

Inspire Partnership Academy Trust

Delce Academy



Attendance Policy

DATE APPROVED BY CEO:
November 2023

Key Definitions

AASSA - Attendance Advisory Service for Schools and Academies

AAP - Attendance Advisory Practitioner for AASSA

SLM – School Liaison Officer

ARBOR - School Information Management System

DfE - Department for Education

CME – Children Missing Education

For the purpose of this policy, a parent means:

- all natural parents, whether they are married or not;
- any person who has parental responsibility for a child or young person; and,
- any person who has care of a child or young person (i.e., lives with and looks after the child).

Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the working together to improve school attendance from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE’s statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance: Part 6 of The Education Act 1996 Part 3 of The Education Act 2002 Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006 The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments) The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 This policy also refers to the DfE’s guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

The Law Relating to attendance and safeguarding

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that: “the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full time education suitable: (a) to age, ability and aptitude and (b) to any special educational needs he/she may have either at school or otherwise”

Record preservation

School registers are legal documents. We will ensure compliance with attendance regulations by keeping attendance records for at least three years. Every entry in the admission register and attendance register must be preserved for a period of three years after the date on which the entry was made. Computer registers will be preserved as electronic back-ups.

Reporting to parents

Parents will be given an attendance certificate, annually, with their child's annual report. Parents can also check their child’s attendance anytime via the Arbor Parent App.

Introduction

This Policy represents our commitment to striving for 100% attendance, which is achievable, and achieved by many children. It sets out the principles, procedures and practice the school will undertake. Strategies, sanctions and possible legal consequences of poor Attendance and Punctuality are also detailed, as well as rewards for, and benefits of good attendance. This policy will be reviewed, amended as necessary and published annually in accordance with current legislation and guidance. The DfE guidance [Working Together to Improve School Attendance 2022](#) states that attendance to school is “essential for pupils to get the most out of their school

experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances”.

The senior leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in Delce Academy is:

Name: Mrs Chandler

Position: Deputy Headteacher

Telephone: 01634 845242 Email: hchandler@inspiredelce.co.uk

The member of school staff parents should contact about attendance on a day-to-day basis is:

Name: Mrs Hartnup

Position: Regional Administration Manager

Telephone: 01634 845242 Email: office@inspiredelce.co.uk

Principles

- Receiving a full-time, suitable education is a child’s legal entitlement.
- It is a parents /carers’ legal responsibility to ensure this happens.
- Attending school regularly aids intellectual, social and emotional development and is essential if children are to benefit fully from their school life.
- Attending school regularly safeguards the welfare of children whilst they are not in the care of their parents.
- All children whose attendance is poor will be treated as vulnerable.

These principles are enshrined in British law, within the Education Act 1996, the Children Act 1989, and other associated pieces of legislation.

[Please click here for the DfE Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance](#)

Aims of the Policy

- To ensure that all children attend school regularly and punctually, in order to maximise their educational achievement and social development. *Statistics show a direct link between under- achievement and absence below 95%.*
- To discharge the Academies duty to safeguard its pupils to the best of its ability.
- To ensure that all those responsible for children’s education, including parents, carers, staff and governors understand and accept their responsibilities in relation to attendance.
- To minimise absence from school, thereby reducing levels of persistent absence.
- To improve the life chances of the children attending *The Rochester Grammar School* and prepare them to be fully contributing citizens when they reach adulthood. *Regular attenders are more successful in transferring between primary school, secondary school, higher education and employment or training.*

Policy objectives

- To safeguard the welfare, health, social and emotional development of children
- To reduce persistent/severe absence
- To reduce or eliminate term time holidays/leave of absence
- To promote commitment to education and high achievement
- To maximise the potential of every individual pupil
- Ensure robust systems are in place to monitor and manage attendance and punctuality throughout the school

Promoting Attendance

Delce Academy will use all possible opportunities to promote the importance of good attendance and punctuality. These will include the home/school agreement, newsletters, rewards and incentives for good or significantly improving attendance. The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents and the child.

The School will:

- Provide and promote a welcoming and positive atmosphere so that children feel safe, and know that their presence is valued.
- Raise awareness of the importance of full attendance and punctuality, using newsletters and other communications to parents; making attendance a high priority.
- Employ a key member of staff with responsibility for monitoring, improving and evaluating school attendance.
- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families. Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns
- Using data to improve attendance School will provide regular attendance reports to appropriate school staff/SLT etc to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies reducing persistent and severe absence.
- Ensure there is a Senior Leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance to school: Mrs Hannah Chandler - Deputy Headteacher.
- Encourage parents to fully support the policy as a vital contribution towards their child's education. All new parents are introduced to the Policy and information on attendance in the School Admissions Pack. It is also accessible on the School website.
- Encourage the children to have a positive attitude towards attendance and punctuality so that they can retain this into adult life.
- Celebrate good attendance by rewarding with certificates, attendance raffles and acknowledgement with parents/carers.
- Ensure that attendance is effectively monitored, using ARBOR's registration system, and absences are followed up promptly in accordance with this policy
- Communicate effectively with other agencies (AAP, School Health, Traveller Education, Early Help, Social Services etc)
- Meet the legal requirements with the use of correct codes for absence, with particular reference to authorised and unauthorised absence. (*DFE guidance*)
- Ensure that all staff comply with the school policy and deal consistently with absence

