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1 INTRODUCTION

Great Academies Education Trust (GAET) recognises that every pupil of compulsory school age has a right to a full-time education and therefore sets high attendance expectations for all pupils. This policy provides a framework for our expectations, procedures, and responsibilities to ensure all leaders, staff, pupils, and parents understand these expectations and their roles and responsibilities in achieving good school attendance for all.

This policy recognises that good school attendance is a major contributor in enabling children and young people to achieve their potential and that the monitoring of school attendance is a key trigger for ensuring pupils are safeguarded.

1.1 Legislation and Guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the Department for Education (DfE) statutory guidance, [Working Together to Improve School Attendance](#) and [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
- School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend because of health needs
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/9419_00/health_needs_guidance_accessible.pdf
- Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/8039_56/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions.pdf

This policy also complies with the Academy Trust's funding agreement and articles of association and is driven by [our vision and values statements](#).

2 DEFINITION AND PURPOSE

Great Academies Education Trust (GAET) considers good attendance to be at least 97% or no more than five days of absence in an academic year.

2.1 Aims

Our academies will aim to meet their obligations to school attendance by:

- Building strong relationships with families to ensure they have the necessary support to attend school daily and punctually.
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled.
- Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance and punctuality.
- Acting early to identify and address patterns of absence.
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence.

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3 EQUALITY

The Great Academies Education Trust ensures that all pupils are enabled to attend as well as is possible through recognising and addressing barriers to good attendance. We recognise the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. We do not discriminate against anyone on the grounds of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation. This is in line with the Equality Act 2010 and covers both direct and indirect discrimination.

4 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Ensuring children and young people attend school is **everyone's** responsibility. To ensure clear lines of accountability within the Academy Trust, we outline here the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders.

4.1 The Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees is responsible for:

- Ensure all academies have an admission register and an attendance register
- Regularly review the Trust's Attendance Policy and ensure the required resources are available to fully implement the policy, the approval of the Attendance Policy may be delegated to the Outcomes Committee.
- Holding Trust leaders to account for the implementation of this policy
- Ensuring Trust leaders understand and fulfil statutory duties
- Ensuring that academies set ambitious targets for attendance
- Monitoring attendance data for the whole trust

4.2 Local Governing Committees

Local Governing Committees are responsible for:

- Ensuring school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Ensure there is a nominated SLT (Senior Leadership Team) lead for attendance
- Setting challenging targets for attendance
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Holding the principals to account for the implementation of this policy

4.3 The Principal

Each principal is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the academy level
- Monitoring academy-level absence data and reporting it to governors Ensuring relevant staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Ensuring the accurate completion of admission and attendance registers in accordance with legal requirements.
- Reporting on the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

4.4 The academy designated senior leader for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Promoting good attendance across the across the academy
- Devising and implementing attendance improvement strategies
- Monitoring and evaluating the impact of implemented improvement strategies
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Collating and analysing attendance data

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4.5 The academy attendance officer

The academy attendance officer is responsible for:

- Dealing with absence on a day-to-day basis and recording reasons for absence on the school system
- Monitoring and submitting weekly attendance data
- Providing regular attendance reports for the designated senior leader
- Implementing agreed escalation procedures
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the principal when to issue fixed-penalty notices

4.6 Class teachers / Form tutors

All class teachers / form tutors are responsible for:

- Accurate recording attendance each day according to the academy’s own procedures and submitting this information to the school office according to each academy’s own timings
- Encouraging pupils to attend regularly and on time
- Welcoming pupils back after an absence

(See Appendices for individual academy procedures and timings.)

4.7 Parents and carers

Parents and carers are responsible for:

- Ensuring their child attends on time every day according to the individual academy timings
- Call the school to report their child’s absence on the first day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence as required and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with at least two emergency contact number for their children
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

4.8 Pupils

- All primary pupils should attend school on time every day
- All secondary pupils should attend every timetabled session on time every day

5 IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

5.1 Developing an attendance culture

All our academies have a culture which promotes good attendance. This includes providing a nurturing and academically stimulating environment, a broad and balanced curriculum which engages and motivates our pupils and an expectation that all pupils and staff will attend school every school day. The link between attendance and achievement is actively promoted, and each academy has in place a system of recognising and rewarding good and improved attendance. Whenever appropriate our academies provide appropriate work for absent pupils, and arrange ways for pupils to catch up following absences. Pupils who have been absent are welcomed back into school.

