Attendance Letter 7 – Failure to Attend Education planning Meeting (appendix 5) • Provide tailored praise and encouragement when children and young people attend (Working together to improve school attendance, DfE, August 2024) • Send parents Attendance Letter 4 – Attendance Improvement (appendix 5)	following a meeting with the school Where there is improvement
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STEP 6	ENFORCE	Depending on previous meetings/discussions/support there are four possible routes for the panel: 1. Discussion about any new information and any additional support that will be put in place, giving a time frame for improvement and schedule a further Education planning if necessary 2. Recommend further discussion at In Year Fair Access (IYFA) in order to access further support 3. Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention: a penalty notice in line with the National Framework or prosecution to protect the child or young person's right to an education (Working together to improve school attendance, DfE, August 2024) 4. Where there are safeguarding concerns, and an Education Supervision Order is not appropriate or has not been successful the case should be considered for s.17 or s.47 statutory social care involvement	Where an Education planning does not lead to improvement
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8. Attendance Legal intervention

Schools, trusts and local authorities are expected to work together and make use of the full range of legal interventions rather than relying solely on fixed penalty notices or prosecution. It is for individual schools and local authorities to decide whether to use them in an individual case after considering the individual circumstances of a family. Where they are used, it should be clear that it will 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 (Working together to improve school attendance, August 2024).

Possible interventions include:

- Attendance Contracts
- Notice to Improve
- Education Supervision Orders (ESOs)
- Attendance Prosecution
- Parenting Orders
- Fixed penalty notices

More information on attendance legal interventions can be found in the DfE's '[Working together to improve school attendance](#)' guidance.

Issuing of penalty notices:

The new national framework for issuing penalty notices came into effect on the 19 August 2024.

If the national threshold has been met and offers of appropriate support have not been engaged with by the parent or has not worked, a notice to improve should usually be sent to give parents a final chance to engage in support (This does not apply to holiday related absences).

The issuing of a notice to improve will need to be an agreed action at an Education planning which is attended by the school's link Inclusion Lead. Once the issuing of a notice to improve has been agreed, the school will complete Dorset Council's notice to improve template this will require a signature of the parent/carer, link inclusion lead and school representative. Once completed will be sent to Dorset Council Penalty Notice Team at penaltynotices@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk who will send to parents. A review date to be sent at time of original panel.

The school and Inclusion Lead will monitor the attendance over the monitoring period. Inclusion lead will discuss attendance with Team Manager who will attend review meeting if attendance has deteriorated. The decision to issue the penalty notice will be made at review panel following the inclusion lead liaison with the school. Legal advice via Dorset Council's Legal panel may be sought by Inclusion lead

The school and Inclusion Lead will monitor the attendance over the monitoring period and the Inclusion Lead will discuss the attendance at the Dorset Council Legal Attendance

Panel. The decision to issue a penalty notice will be made at this panel following the Inclusion Lead's liaison with the school.

More information about Dorset's process for issuing school attendance penalty notices is set out in our code of conduct [Children's Services code of conduct for the issue of fixed penalty notices - Dorset Council](#)

9. Children who Cannot Attend School due to Health Needs

Schools should complete a referral form for children and young people who require a learning centre place. Schools should e-mail the referral to their Link Inclusion Lead.

Schools are expected to attend and present their request to the panel members as they know their children and young people the best which ensure the most suitable provision is sought. Schools have approx. 5 minutes to present their referral.

Referrals will be discussed at a weekly central learning centre panel. The central learning centre panel will include Learning and Belonging Service Managers, Learning and Belonging Team Managers, the virtual school and Inclusion Leads. Settings are also expected to attend and present their request as they know and understand their young people.

Section 19 What is S19?

When a child of compulsory school age is unable to access their educational setting due to illness, exclusion or otherwise, the Council must consider whether it has a duty under section 19 of the Education Act 1996 to make suitable provision for them

Permanent Exclusion:

Local authorities must arrange suitable full-time education from the sixth school day after the exclusion.

Types of alternative provision: A Learning Centre, online learning, vocational training.

Illness:

Provision for children unable to attend school due to health needs.

Arrangements should be made as soon as it is clear the child will be absent for 15 days or more.

Types of support: home tuition, hospital education, online learning.