- and punctuality.
- Provide training for staff in all matters of attendance.
 - Ensure attendance information is available for Governors and parents.
 - Share good practice with other school
-
- Have procedures in place to help children settle back to school after a long absence. It is important that on return from an unavoidable absence all pupils are made to feel welcome. This should include ensuring that the pupil is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date with any information that has been passed to the other pupils.
 - Liaise with the LA and other relevant agencies promptly for those children whose health needs do not allow them to attend school
 - Make every effort to meet the individual needs of the pupils with SEND

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absences is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Inform parents when their child's attendance becomes a concern
- Send letters as needed to advise parents/carers of this and offer support. This letter acknowledges the pupil's circumstances but highlights the importance of good attendance.
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance.
- Ensuring registers have been completed correctly
- Completing daily attendance checks, including absence and lateness follow up in accordance with the school policy
- Monitoring attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level and share with SLT weekly
- Reporting concerns about attendance to the headteacher and designated senior leader responsible for attendance
- Working with school leaders to tackle persistent absence
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Advising the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- Ensuring all correspondence related to attendance is sent out in a timely manner and is recorded systematically in Arbor
- Recording attendance on a daily basis using the correct codes using Arbor or completing a paper register if required
- Promoting good attendance and punctuality with all children
- Communicating concerns with attendance and punctuality with the attendance officer or designated safeguarding leader

We expect the parent to:

- Provide more than 1 up to date contact numbers and changes of address.
- Provide details of at least two contacts for emergency use.
- Notify the School when their child is unable to attend, with a reason, on the first day of the absence.
- Telephone the School after the first day of absence to advise the School if the absence is continuing.
- Provide medical evidence:
 - If the sickness continues for over 3 days
 - When the child has recurring sickness or a medical ailment which requires them to take sporadic periods of absence from school i.e. tonsillitis. We request this information if it reoccurs 3 or more times. Failure to provide evidence will result in a referral to the Attendance Advisory Practitioner (AAP)
 - When non-urgent medical appointments are made during term time
- Provide medical evidence indicating attendance at the dentist, doctor or optician before the arranged appointment unless an emergency situation has arisen. Whenever possible all appointments should be made outside of school hours.
- Ensure that their child arrives at school on time each day.
- Let the School know if their child is going to be late, e.g. if a car breaks down; if an urgent appointment has been made.
- Understand the importance of good attendance and punctuality and promote this with their child, aiming for 100% attendance each year.
- Provide written explanations of any absence and medical evidence for whole day appointments as well as medical evidence for persistent absence from school due to alleged illness.
- Only request leave of absence if it is for an exceptional circumstance.

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is a parent/carer's legal responsibility (Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act) and permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the Head Teacher creates an offence in law.

We expect students to:

- Attend every day unless they are ill or have an authorised absence.
- Arrive in school on time.

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading and promoting attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- Reporting the absence of Looked After Children to the child's social worker.

The Trustees and local governing board

Trustees will:

- Recognise the importance of school attendance and promote it across the trust's ethos and policies, which are regularly reviewed for effectiveness
- Regularly review attendance data, discuss, and challenge trends, and help trust leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual cohorts or schools who need it most
- Ensure effective practice is being shared between schools within the trust

Local Governing boards will:

- Recognise the importance of school attendance, promoting it as part of the school ethos and in line with related trust policies
- In partnership with executive leaders ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- Regularly review attendance data, discuss, and challenge trends, and help school leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most.
- Ensure school staff receive adequate training on attendance and are sharing effective practice with other schools in the trust
- The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

Share effective practice on attendance management and improvement across schools

One of the most successful approaches to improving attendance is the sharing of effective practice between schools. As an Academy Trust, we will therefore, provide regular opportunities to bring together staff from different schools to learn from each other's attendance expertise and share effective interventions. As a minimum this may include, sharing exemplary resources and documents such as communications to pupils and parents, regular networking or Q&A sessions, and topical best practice training or webinars.

Lateness and Punctuality

Poor punctuality is not acceptable and can contribute to further absence. Good time-keeping is a vital life skill which will help children as they progress through their school life and out into the wider world. Pupils who arrive late disrupt lessons and, if a child misses the start of the day, they can feel unsettled and embarrassed, miss vital learning and important messages from their class teacher. Every minute a child is late to school can add up to a lot of learning time over the year!