5.2 Attendance in the Early Years

GAET recognises that children with poor attendance in the Early Years have little chance of catching up missed learning and socialisation with their peers. It is known that regular school attendance in these early years is crucial for a child to adopt positive attendance and punctuality habits and routines for future learning. Procedures in GAET academies for the under 5s are expected to be in line with those for children of statutory school age, with the exception of legal sanctions.

5.3 Recording Attendance

We will keep an electronic attendance register. We will place all pupils onto this register on the first expected day of attendance.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. *(See Appendices for individual academy timings.)* It will record whether every pupil is:

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- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

(See Appendix 1 for further guidance on DfE attendance codes.)

Any amendment to the attendance register will include: The original entry

- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
- We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 36 years after the date on which the entry was made.
- We will share the daily attendance data with the Department for Education.
- Where a child has a social worker or youth offending team worker, the school will share unauthorised absences with the worker.

(See Appendices for the school specific timings and clarifications.)

5.4 Unplanned absence

The pupil’s parent or carer must notify their child’s academy of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence as soon as possible by telephone. Absence due to illness will be marked as authorised unless the academy has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. If the authenticity of the illness is questioned, the academy may ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor’s note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. Medical evidence will not be requested unnecessarily. If the academy is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parent or carer will be notified.

5.5 Planned absence

Where a pupil needs to attend an **urgent** medical or dental appointment, the pupil’s absence will be authorised for the relevant period where the parent or carer notifies the academy in advance. Evidence of appointment cards or electronic notifications may be requested.

Routine medical and dental appointments should be arranged out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary and is expected to attend before and after the appointment where possible.

The pupil’s parent or carer must also notify the academy of any other planned or anticipated term-time absence as far in advance as possible.

5.6 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent for the whole session

(See Appendices for individual academy timings and DfE Absence Codes)

5.7 Following up unexplained absence

Each academy has their own specific procedures for following up unexplained absence, however as a minimum where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, academies are expected to:

- Contact the pupil’s parent or carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason *(In the event that a pupil’s emergency contacts cannot be reach further steps can be taken,*

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which include contacting the police.)

- Determine whether the absence is authorised
- Determine the correct absence code and input the code as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained (*no later than 5 school days after the session*)
- Call the pupil’s parent or carer on each day of unexplained absence and ensure that any necessary safeguarding actions are taken

(See Appendices for details of individual academy procedures)

5.8 Reporting to parents and carers

In line with DfE guidance, our academies will inform parents about their child’s attendance and absence levels at regular intervals throughout the school year. Where there is a concern for a pupil’s absence this will be at the earliest possible time. *(See Appendices for school specific arrangements.)*

5.9 Pupils educated off-site

In the case of pupils educated off-site, for example, pupils on college placements or work experience, it is the responsibility of each academy to establish procedures for following up absences. These are detailed in academy appendices. We will continue to monitor the rates of attendance on a weekly basis.

6 AUTHORISED AND UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

6.1 Approval for absence in exceptional circumstances

Our principals will only grant a leave of absence during term-time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the principal’s discretion, including the length of time for which the pupil is authorised to be absent.

Any application for term-time absence in exceptional circumstances will be considered individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances, and relevant context behind the request. Parents should notify the Principal as soon as possible about the anticipated absence and request for consideration of exceptional circumstances.

(See Appendices for individual academy procedures for requesting absence in exceptional circumstances.)

- By their nature, exceptional circumstances are rare, but may include: leave for a bereavement of a close family member
- Time to visit a terminally ill relative
- Leave for one-off important religious observances
- Leave which takes the needs of the families of service personnel into account
- Leave which makes reasonable adjustments for pupils with special educational needs or disabilities.