Otherwise:

"Otherwise" is a broad category which covers circumstances other than illness or exclusion in which it is not reasonably possible for a child to take advantage of any existing suitable schooling. In all cases, councils must consider the individual circumstances of each particular child and be able to demonstrate how they made their decisions. They must take account of all available evidence and record the reasons for their decisions. They may need to make decisions in cases where they do not have all the evidence they would like.' Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman 'Out of School, Out of Sight?' 2022

'Otherwise' (as opposed to illness or exclusion) is intended to cover other situations in which

it is not reasonably possible or practical for a child to access and take advantage of any existing suitable schooling Examples:

Scenario 1: When a child has had 10 or more continuous days of unauthorised absence

Scenario 2: Where a child has been absent for a continuous or cumulative period of 15 school days (authorised or unauthorised) and where the reason for absence is connected

Scenario 3: When a child is not on a school roll including where a child has been de-registered from Elective Home Education (EHE) after the 15th day

Scenario 4: When a child with an EHCP isn't receiving appropriate provision

Scenario 5: When a child with an EHCP doesn't have a school place

Scenario 6: When in certain circumstances a child is awaiting a school place and there may be a delay in education starting (Ombudsman 2022)

Medical Guidance and Evidence:

Schools must support pupils with medical conditions as per the Children and Families Act 2014.

Requirements: individual healthcare plans, staff training, emergency procedures.

Evidence needed: medical reports, healthcare professional recommendations.

Evidence of the graduated approach

Children & Young People without an EHCP:

The LA where a child resides is responsible for S19.

If the child resides between different addresses in a split family, the decision is made on where the child spends most of their time and this LA has the S19 responsibilities

If the child ordinarily resides 50/50 in 2 LAs, then both LAs can discuss and agree sharing the responsibilities for S19 provision. If an agreement cannot be reached, then the LAs can write to the Secretary of State for a decision.

Children with an EHCP:

The LA who is responsible for maintaining the EHC plan is responsible for maintaining their provision; this includes section 19 provision. The school and LA responsibilities are set out in paragraph 8 of the Section 19 policy

Even if a school in another local authority is named in the EHCP, the LA responsible for maintaining the plan is responsible for the section 19 provision

The Education Act 1996 also places a duty on schools to provide education in the interim period while an assessment of need is undertaken to inform the LA's need to arrange

Alternative Education Provision under Section 19 of the Education Act 1996, this should be provided through remote education provision or other means as a soon as reasonably practicable, and until the LA has concluded its assessment.

Myth Busting:

Where the Local Authority offers (based on an assessment of need) a package of alternative education that it deems to be reasonably practicable for that child it is not under a duty to provide further alternative education if the child or young person is not taking advantage of that provision. Any Alternative Education Provision arranged should be considered as a short-term intervention, with the expectation it will support the child to reintegrate with education on the site of their host school at the earliest opportunity, a principle that schools, parents, children and partners are required to commit to.

10. AV1

Dorset has a number of AV1s available for your school to help improve attendance.

AV1s are distance learning robots. Children and young people can partake in the vital education and social aspects of school from home or even a hospital bed.

They have been used successfully in a range of Dorset schools, including first, primary, middle and secondary provision.



St Ives Primary School, Dorset

AV1s sit in the classroom in place of the child, and the child can then join in lessons by listening, watching the teacher, asking questions, and participating in discussions. The child or young person can operate the AV1 from a phone or tablet, wherever they might be. It also officially counts as attendance. Increasingly schools are using them with children who are suffering with anxiety and looking for a way of enabling them to return to classroom. The AV1 can provide a step towards this.

Live streaming

AV1 transmits a live stream, from the AV1 to the AV1 user's tablet. This means that no data is recorded. The live stream is end-to-end encrypted, meaning it is impossible for any external party to access the video/audio sent from the AV1. It is not possible to record or screenshot when using the AV1 app on an Android device.

Knowing who is accessing AV1

Only one user can be connected to the AV1 at any time. You will know the user is connected when the eyes light up. The AV1 user must enter this 4-digit code each time they wish to use their AV1. In addition, the AV1 user/their guardian are required to digitally accept terms and conditions, which state that only the AV1 user will be using the AV1.

Want to know more?

All the information on how to book one out for your school can be found [here](#). We can also offer a free trial. Any queries please contact us at AV1@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk You can also speak to your Inclusion Lead.

12. ACE – All children in Education

Logging in: <https://ace-dorsetcc.msappproxy.net/ace/>

Contact for queries/support: ace@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

ACE should be used to inform the local authority teams of the following –

- Elective home education
- Permanent exclusions
- Reduced (part-time) timetables
- Attendance concerns
- Children missing education
- Off-site direction
- Children removed from roll

Please see the ACE guidance for schools for instructions on how to use the ACE system.

If you are informing the local authority of elective home education, you will need to follow this up with an email with evidence from the parent writing to state that they are taking responsibility for their child's education. Please send this your locality team on the emails at the bottom of this guidance.