Legally the register must be taken twice a day, once at the start of the school day at and once during the afternoon session.

Gates open: 8:30am

Morning registration: 8:45-8:55am

Authorised Late (L) mark given within: 8:55-9:25am

Unauthorised late (U) mark given after: 9:25am

Afternoon registration:

- KS1 & LKS2 - 13:15pm - 15:25pm
- UKS2 - 13:30pm - 13:25pm

Pupils who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of the other pupils. Ongoing and repeated lateness after the close of registration is considered as unauthorised absence and will be subject to legal action

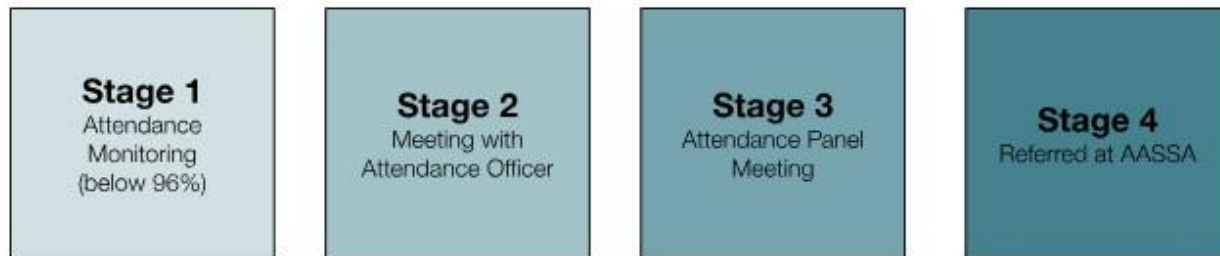
The table below indicates how frequent lateness can add up to a considerable amount of learning being lost. This can seriously disadvantage children and disrupt the learning of others.

Minutes late per Day	Equates to Days of Teaching Lost in one Year	Which means this number of lessons missed
5 mins	3 Days	15 Lessons
10 mins	6 Days	30 Lessons
15 mins	9 Days	45 Lessons

Absences

Regular monitoring of the registers and analysis of data, will be made by the Attendance Officer and Deputy Headteacher, to identify pupils with a pattern of absences that may lead to Persistent Absence (PA) and Severe Absence. The Attendance Officer and Deputy Headteacher will be responsible for putting in place actions for each pupil of concern.

As such, at Delce Academy we follow a Frequent/Persistent Absence Review process of which there are 4 Stages (see below):



Stage 1

Parents/carers of children whose attendance is below 96% or whose child ended the previous academic year with poor attendance, will receive a Stage 1 - Attendance Monitoring Letter. You will be requested from this point to provide medical evidence* to authorise any further absences from school. Your child's name will be placed on an attendance monitoring list meaning their attendance will be reviewed in weekly meetings held between the Deputy Headteacher and Attendance Officer.

Failure to provide medical evidence will result in absences being recorded as unauthorised and your child being escalated to Stage 2.

Please note: If unauthorised absences total 10 sessions or more, your child will automatically escalate to Stage 4 and will be referred to the Attendance Advisory Service for Schools and Academies (AASSA) to be considered for Penalty Notice/Court Action.

**medical evidence - A doctor's letter, a copy of a prescription for medicine, medical appointment card with your child's name on or the medicine packaging.*

Stage 2

This means your child has had further unauthorised absences since receiving a Stage 1 letter. We will continue to monitor your child's absence and their name will remain on the monitoring list. You are still required to provide medical evidence* for any absences, without this, absences will not be authorised.

In addition to this, you will be contacted by telephone by the Attendance Officer to discuss the reasons for your child's absences. If at this point you are able to provide medical evidence, the unauthorised marks will be changed.

The attendance officer will make multiple attempts to contact you but failure to engage will result in decisions being made in your absence. Mandatory guidance/targets will be put in place to help improve attendance (a letter outlining these will be sent to you).

We will monitor your child's attendance and if there is not a significant improvement within a 4 weeks period, your child will be escalated to Stage 3.

Please note: If unauthorised absences total 10 sessions or more, your child will automatically escalate to Stage 4 and will be referred to the Attendance Advisory Service for Schools and Academies (AASSA) to be considered for Penalty Notice/Court Action.

**medical evidence - A doctor's letter, a copy of a prescription for medicine, medical appointment card with your child's name on or the medicine packaging.*

Stage 3

Being at Stage 3 means that your child has failed to attend regularly and has further unauthorised absences recorded. We will continue to monitor your child's absence and their name will remain on the monitoring list. You are still required to provide medical evidence* for any absences, without this, absences will not be authorised.