Other valid **authorised absence** include:

- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil’s parents belong
- Pupils travelling with their parent for parental occupational purposes *(Please see the guidance regarding ‘Code T’ in Working Together to Improve Attendance, 2024 regarding when this may be considered as an unauthorised absence).*

6.2 Legal Sanctions

Our academies will work with pupils, parents, and carers to improve a pupil’s attendance and avoid legal sanctions wherever possible; this could be in the form of an attendance improvement plan or a parent contract. Where all reasonable steps have been taken and no improvement is seen, our academies have several legal routes available to them.

Section 444 (1) or 1 (A) of the Education Act 1996 states that if a parent fails to ensure the regular school attendance of their child if they are a registered pupil at a school and are of compulsory school age, then they are guilty of an offence. A parent found guilty of this offence can be fined up to £2500 and / or be imprisoned for a period of up to three months.

Fixed Penalty Notices

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A Principal can issue the parents or carers of a pupil with a fixed penalty notice for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age. Any fixed penalty notice will be issued in line with the guidance provided in *Working Together to Improve Attendance (from August 2024)*, paragraphs 175-179 (inclusive). A fixed penalty notice requires each parent to pay £80 within 21 days or £160 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. Payment must be made directly to the local authority. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police. The decision on whether to issue a penalty notice may consider:

- A pupil has accumulated at least 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks. The accumulation can be a combination of unauthorised absence and arriving late after the register closes.
- One-off instances of unauthorised attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
(*Penalty notices for holidays in term time will be issued in line with relevant Local Authority guidance.*)
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason.

Education Supervision Order (ESO)

Before initiating a prosecution under section 444(1) or (1)(A) of the 1996 Education Act, a Pupil Welfare Officer will consider whether it is appropriate to apply for an ESO under section 36 of the 1989 Children Act to the Family Court. The purpose of an ESO is to place a child/young person who is not being properly educated under the supervision of the Local Authority as opposed to the parent having full responsibility for the choices regarding their child’s education. The ESO is usually granted for a period of up to 12 months at a time. Social Care are consulted through this process and if an ESO fails to bring about a positive change an assessment is carried out with the family.

7 STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING ATTENDANCE

Great Academies Education Trust recognises the importance of promoting good school attendance for all our pupils. Our academy trust emphasises recognition and positive reinforcement as an essential tool in driving up attendance. We know that safe, happy, fulfilled pupils want to come to school each day and therefore all our academies place pupil well-being at the heart of our attendance strategies. Establishing a broad and enriched curriculum in each of our academies and working in partnership with a range of external partners to provide a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities, is central to our vision.

In addition to our universal offer, our academies are free to develop their own systems for recognising and rewarding good and improved attendance daily, weekly, and termly. (*See Appendices for details of individual academy strategies.*)

8 ATTENDANCE MONITORING

8.1 Monitoring and analysing attendance data

As a trust, we collect, collate and monitor attendance and absence data weekly, termly and yearly across all age groups according to age, stage, and vulnerability. We monitor individual pupil attendance data to inform conversations with parents and subsequent attendance improvement plans. We 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.

Pupil-level absence data is collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE’s school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. Senior Leaders will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the Board of Trustees and Local Governing Committees. We look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns.

9.2 Using data to improve attendance

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Our Academies will

- Provide regular attendance reports to parents, class teachers, form tutors and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place to modify them and inform future strategies

9.3 Reducing persistent and severe absence

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

Our Academies will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the academy 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

9 LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Exclusions Policy
- Behaviour policy
- Supporting Children with Medical Conditions Policy