Appendix 1: Targeted Support Meeting Template

Targeted Support Meeting		Date:	
School:		Inclusion Lead:	
School representative:		Targeted Youth Worker:	
Family Help Link Worker:		Provision Lead	
Education Psychologists		Other Professional	

Inclusion data:	
Overall school attendance:	
Authorised %:	
Unauthorised %	
PA %	
SA%	
Number of students with 2 or more suspensions (ensure have been discussed above).	
PEX's	
Number of EHE's	
Number of CME's	

[illegible]

School community discussion (particular cohorts of concern, new initiatives within the school, other areas of concern re joint working etc)

Date of next meeting:

Appendix 2: Education planning Meeting information template (to be shared with Inclusion Lead ahead of the meeting)



Education planning Meeting request.

Please complete and e-mail to your link Inclusion Lead at least 5 days before the Education planning Meeting. If not received prior to the meeting your inclusion lead will not be able to meet with the Family.

School					
Contact at school/setting		Role		Email & Tel	
Date of Education planning Meeting.					

Name of child/young person			
Date of birth		NCY	
Child/young person's address			
Ethnicity		Language spoken	
Pupil premium		Armed Forces Family	
Social care status (CP/CIN/CiC)			
Name(s) of parents			
Addresses of parents if different			
Contact details			

--	--

Is this a review meeting (within 6 months)

☐ Yes

☐ No

If Yes: Please briefly give update since previous meeting ;

**Does the child or young person have SEN? If so, please give a brief outline below.
Does the child have an EHCP?**

--

Does the child or young person have medical needs? If so, please give a brief outline.

--

Does the child or young person have any siblings? If so, please provide details

Name of sibling(s)	Date of birth	Name of school and NCY	Invited to meeting?

Which other professionals are involved?

Name	Title	Contact details

--	--	--

Please indicate reason for brining to Inclusion Meeting, for example persistent or severe absence, risk of exclusion, medical need etc

--

Check list (if the reason for the Education planning Meeting is attendance-related)

Current attendance record

Copies of attendance letters sent to family

Copy of attendance support plan/ parenting contract

Evidence of support offered so far and impact

Minutes of previous meetings with family

Other professionals working with the family invited

Check list (if the reason for the Education planning Meeting is behaviour-related)

Behaviour log

Evidence of support offered so far and impact

Minutes of previous meetings with family

Other professionals working with the family have been invited

Check list (if the reason for the Education planning Meeting is medical-related)

Attendance registration certificate

Evidence of support offered so far and impact
Information from Medical professionals supporting young person
Minutes of previous meetings with family
Other professionals working with the family have been invited

Appendix 3: Education planning Minutes template



Please allow 45 minutes for each child to be discussed. Schools will chair the Education plannings and complete the minute template below for each child discussed at an Education planning. Please send them to the Inclusion Lead within two weeks of the meeting. It is important that the member of school staff present at the Education planning has the authority to make decisions regarding a child's attendance. Those have a right to be made aware that discussions in this meeting may be used as evidence if legal intervention is pursued. If appropriate therefore, please read out the following PACE caution

School	
Name of child/young person	
Date and time of panel:	
Invited: Roles	
Present: Roles	
Parent(S)/Carers/Guardians – D.O.B	
Siblings – ages and what school attends	
Household composition	
Significant others not in household.	
Current agencies working with Family.	

Education planning Meeting

PACE CAUTION

“You do not have to say anything, but it may harm your defence if you do not mention, when questioned, something you may later rely on in court. Anything you do say may be given in evidence.”

PACE Caution Given	YES -
	NO -reason -

Attendance % at time of panel	
Number of unauthorised absences at time of panel	
Number of sessions lateness L and U at time of Education planning	
Number of sessions of suspensions at time of Education planning	
Any other issues to be discussed (if applicable)	
Date of School Attendance Meeting - Attended by parents, if no reason recorded.	
Attendance Action Plan completed? If no reasons given: Date	
Parenting Contract Completed? If no reasons given: Date	

Attendance Action Plan Reviewed: Include what actions were completed and by whom : what actions weren't completed and reasons why: any additional information.	
--	--

Agreed Actions		
Action	By whom?	By when?

Agree review date	
-------------------	--

	Name (position)	Signature
Parent/Carer:		
Child/ young person: if appropriate		
School:		
Council inclusion Lead:		

Appendix 4: Attendance contract template



We are going to work together in making sure that **NAME OF CHILD/YOUNG PERSON** improves their attendance at school over the next **TIME PERIOD**.

School	
Date of birth	
Year group	
Address	
Name(s) of parent(s)	
Contact Number	
Address(es)	

Senior school staff member with overall responsibility
Member of school staff with day-to-day responsibility
Contact number (and when is the best time to call?)
Dorset Council Officer (if applicable)
Contact details

Current attendance % and other information, including number of absences, family views, child/young person views (if appropriate) and what has been tried before

The specific targets of our plan and when we aim to do this by (date)

Achieving these targets

I/we (the family) agree to:

I (child/young person) agree to (if appropriate):

We (the school) agree to:

Officers of Dorset Council agree to (if applicable):

Others agree to (if applicable):

Agreeing to the contract:

Name	Role	Signature

Date:

Copies to be circulated to all parties

Appendix 5:

Letter 1 – New school year

Dear [Name of Parent(s)/Carer(s)],

In This Together

We hope your child had a joyful and restful summer break. It's a real pleasure to welcome them back to [Insert Name of School]—we are so glad to have them with us.