In addition, you will now be invited to an Attendance Panel meeting with a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) Family Liaison Manager and the Attendance Advisory Practitioner from Medway Council to put in place a supportive reintegration/action plan to help assist the improvement of your child's attendance. Failure to engage or attend the meeting will mean that actions (where possible) are set in your absence and a letter will be sent to you informing you of this.

If we do not see an improvement in your child's absence they will be escalated to Stage 4.

Please note: If unauthorised absences total 10 sessions or more, your child will automatically escalate to Stage 4 and will be referred to the Attendance Advisory Service for Schools and Academies (AASSA) to be considered for Penalty Notice/Court Action.

**medical evidence - A doctor's letter, a copy of a prescription for medicine, medical appointment card with your child's name on or the medicine packaging.*

Stage 4

Your details will now be passed to the Attendance Advisory Service for School and Academies (AASSA). They will determine the right course of action which could be one of the following:

1. From February 2004, new measures introduced in the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 have made it possible that certain cases of unauthorised absence from school amounting to 10 sessions (5 days) can be dealt with by way of Penalty Notice. These Penalty Notices require the recipient to pay a fine of £60 per parent and per child, if paid within 21 days, or £120 if paid within 28 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice will result in prosecution in the Magistrates Court.
2. The local authority may initiate court action under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, which could lead to fines of up to £2,500, or even imprisonment,
3. In some cases, action may be taken under the Children's Act 1989 to protect the welfare and development of your child

First Day Absence Contact

A child not attending school is considered a safeguarding matter. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required. If a child is absent, parents/carers are expected to notify the school as soon as possible before the school day starts if their child is unable to attend for any unavoidable reason, such as illness. If the school does not receive notification, it will text/email on the first day of absence, to try to ascertain the reason. First day contact will be carried out as early as possible in the school day, in order to notify parents whose children may have set off for school, but not arrived, as quickly as possible.

Second Day Absence Contact

If the child is still too unwell to attend the following day, parents will need to telephone the school again before the start of the school day to inform them of this second day of absence.

If no contact has not been established with any of the named parents/carers we will make all reasonable enquiries to establish contact with emergency contacts and will include making enquiries to known friends and wider family.

Third Day Absence Contact

If there has been no contact, a welfare home visit will be made by the school Attendance Officer and Family Liaison Manager. Where the school is unable to undertake a home visit, we will contact the police to request they undertake a welfare check. This action will be taken on day one if the child has complex needs, subject to a child protection plan or are known to the school safeguarding team. If a child is absent for longer than 3 days due to ill health, medical evidence will need to be provided in order that the school can authorised the absence. On return to school, the parent must put in writing the reason for absence in addition to telephoning the school on the days of absence.

Fourth Day Absence Contact

If no contact, make a referral to children's social care and / or request a police welfare check. Referral made to children's social care dependent on outcome.

Fifth Day Absence Contact

We have a legal duty to report the absence of any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 5 consecutive days. If the child is not seen and contact has not been established with the named parent/carer then the local authority is notified that the child is at risk of missing. Children's Services staff will visit the last known address and alert key services to locate the child. This is known as a Child Missing in Education (CME).

Continuing Absence Procedures

We have a legal duty to report the absence of any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days. If the child is not seen and contact has not been established with the named parent/carer then the local authority is notified that the child is *at risk of missing education (CME)*. The Attendance Advisory Service staff will visit the last known address and alert key services to locate the child. So help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up-to-date contact number. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.

Persistent Absence

A pupil is defined by the Government as a 'persistent absentee' (PA) is when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year, **for whatever reason, whether it be authorised or unauthorised, or a mixture of both**. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to a child's educational prospects and we need parents' full support and encouragement to tackle it. Projected PA children are tracked and monitored carefully through our attendance system. All our PA children and their parents/carers are subject to an Intervention Plan. All PA cases are also automatically made known to the AAP and some cases may lead to legal action being initiated.

Some children may have acute health conditions which, despite the best efforts of parents and carers, lead to significant ongoing periods of absence. We will work closely with parents/carers to ensure we develop support systems which enable each child to attend school as often as physically possible. Children should never be excluded from school or activities on medical grounds unless they are acutely unwell or hospitalised. Families of children with acute physical and medical conditions that lead to pervasive absence will not follow the same systems and procedures laid out in this policy.

Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation - particularly county lines. It is therefore important that the school responds to persistently absent pupils and children missing education as it supports identifying such abuse, and in the case of absent pupils, helps prevent the risk of them becoming a child missing education in the future.