10 MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

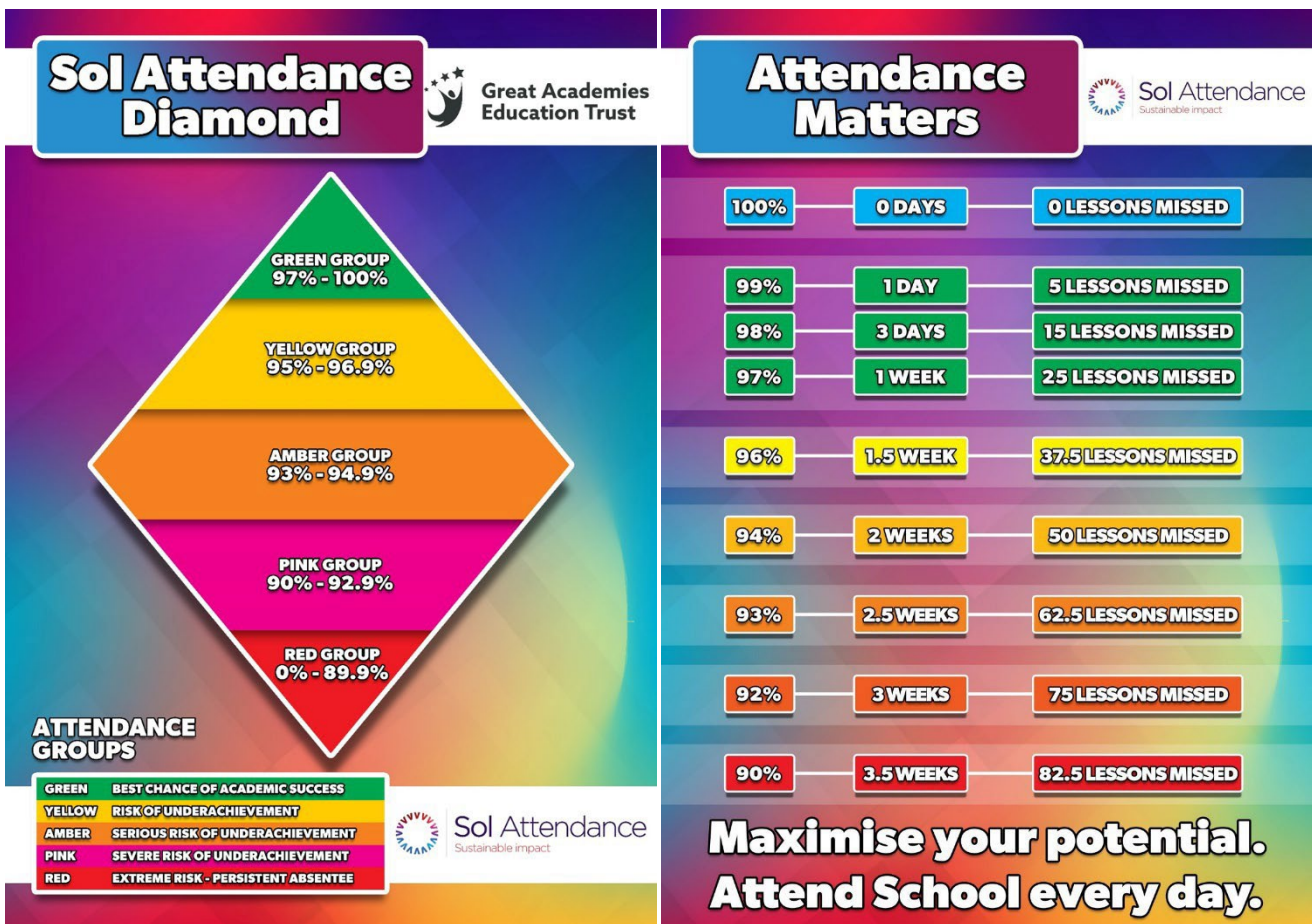
This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum 12 months by A Finch. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full board of Trustees or Outcomes Committee

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APPENDIX 1 – ATTENDANCE INFORMATION



APPENDIX 2 - ADMISSION REGISTER

The law

The law requires all schools to have an admission register and, with the exception of schools where all pupils are boarders, an attendance register. All pupils (regardless of their age) must be placed on both registers. The admission register must contain the personal details of every pupil in the school, along with the date of admission or re-admission to the school, information regarding parents and carers and details of the school last attended.

Expected First Day of Attendance

Schools must enter pupils on the admission register and attendance register from the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school. For most pupils the expected first day of attendance is the first day of the school year. If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed or notified date, the school must establish the reason for the absence and mark the attendance register accordingly.

Deletions from the Admission Register

A pupil can only lawfully be deleted from the admission register on the grounds prescribed in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. These are to be found in Appendix 1. All academies should establish and record the onward destination of any pupil who is being deleted from the admission roll.

Off rolling

Off-rolling is the practice of removing a pupil from the school roll without using a permanent exclusion, when the removal is primarily in the best interests of the school, rather than the best interests of the pupil. This includes pressuring a parent to remove their child from the school roll.