At [School Name], we believe that every child deserves the best possible chance to thrive, and regular attendance plays a vital role in helping them do just that. Being in school every day helps children build friendships, grow in confidence, and make the most of their learning opportunities. It also helps them feel a strong sense of belonging—something we value deeply in our school community.

As a parent it is your responsibility for your child to attend school every day. However, we understand that every child is unique, and sometimes attending school can be more challenging for some than others. Please know that we're here to support you and your child every step of the way. If there's anything getting in the way of regular attendance, we encourage you to reach out to us—early conversations can make a big difference, and we're always ready to listen and help. You can contact us at [Insert Contact Details].

Together, we can support your child by:

- Ensuring they arrive at school on time each day by [Insert Expected Time]
- Booking medical and dental appointments outside of school hours whenever possible
- Letting us know if your child is unwell and unable to attend ([Insert how to report absence])
(You may find this NHS guide helpful: [Is my child too ill for school?](#))
- Taking holidays only during school breaks
- Attending parents' evenings and school events
- Talking to us about any concerns or challenges—our staff are here to help

You can find our attendance policy on our website here: [Insert Link]. If you need it in a different format or have trouble accessing it, just let us know and we'll be happy to help.

Thank you for being such an important part of our school community. We truly value your partnership and look forward to working together to support your child's learning, well-being, and future success.

If you have any questions or would like to talk more about how we can support your child, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Warm regards,

[Headteacher's Signature]

[Name]

Headteacher

Letter 2 – Half-termly attendance letter example

[date]

Dear [name of parent(s)/carer(s)]

In this together

Each half term, you will receive a letter to update you on your child's attendance. We know that there are many reasons for a child's absence, and we want to **work together** to support your child's attendance if it should fall below 90% or be near 90%.

This letter is for attendance from [date] up to [date]

Name of child:

*We know that 's attendance has been affected by
..... e.g. medical needs.*

Attendance overview:

Term	Attendance %
End of Autumn 1st Half	
End of Autumn 2nd Half	
End of Spring 1st Half	
End of Spring 2nd Half	
End of Summer 1st Half	
End of Summer 2nd Half	

Colour code –

Red – poor attendance

Yellow – attendance of concern

Green - good attendance

Previous Years (if applicable):

Year 3: [Insert %]

Year 2: [Insert %]

Year 1: [Insert %]

Reception: [Insert %]

Signature:

Name contact and role:

Letter 3- Initial Attendance Concerns

In this together

Dear [Name of Parent(s)/Carer(s)],

I hope this letter finds you well.

We know how important regular school attendance is—not just for academic progress, but also for helping children build friendships, feel part of the school community, and enjoy all the opportunities that school life offers.

We've noticed that [Name] has been absent for [Number] days so far this school year, which is a little more than most of their classmates. We completely understand that there can be many reasons for this, and we wanted to reach out to offer our support. That is why we gave you a call on [Insert Date].

Thank you for taking the time to speak with us. It was helpful to talk through how things are going for [Name]. Here's a quick summary of what we discussed:

Insert summary

Optional - We also want to take a moment to recognise the positive progress [Name] has made—whether it's in their learning, attitude, or participation. It's lovely to see their efforts, and we're keen to keep building on that together.

If you'd like to talk more or if there's anything else we can do to help, please don't hesitate to get in touch. We're here to support you and [Name] in any way we can.

Warm regards,

[Signature]

[Name and Role]

Letter 4 - Attendance Improvement

[Date]

Dear [Name of Parent(s)/Carer(s)],

Re: Celebrating Attendance Progress

We're really pleased to share some good news—[Name]'s attendance has improved, and we want to take a moment to thank you for the important role you've played in making that happen.

Your support makes a real difference, and we're so grateful to be working in partnership with you. When children feel supported both at home and at school, they're more likely to thrive—and strong attendance is a big part of that success.

If you'd like to talk more about how we can continue supporting [Name] together, please don't hesitate to get in touch with me at [add details]. We're always here to help.

With warm regards,

[Signature]

[Name, contact and Role]

Letter 5 - Invitation to Attendance Meeting

[Date]

Dear [Name of Parent(s)/Carer(s)],

Re: Working Together to Support [Name]'s Attendance

Thank you for the support you've shown so far in helping to improve [Name]'s attendance. We really appreciate your efforts. While we've made some progress, [Name] has missed [number of days] since our last conversation, and we'd like to work together to explore how we can best support them moving forward.