This includes when problems are first emerging but also where children are already known to local authority children's social care and need a social worker (such as a child who is a child in need or who has a child protection plan, or is a looked after child), where being absent from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community. Further information and support, includes:

- Guidance on school attendance 'Working together to improve school attendance' including information on how schools should work with local authority children's services where school absence indicates safeguarding concerns.
- Information regarding schools' duties regarding children missing education, including information schools must provide to the local authority when removing a child from the school roll at standard and non-standard transition points, can be found in the department's statutory guidance: [children-missing-education](#)
- Further information for colleges providing education for a child of compulsory school age can be found in:

[full-time-enrolment-of-14-to-16-year-olds-in-further-education-and-sixth-form-colleges](#)

- General information and advice for schools and colleges can be found in the Government's [missing-children-and-adults-strategy](#)

Understanding absence percentages

You may wonder why a school would be concerned if your child's attendance is 95%. This may make it easier to understand:

95% equates to half a day off every two weeks

90% equates to a day off every two weeks

85% equates to one and half days off every two weeks

80% equates to one whole day every week

Even the brightest and most enthusiastic learner will find it hard to keep up with their work with these levels of absence. That is why we encourage the highest attendance possible.

Penalty notices

In education law, parents/carers are committing an offence if they fail to ensure the regular attendance of their child of compulsory school age at the school at which the child is registered, unless the absence has been authorised by the school.

The local authority will use the full range of legal measures to secure good attendance. Legal measures will only be considered when there is unauthorised absence and improvements are not being made. Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a penalty notice, parents must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the headteacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:

- a number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- one-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute the parent or withdraw the notice.

Please note: If you pay the Penalty Notice and your child has further unauthorised absences additional legal action will be taken.

Authorised and unauthorised absence

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the School as AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing. Medical evidence may also be required in the form of a copy of a prescription, GP note, etc. Types of absence that are likely to be authorised are illness, medical or dental appointments that unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies.

Examples of types of absence that are not considered reasonable and which will not be authorised under any circumstances are:

- Going shopping with parents, Birthdays
- Minding other younger children in the family
- Siblings or other relatives are unwell
- Arriving at school too late to get a present mark (After the close of registration)
- Truancy
- Death of a pet
- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily e.g. because they had a late night or for non-infectious illness or injury that would not affect their ability to learn
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Children who arrive at school after the close of registration are marked using a 'U'. This indicates that they are in school for safeguarding purposes, however is counted as an absence for the session
- Shopping trips
- Accompanying siblings or parents to medical appointments
- Their own or family birthdays
- Holidays taken during term time without leave, not deemed 'for exceptional purposes' by the headteacher - may result in school applying to the local authority to issue a penalty notice or if you have previously been issued a penalty notice, the school may request a direct prosecution by the local authority
- Day trips
- Other leave of absence in term time which has not been agreed

A school can, if needed, change an authorised absence to an unauthorised absence and vice versa, if new information is presented. Any changes will be communicated to parents/carers. An example of this would be where a parent states a child is unwell but on return to school, there is evidence they have been on holiday.

As of 1st September 2013, there has been a change to The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations Act 2006. Headteacher's may no longer grant a 'Leave of Absence' in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Therefore, any such absences not deemed as exceptional circumstances will be unauthorised. Holidays or overseas trip absences in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking students away in school time. Remember that any savings you think you may

make by taking a holiday/overseas trip in school time are offset by the cost to your child's education. Because of the damage to your child's learning caused by this, we do not authorise any holidays/overseas trips in term time, unless in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the headteacher.

Register codes (as set by the DfE)

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances

E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

Applications for leave of absence in term time (includes Holidays in term time)

All pupils are encouraged to attend school every day of the 190 days that school is open. The register is called twice daily and pupils are expected to be present for the 380 sessions, or half days. That leaves 175 days for family holidays, shopping trips and other needs.

As a school we prioritise teaching and learning, therefore, in accordance with the local and National guidelines, Delce Academy does not authorise holidays during term time.

Permission, however, may be granted only in exceptional circumstances, when the benefit of the absence far outweighs the benefit of school attendance. A request for such absence should be made in writing to the Headteacher. When requesting leave of absence during term time may you be reminded that 10 days of absence equates to 20 sessions missed schooling, which is equivalent to 5.2% of absence.

Please note: any child who has taken a term time holiday will be required to provide medical evidence for any further absences during the remainder of the academic year. Any absences due to ill health either directly before or after a school holiday will need to provide medical evidence in order for the school to authorise the absence.

In the case of all unauthorised leave of absences, incurring 10 or more unauthorised sessions (5 days), an application for a Fixed Penalty Notice will be made to the local authority.

Notes:

- From February 2004, new measures introduced in the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 have made it possible that certain cases of unauthorised absence from school amounting to 10 sessions (5 days) can be dealt with by way of a Penalty Notice. These Penalty Notices require the recipient to pay a fine of £60 if paid within 21 days, or £120 if paid within 28 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice will result in prosecution in the Magistrates Court. Penalty notices will be issued to each parent/ carer that resides with the child.
- Non-payment of these fines will result in application to Criminal Court.