We understand that illness and other challenges can sometimes make regular attendance difficult. If there are any barriers you or [Name] are facing, we want to listen and help. Like you, we want to ensure [Name] has every opportunity to succeed—both academically and personally.

Being in school regularly helps children not only with their learning, but also with building friendships, developing confidence, and feeling a strong sense of belonging in our school community.

To support this, we'd like to invite you to a meeting to talk through how we can work together to improve [Name]'s attendance. The details are:

Date: [Insert date]

Time: [Insert time]

Venue: [Insert venue]

Attendees: [Insert names/roles]

You're very welcome to bring someone with you for support if you'd like.

Our school attendance policy, which outlines how we monitor and support attendance, is available on our website: [Insert link]. If you'd prefer a printed copy or need it in a different format, just let us know.

Please confirm that you've received this letter and whether you'll be able to attend by contacting [Name, email address, and telephone number].

We're really looking forward to working with you to support [Name] and help them feel confident, connected, and ready to thrive.

Warm regards,

[Signature]

[Name, contact and Role]

Letter 6 - Invitation to Education Planning Meeting

[Date]

Dear [Name of Parent(s)/Carer(s)],

Re: Invitation to Education Planning Meeting

Thank you for meeting with us on [Date] to talk about [Name]'s attendance. We really appreciate your time and openness in working together to support [Name]. Since our last conversation, [Name]'s attendance hasn't yet improved, and we understand that there may be a range of reasons behind this. We want to continue working closely with you to understand any challenges and explore how we can best support [Name] moving forward.

- **Days missed since last meeting:** [Insert number]
- **Total days missed this academic year:** [Insert number]

We know that regular school attendance plays a vital role in helping children and young people grow—not just academically, but socially and emotionally too. Being part of the school community helps build friendships, confidence, and a sense of belonging.

To continue this conversation and plan together, we'd like to invite you to an **Education planning Meeting**:

Date: [Insert date]

Time: [Insert time]

Venue: [Insert venue]

You're very welcome to bring someone with you for support.

This meeting will include [Name] from our school and [Name], our Inclusion Lead from Dorset Council, who may be able to offer additional advice and support. We may also invite [insert names of other professionals], depending on what might be helpful.

At [Name of School], we truly value the partnership we have with families. Your insights are essential, and we hope you'll be able to join us so we can work together to understand and address any concerns that may be affecting [Name]'s attendance.

Please confirm receipt of this letter and let us know whether you'll be attending by contacting [Name, email address, and telephone number].

If you're unable to attend, we'll still hold the meeting and discuss [Name]'s attendance so we can decide on the next steps. However, your voice is important, and we'd really like you to be part of the conversation.

Warm regards,

[Signature]

[Name, contact and Role]

Enclosed: PACE leaflet (Appendix 9), if appropriate

Letter 7 - Failure to attend Education Planning Meeting

[Date]

Dear [Name of Parent(s)/Carer(s)],

Re: Education planning Meeting – Follow-Up

We're sorry we missed you at the Education planning Meeting on [Insert Date]. We understand that things can come up, and we hope everything is okay. Enclosed with this letter are the minutes from the meeting, which outline the discussions, actions, and decisions made by the panel.

We want to take this opportunity to remind you that regular school attendance is a legal responsibility for all parents and carers of children of compulsory school age. It's also a vital part of helping children succeed—both in their learning and in building the confidence, friendships, and sense of belonging that come from being part of the school community.

We will continue to monitor [Name]'s attendance closely, including punctuality, and we're here to support you in any way we can. If there are challenges you're facing, please don't hesitate to reach out—we want to work with you to find solutions that help [Name] feel supported and ready to thrive.

At [Name of School], we're committed to helping every child reach their full potential, and we know that strong partnerships with families are key to making that happen.

If you'd like to talk through the meeting notes or discuss any concerns, please contact [Name, email address, and telephone number]. We'd really value the opportunity to reconnect and work together.

We're hopeful to see a positive change in [Name]'s attendance and are here to support that journey with you.

Warm regards,

[Headteacher's Signature]

[Name, contact and Role]

Enclosed: PACE leaflet

Letter 8 - Lateness Letter

In This Together

[Date]

Dear [Name of Parent(s)/Carer(s)],

Re: Supporting [Name] with Punctuality

At [School Name], we're committed to working closely with families to help every child feel confident, connected, and ready to learn. One important part of this is arriving at school on time each day.

Being on time helps [Name] start the day positively and feel part of the school community. It also means they can:

- Enjoy social time with friends before lessons begin
- Settle into the school day calmly and confidently
- Hear all instructions and take part in the full learning experience
- Avoid the discomfort that sometimes comes with arriving late

Our school site opens at [Time], and we ask that all children are in class and ready to begin learning by [Time].

We've noticed that [Name] has been late on [Number] occasions so far this school year. We completely understand that mornings can be challenging, and there may be reasons we're not yet aware of. If there's anything making punctuality difficult, please don't hesitate to get in touch—we're here to help.

You can contact [Name] by email at [Email Address] or by phone on [Phone Number]. We'd really value the opportunity to talk and work together to support [Name] in getting the best possible start to each day.

Thank you for your continued support.

Warm regards,

[Signature]

[Name and Role]

Appendix 6: Notice to Improve Template

School Attendance Notice to Improve

[Date]

Dear [Name of Parent(s)/Carer(s)],

Re: Working Together to Improve [Name]'s Attendance

We're writing to you because we're concerned about [Name]'s school attendance. We know that regular attendance is vital—not just for academic progress, but also for wellbeing, friendships, and helping children feel a strong sense of belonging in school.

We've been working to support you and [Name] in improving attendance, and we want to acknowledge the efforts that have been made so far. These have included (also detail if these are still available to family):

- **Phone calls** to discuss concerns and offer support
- **Written communication** summarising our conversations and outlining agreed support
- **Invitations to meetings** to explore how we can work together to remove any barriers
- **An attendance contract**, agreed between you, the school, and [any other professionals involved]
- **Education planning involvement**, with support from Dorset Council's Learning and Belonging Team
- **Offers of additional support** from Dorset Council's Family Help and Targeted Youth Work Teams

Despite these efforts, [Name]'s attendance remains a concern. Between [Warning Start Date] and [Warning End Date], [he/she/they] had 10 or more sessions (half-days) of unauthorised absence. Please see the attached registration certificate for full details.

We want to continue working with you to support [Name], but we also need to let you know that under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, parents and carers have a legal responsibility to ensure their child attends school regularly. If attendance does not improve, this could lead to a Penalty Notice being issued.

What happens next:

You now have (Select clear timeframe: between 3-6 weeks) to show a significant improvement in [Name]'s attendance. During this time, it's important that [he/she/they] attend school (Agree what this looks like e.g. every day and avoid any further unauthorised absences.)

If attendance does not improve during this period, a Penalty Notice may be issued. This carries a fine of £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.

We understand that every family's situation is different, and we're here to help. If you'd like to talk about this notice or explore further support, please contact [Name] at [Phone Number]. You can also reach out to [Inclusion Lead Name] at Dorset Council at [Phone Number and Email].

We remain committed to working with you to support [Name] in getting the most from their education and feeling confident and connected at school.

Warm regards,

[Name]

Headteacher

[School Name]

[Name]

Inclusion Lead

Learning and Belonging Team, Children's Services, Dorset Council

Enclosed: Registration Certificate and PACE Leaflet

Appendix 7: Penalty Notice Request Form and Checklist



NB: Please only type the details when completing this form

Parent / Carer 1's details		Parent / Carer 2's details	
Title	Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Dr/Other	Title	Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Dr/Other
Forename		Forename	
Surname		Surname	
DOB		DOB	
Full address		Full address	
Postcode		Postcode	
Telephone numbers		Telephone numbers	
Email address		Email address	

Child 1's details		Childs 2's details	
Forename		Forename	
Legal surname		Legal surname	
Chosen surname		Chosen surname	
DOB		DOB	
Year group		Year group	
Full address		Full address	
Postcode		Postcode	

Please select only ONE of the options below					
Option 1: Complete below for a penalty notice for a Leave of Absence (LOA) in Term Time			Option 2: Complete below for a penalty notice for Unauthorised Absences (General attendance)		
Did parent/carer request a leave of absence: (please only tick (P) one box	Phone call		Attendance this academic year %	Overall Attendance	%
	Text/Dojo message			Authorised	%
	Email			Unauthorised	%
	LOA request				
	No LOA request				
Have you done the following			Have you done the following		
1. Sent a letter in response to the above		Yes / No	1. Sent 1 st letter warning of possible penalty notice due to the number of unauthorised absences		Yes / No
2. Sent a letter advising that a penalty notice request has been made to the Local Authority		Yes / No	2. Sent 2 nd letter advising that a penalty notice request has been made to the Local Authority		Yes / No
3. Included an attendance certificate (with the absence coded as G) for the school year to date		Yes / No	3. Included an attendance certificate (with the absences coded as unauthorised) for the school year to date		Yes / No
Submit this request as soon as possible following the child's return to school			Ensure you have given the warning at the start of the required 6 week monitoring period		
Please submit all your paperwork as one combined bundle which has editing enabled if sent as a PDF. Ensure full details are provided. If either of the above is not done, the paperwork will be returned to you. The supporting information required is signed copies of all letters, LOA request/email or details of phone call/message, attendance record for the current academic year only, and copies of emails and delivery receipts (if applicable)					