- If a Parent/Carer requests for a term holiday is refused, but the holiday taken, it will be classified as unauthorised absence and may be subject to a penalty notice being served to each parent/ carer that resides with the child by Medway's Attendance Advisory Service for Schools and Academies (AASSA)
- A formal application must be made in writing, IN ADVANCE and returned to the Attendance Officer
- Permission sought after a holiday has been taken will not be granted.
- If the parent/ carer removes a student from their education for the purpose of a suspected holiday without advising the school this will be referred to the Attendance Advisory Practitioner (AAP). On the third day of absence a letter will be sent requesting that the parent/ carer contacts the school within 2 days to confirm the reason for absence. No response will assume to be a holiday absence and penalty notice(s) may be issued.

The Academies policy is not to authorise holidays during term time. Any applications for leave in term time must be made in writing to the Head Teacher/Principal. There is no automatic right to term time leave of absence, and your request is likely to be declined except in the most exceptional circumstances. Each application will be considered on its own merit, and the attendance record(s) of the child/ren concerned will be taken into account when making a decision.

Deletion from roll

For any pupil leaving Delce Academy, other than at the end of Year 6, parents/carers are required to complete a 'Pupils moving from school' form which can be obtained from the school office. This provides the school with the following information: Child's name, class, current address, date of leaving, new home address, name of new school, address of new school. This information is essential to ensure that we know the whereabouts and appropriately safeguard all of our pupils, even those who leave us.

It is crucial that parents keep school updated with current addresses and contact details for key family members in case of emergency.

Under Pupil Regulations 2006, all schools are now legally required to notify their Local Authority of every new entry to the admission register within five days of the pupil being enrolled. In addition to this, every deletion from the school register must also be notified to the Local Authority, as soon as the ground for deletion has been met in relation to that pupil, and in any event no later than the time at which the pupil's name is deleted from the register. This duty does not apply when a pupil's name is removed from the admission register at a standard transition point – when the pupil has completed the final year of education normally provided by that school.

Reluctant attenders/School refusal /Mental Health, Emotionally Based School Avoidance and Wellbeing

Whilst any child may occasionally have time off school because they are too unwell to attend, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. You should do everything possible to encourage your child to attend. However, if their reluctance appears to be school-based, such as difficulty with work, or bullying, please discuss this with the school at the earliest opportunity

and the school will do everything possible to resolve the issue. Colluding with your child's reluctance to attend is likely to make the matter worse.

School refusal/school phobia is a psychological condition that usually has been medically diagnosed. Other arrangements may be put in place for a child with genuine school phobia.

We can use outside agencies to help with this, such as the School Nurse, Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing support services, a Child and Family Support Worker or the relevant Local Authority team/s. Where outside agencies are supporting the family, you may be invited to attend a Team Around the Family meeting (TAF) to consider what is working well and what needs to improve. An individualised early help plan will be agreed and subsequently reviewed.

Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) is a broad umbrella term used to describe a group of children and young people who have severe difficulty in attending school due to emotional factors, often resulting in prolonged absences from school.

The impact of EBSA on children is far-reaching, it has been linked to seriously hampering children's psychological, social, and academic performance and subsequently performance in exams and employment opportunities.

Parents who have concerns about their child's mental wellbeing can contact our school's Designated Safeguarding Lead for further information on the support available. Many children will experience normal but difficult emotions that make them nervous about attending school, such as worries about friendships, schoolwork, exams or variable mood. It is important to note that these pupils are still expected to attend school regularly.

[Summary of responsibilities where a mental health issue is affecting attendance.pdf](#)

Parents should also contact their GP or the NHS Helpline by phoning telephone number 111 for advice if they are concerned. In case of emergency parents should dial 999.

EOTAS (Education Other Than At School) is for children and young people with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) who cannot be educated in a school setting. This can be for lots of different reasons, such as physical and mental health difficulties. It may be necessary for the child or young person to receive education outside of a school setting.

This means the child or young person would not be on roll at a school or post-16 setting and the special educational provision could happen at home or another unregistered educational setting.

EOTAS can only be agreed by:

- the EHC needs assessment
- a reassessment of needs (EHC needs reassessment)
- the EHCP annual review.

Some examples of types of EOTAS are:

- online schooling
- hospital schooling
- tuition at home or tuition centers

We must consider a request from the parent or carer and decide if EOTAS is appropriate. This decision will be based on evidence that EOTAS is necessary as it would be inappropriate for the provision to be made in an educational setting such as a school or post-16 setting.

All discussions regarding a EOTAS referral must be discussed with the Deputy Headteacher and school SENCo.

EOTAS is different from elective home education (EHE). Parents and carers who choose to home educate are responsible for making their own suitable arrangements for their child's educational provision.