Details of the person completing this form			
Name		Telephone number	
Job title		Email address	
School		Date PN requested	

Any other relevant information (e.g. details of phone calls/text messages)

For Dorset Council Officers use ONLY

PN Type	Leave of absence	Unauthorised absence	Unauthorised lateness		Exclusion	
No. of UA sessions		School name				
PN date period	From:			To:		
Letter from				Date of letter		

Date excluded		Number of days excluded		Date seen in public	
---------------	--	-------------------------	--	---------------------	--

Seen in public by who and where	
---------------------------------------	--

Checked by IL	Yes/No	Initials
Mosaic -		
Capita -		

PLEASE SUBMIT THIS FORM WITHIN TWO WEEKS OF COMPLETION OF HOLIDAY ABSENCE.

Please send the following supporting documents with this request: - **Current Attendance certificate (mandatory)**, Holiday request form if completed by parent(s) & Communication from school to parent(s) advising holiday not authorised.

WE WILL ONLY PROCEED IF WE HAVE THESE DOCUMENTS.

Email request to: penaltynotices@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk cc: Inclusion Lead

Please refer to checklist below before submitting form:

- Is this the most up to date address for the family? (Please check if unsure)
- If they have recently moved into the authority area, please let us know so we can check whether previous Penalty Notices have been issued
- Check personal information is correct i.e. DOB & surname spelt accurately
- Please attach an up-to-date attendance certificate showing when the holiday took place and when the child or young person returned to school or shows absences. This should be signed and dated by the Head Teacher. *(If the holiday falls either side of a school holiday please make sure to submit request once the child or young person has returned in the new term)*. All attendance certificates also need to show the child or young person's name.
- An absence penalty notice can only be issued if 10 or more session marked as one, or a combination of, the following codes: **G, N, O or U Codes** have been taken within a 10-week period. 10 sessions = 5 full school days.
- Please indicate clearly which parent you would like to issue the penalty notice to? If both parents have parental responsibility, then they can both be issued a penalty notice if both were in agreeance with the holiday that had taken place.

- Please check if the family have siblings at another setting and what that setting has agreed.
- Please can you send the request form, attendance certificate, parental request for leave, evidence of school's response unauthorising the request and any other information as separate PDF Documents on one email. Where the parents did not request a leave of absence, a letter from the Head Teacher to the parent informing them that their child has had a period of unauthorised absence.
- If sending in multiple requests, please ensure all documents are separated and named accordingly.
- A penalty notice cannot be issued to a child under statutory school age.

For further information please contact: penaltynotices@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk or alternatively phone us on 01305 221596

Appendix 8: PACE Caution Leaflet



**Learning &
Belonging**

**Police and
Criminal Evidence
(PACE)**

Information is available on the Dorset Council website:
www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk and [Global Search | Dorset Nexus](#)

**You and the law on School
Attendance
Children Act (1989)**

Why have I been given this leaflet?

There are worries about your child's attendance. We understand that attending school is more challenging for some children and young people than others. This is why we will always try our best to work with families in a supportive way to understand and overcome barriers to school attendance.

However, in a very small minority of cases, we may need to utilise legal interventions if we believe this to be in the best interests of a child or young person.

Dorset Council's Inclusion Leads work with schools to support attendance. Anything you may say to an Inclusion Lead while they are working with you could be used in court as evidence. This is why you have received this PACE information.

What does PACE mean?

PACE is the abbreviation for:

Police
And
Criminal
Evidence Act

Will I have to go to court?

It does not automatically mean you will be taken to court because legal intervention is an absolute last resort but it is important that you are aware of it.

What happens next?

The process is as follows:-

1. You will be asked to attend a meeting with your child's school and an Inclusion Lead from Dorset Council. Other professionals may be invited where appropriate and you are welcome to bring someone along with you.
2. An action plan will be agreed.
3. There will then be a period of support and monitoring.

What happens if my child's attendance improves during this period?

There will be no further involvement from Dorset Council's Inclusion Leads if your child's attendance improves sufficiently and the plan appears to be working. Inclusion Leads will only become involved again if attendance becomes a worry.

What happens if I do not cooperate, and my child's attendance does not improve?

We understand that some children and young people find it harder than others to attend school. We will only use the following legal interventions as an absolute last resort and if we feel that legal intervention will help a child to attend school.

If your child still fails to attend school regularly, you could be prosecuted under Section 444(1) Education Act 1996.

A Final Warning letter will be issued and legal papers sent to Dorset Council's legal support. If you are found guilty, you could be fined up to £1000.