Section 19 of the Education Act 1996 (as amended by Section 3 of the Children Schools and Families Act 2010) provides a duty on local authorities of maintained schools to arrange suitable education for those who would not receive such education unless such arrangements are made for them. This education must be full time, or such part time education as is in a child's best interests because of their health needs.

Reduced Timetables

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary reduced timetable to meet their individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package. ([Working Together to Improve School Attendance](#)).

A reduced timetable must only be in place for the shortest time necessary and not be treated as a long-term solution. Any pastoral support programme or other agreement should have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend full time, either at school or alternative provision. There should also be formal arrangements in place for regularly reviewing it with the pupil and their parents. In agreeing to a reduced timetable, a school has agreed to a pupil being absent from school for part of the week or day and therefore must treat absence as authorised and code in the register as a C, which is an authorised absence.

The school will share the relevant reduced timetable paperwork with the Safeguarding Team who will ensure that the reasons for the timetable are necessary and proportionate.

Participating in a supervised sporting activity

Parents of able sportsmen and women can seek leave of absence from school for their child to take part in regional, county, national and international events and competitions. It is, however, down to the Headteachers discretion as to whether to authorise this and they will wish to discuss with you the nature and frequency of the absence and how learning will continue if absence occurs. Permission for your child to leave early or arrive late to attend coaching and training sessions is also at the discretion of the Headteacher and is not likely to be approved if it is a regular event, unless the sports club or association is providing an education tutor as part of their coaching.

Participating in a performance

Parents of a child performer can seek leave of absence from school for their child to take part in a performance. They must contact the Headteacher to discuss the nature and frequency of the work, whether the child has a valid performance license and whether education will be provided by the employer during any future leave of absence. It is, however, down to the Headteachers discretion as to whether to authorise this (remains satisfied that this will not have a negative impact on the pupils education) and they will wish to discuss with you the nature and frequency of the absence and how learning will continue if absence occurs.

Suspension from School

With effect from the 1st September 2022, any pupil who has been suspended from school, and provision has been arranged, if the student does not attend the provision this shall be recorded as an unauthorised absence. This may result in further action taken by the school, please see also penalty notice section.

Home Educated/Education Otherwise

On receipt of written notification to educate otherwise, parents will be invited into the school to discuss the reason for this decision and to seek a way forward that may enable the child to remain at the school if parents are in agreement. If the child does not remain at the school and is educated otherwise, the school must inform the pupils' local authority that the pupil is to be deleted from the admission register.

Leavers and children who cease to attend without prior notice (CME) procedures

Parents must inform the school in writing if they are planning to remove their child from Delce Academy. This must include the details of the new school the child is planning to attend or that they are exercising their right to educate their child otherwise. All Education Otherwise information will be passed into the Inclusions Team at Medway Council, who are responsible for monitoring all children who are educated otherwise. If after ten day's continuous absence the school has been unable to ascertain the whereabouts of a pupil, they will refer the child's details to the Local Authority, in order to perform further checks that are not available to school.

Non starters

Pupils who are allocated places but fail to start are also treated as CME. If the school has been unable to make contact with the family during a ten-day period after their expected arrival, they will refer the pupils to the Local Authority for further checks.

Vulnerable Children

Children who are Looked After (LAC), subject to a Child Protection Plan (CP) or Children in Need (CIN) will be treated with highest priority and will be known to the Attendance Improvement Coordinator. Any unexplained absence will be followed up immediately by a telephone call to the home. Any outside professionals who are also working with the children and family will also be notified of the absence (Social worker, AAP etc). Children with Special Educational Needs (SEND) will be treated with similar priority in order that their time in school can be maximised, and their learning supported to the greatest extent possible.

Traveller Absence

The school will authorise the absence of a Traveller pupil of no fixed abode who is unable to attend school because they are travelling with their parent who is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require them to travel from place to place. This is subject to certain limits, depending on the child's age and number of sessions absent. The school will discuss cases individually with Traveller parents as necessary. Parents should let the school know of their plans as far in advance as possible. Authorised Traveller absence will be recorded appropriately in the register.

To help ensure continuity of education for Traveller children, wherever possible, the child should attend school elsewhere when their family is travelling for occupational purposes. In which case the child will be dual registered at that school and this school, which is their 'main' school. Children from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities whose families do not travel for occupational purposes are expected to register at school and attend as normal. They are subject to the same rules as other children in terms of the requirement to attend school regularly.

Religious Observance

Our school acknowledges the multi-faith nature of the school community and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside of school holidays or weekends. In accordance with the law, the school will authorise one day's absence for a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs. Should any additional days be taken, these will be recorded in the register as unauthorised absence. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body, to confirm whether the day is set apart.

My child is trying to avoid coming to school. What should I do?

Contact the Attendance Officer immediately and openly discuss your worries. Your child could be avoiding school for a number of reasons – difficulties with schoolwork, bullying, friendship problems, family difficulties. It is important that we identify the reason for your child's reluctance to attend school and work together to tackle the problem. In some cases, you may find it helpful to discuss the circumstances of your child's difficulties with another professional.

What can I do to encourage my child to attend school?

Make sure your child gets enough sleep and gets up in plenty of time each morning. Ensure that he/she leaves home in the correct clothes and properly equipped. Show your child, by your interest, that you value his/her education. Be interested in what your child is doing in school, chat to them about the things they have learnt, what friends they have made and even what they had for lunch.

Early Help

Early identification of needs and support required can prevent concerns escalating. Early help plans should have focused outcomes for children and families, and should be actively planned with them. Plans should deliver evidence-based interventions using single agency or common assessment frameworks, and clear thresholds for specific agency intervention e.g. Social care, housing, mental health services. Early Help plans should be regularly reviewed.

We see how early help can transform a child in school, not just what they are able to achieve academically, but how their personal, social and emotional development can thrive with the right

support. We are committed to early help because it is the right thing to do for our children to give them the best start in life

Appendix 2: Summary table of responsibilities for schools September 2022

For all pupils...			
Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Trustees and Governors are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Ensure their child attends every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies.</p> <p>Notify the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent (e.g. sickness).</p> <p>Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance.</p> <p>Book any medical appointments around the school day where possible.</p>	<p>Have a clear school attendance policy on the school website which all staff, pupils and parents understand.</p> <p>Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance.</p> <p>Accurately complete admission and attendance registers.</p> <p>Have robust daily processes to follow up absence.</p> <p>Have a dedicated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance.</p>	<p>Take an active role in attendance improvement, support their school(s) to prioritise attendance, and work together with leaders to set whole school cultures.</p> <p>Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.</p> <p>Ensure school staff receive training on attendance.</p>	<p>Have a strategic approach to improving attendance for the whole area and make it a key focus of all frontline council services.</p> <p>Have a School Attendance Support Team that works with all schools in their area to remove area-wide barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Provide each school with a named point of contact in the School Attendance Support Team who can support with queries and advice.</p> <p>Offer opportunities for all schools in the area to share effective practice.</p>

For pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent			
Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Trustees and Governors are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered to prevent the need for more formal support.</p>	<p>Proactively use data to identify pupils at risk of poor attendance.</p> <p>Work with each identified pupil and their parents to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-school barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Where out of school barriers are identified, signpost and support access to any required services in the first instance.</p> <p>If the issue persists, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the local authority and other partners. Act as the lead practitioner where all partners agree that the school is the best placed lead service. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the school, continue to work</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Hold a termly conversation with every school to identify, discuss and signpost or provide access to services for pupils who are persistently or severely absent or at risk of becoming so.</p> <p>Where there are out of school barriers, provide each identified pupil and their family with access to services they need in the first instance.</p> <p>If the issue persists, facilitate a voluntary early help assessment where appropriate. Take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the school and other partners. Provide the lead practitioner where all partners agree that a local authority service is best placed to lead. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the local authority, continue to work with the school and partners.</p>

For persistently absent pupils			
Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Trustees and Governors are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.</p>	<p>Continued support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent and:</p> <p>Where absence becomes persistent, put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers. Where necessary this includes working with partners.</p> <p>Where there is a lack of engagement, hold more formal conversations with parents and be clear about the potential need for legal intervention in future.</p> <p>Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, work with the local authority on legal intervention.</p> <p>Where there are safeguarding concerns, intensify support through statutory children's social care.</p> <p>Work with other schools in the local area, such as schools</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Continued support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent and:</p> <p>Work jointly with the school to provide formal support options including parenting contracts and education supervision orders.</p> <p>Where there are safeguarding concerns, ensure joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners.</p> <p>Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, enforce attendance through legal intervention (including prosecution as a last resort).</p>

For persistently absent pupils			
Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Trustees and Governors are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
	previously attended and the schools of any siblings.		

For severely absent pupils			
Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Trustees and Governors are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child’s barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.</p>	<p>Continued support as for persistently absent pupils and:</p> <p>Agree a joint approach for all severely absent pupils with the local authority.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Continued support as for persistently absent pupils and:</p> <p>All services should make this group the top priority for support. This may include a whole family plan, consideration for an education, health and care plan, or alternative form of educational provision.</p> <p>Be especially conscious of any potential safeguarding issues, ensuring joint working between the school, children’s social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners. Where appropriate, this could include conducting a full children’s social care assessment and</p>

For severely absent pupils			
Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Trustees and Governors are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
			building attendance into children in need and child protection plans.