If you have failed to make reasonable efforts to ensure your child attends school, you may be prosecuted under Section 444(1A) Education Act 1996, which is a more serious offence and could result in a fine of up to £2,500, an Unpaid Work in the Community Order being made, or a custodial sentence being imposed.

Appendix 9: Locality Contact Information

Locality	E-mail	Telephone
North Locality	northinclusion@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk	01258474036
Dorchester Locality	dorchesterlocalityinclusion@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk	01305224220
West Locality	westlocalityinclusion@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk	01308425241
Chesil Locality	chesilinclusion@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk	01305762400
East Locality	eastlocalityinclusion@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk	01202868224
Purbeck Locality	purbecklocalityinclusion@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk	01929557000

Appendix 10: Attendance Register Codes

Code	Description:
Code / \:	Present at the school / = morning session \ = afternoon session This code is classified for statistical purposes as attending. Pupils must not be recorded as present if they are not in school during registration. If a pupil were to leave the school premises after registration, they will still be counted as attending for statistical purposes.
Code L:	Late arrival before the register is closed. All schools are expected to set out in their attendance policy the length of time the register will be open, after which a pupil will be marked as absent. This should be the same for every session and not longer than 30 minutes. This code is classified for statistical purposes as attending
Code K:	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority. The pupil is attending a place, other than the school or any other school at which they are a registered pupil, for educational provision arranged by a local authority under section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996 (exceptional provision of education), section 42(2), or 61(1) of the Children and Families Act 2014 (special educational provision off site). A pupil attending provision arranged by the school rather than the local authority must be recorded using Codes P or B instead. This code is classified for statistical purposes as attending an approved educational activity
Code V:	Attending an educational visit or trip This code is classified for statistical purposes as attending an approved educational activity

Code P:	Participating in a sporting activity This code is classified for statistical purposes as attending an approved educational activity
Code W:	Attending work experience This code is classified for statistical purposes as attending an approved educational activity.
Code B	Attending any other approved educational activity The pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience. This code is classified for statistical purposes as attending an approved educational activity.
Code D:	Dual registered at another school The law allows a pupil to be registered at more than one school. This code is used to indicate that the pupil is absent with leave to attend the other school at which they are registered. The main examples of dual registration are pupils who are attending a pupil referral unit, a hospital school or a special school on a temporary basis. This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance to avoid double counting.
Code C1:	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad. This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.
Code M:	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment. If a pupil is present at registration but then leaves the school to attend a medical or dental appointment during the session in question, no absence needs be recorded for that session. This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.
Code J1:	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Code S:	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.
Code X:	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school. This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance
Code C2:	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, schools can temporarily reduce the timetable of a pupil of compulsory school age to part-time, if the school and a parent who the pupil normally lives with have agreed that, exceptionally, the pupil should temporarily be educated only part-time and have agreed the times and dates when the pupil will, during the period of temporary part-time education, be expected to attend the school.
Code C:	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances A leave of absence in term time should only be agree in Exceptional circumstances. Generally, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance. This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence
Code T:	Parent travelling for occupational purposes. The pupil is a mobile child (no fixed abode) and their parent(s) is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with them. If there is genuine and reasonable doubt over the reason given, the school may ask for proof that the family are required to travel for occupational purposes during the period of absence. For statistical purposes this is counted as authorised absence
Code R:	Religious observance This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.
Code I:	Illness – Physical and Mental (not medical or dental appointment) Schools are not expected to routinely request that parents provide medical evidence to support illness absences. Where the school has genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness, medical evidence should be requested to support the absence.

Code E:	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made. This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.
Code Q:	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements. This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance.
Code Y1:	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available. This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance.
Code Y2:	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel (caused by a local, national, or international emergency). This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance.
Code Y3:	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed. This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance.
Code Y4:	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed. This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance.
Code Y5:	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention. This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance.
Code Y6:	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Code Y7:	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause. This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance.
Code G:	Holiday not granted by the school. This code is classified for statistical purposes as unauthorised absence
Code N	Reason for absence not yet established. This code is classified for statistical purposes as unauthorised absence.
Code O:	Absent in other or unknown circumstances. Where no reason for absence is established or the school is not satisfied that the reason given is one that would be recorded using one of the codes statistically classified as authorised. This code is classified for statistical purposes as unauthorised absence
Code U:	Arrived in school after registration closed. This code is classified for statistical purposes as unauthorised absence.

Code Z:	Prospective pupil not on admission register. To enable schools to set up registers in advance of pupils joining the school to ease administration burdens. This code is not collected for statistical purposes.
Code #:	Planned whole school closure. This code is not collected for statistical purpose