While it may not always be unlawful, Ofsted believes off-rolling is never acceptable.

There are many reasons pupils leave school. They might move house, leave the country, or move to another, closer school when a place becomes available. Of course, none of these things is off-rolling.

Other pupils might leave to be home educated. Again, where this is a parent's clear choice, without pressure from the school, it is not off-rolling.

Dual-registering a pupil with another school such as an alternative provider is also not off-rolling. This is because the pupil has not left the roll of their school. The statutory guidance on alternative provision makes it clear that pupils should be dual-registered if they are attending AP. 'Managed moves' from one school to another as an alternative to exclusion can sometimes be effective in breaking the cycle of poor pupil behaviour. If these moves are used in pupils' best interests, with the agreement of everyone involved within the statutory guidance, then again, this is not off-rolling.

Some pupils are permanently excluded. But as long as headteachers have followed the relevant legislation and statutory guidance, this is not off-rolling. Schools must be able to exclude pupils where necessary, and we support schools using exclusions as part of their behaviour policy and as a last resort.

We make decisions in the very best interests of pupils. However, if pupils are leaving a school to serve the school's interests, not their own, we will define this as off rolling.

Informing the Local Authority

Academies must inform their local authority of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admission register where they are about to remove a pupil's name from the school admission register under any of the fifteen grounds listed in the regulations. This duty does not apply when a pupil's name is removed from the admission register at standard transition points – when the pupil has completed the final year of education normally provided by that school – unless the local authority requests that such returns are to be made.

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APPENDIX 3 – ATTENDANCE CODES

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

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
K	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is attending an education provision arranged by the local authority
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
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
AUTHORISED ABSENCE CODES		
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
C1	Authorised absence for the participating in a regulated performance or working abroad	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to an agreed performance or work in which they hold a licence
C2	Authorised absence due to agreed part-time timetable	Due to exceptional circumstances a pupil has an agreed part-time timetable.
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	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling in the course of their trade and the pupil is travelling with them, as agreed with the school
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UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE CODES

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 within 5 school days
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence, or no reason was provided within 5 school days
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

CODE	DEFINITION	SCENARIO
Q	Unable to attend due to access arrangements	The local authority has failed to make access arrangements
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided being unavailable	The pupil does not live in walking distance and the pre-arranged transport is not available
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread travel disruption	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel caused by local, national or international emergency
Y3	Unable to attend due to partial school closure	Unable to attend due to part of the school building being unavoidably closed.
Y4	Unable to attend due to unexpected whole school closure	The whole school is closed unexpectedly for example due to adverse weather
Y5	Unable to attend due to being in criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend due to being in police detention, remanded to youth detention or awaiting trial/sentencing, detained under a sentence of detention.
Y6	Unable to attend due to public health guidance or law	Pupil is unable to attend due to being against guidance published by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care or prohibited by legislation.
Y7	Unable to attend due to an unavoidable cause	An unavoidable cause has prevented the student attending, this must be a cause to pupil not parent.
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
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

APPENDIX 4 - DEFINITIONS

CHILD MISSING EDUCATION (CME)

Children missing education (CME) are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of abuse, exploitation, radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later on in life. Academies have safeguarding duties in respect of their pupils, and as part of this should investigate any unexplained absences. GAET academies comply with the local authority in respect of informing the LA of the details of pupils who are regularly absent from school or have missed 10 school days or more without permission. It is also important that pupils' irregular attendance is referred to the authority, particularly if the school believes it may be necessary to consider prosecution.

If the academy cannot determine the destination of a pupil, it should note the attendance and admissions register to this effect. Before removing a pupil from the school roll and informing the LA, the Principal must ensure the following steps have been taken:

- All internal school records have been checked to establish the whereabouts of the pupil.
- Emergency contacts have been contacted by phone calls, home visits and letters
- Family/relatives known to the school have been contacted, who may not be on the emergency contact list
- The school staff has been asked if they have any information
- Any other agency with involvement has been contacted

In making the decision about removing a pupil from the school's admission register, schools must refer to the Statutory Instrument 2006 No. 1751 EDUCATION, ENGLAND, The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. The LA must be informed of any pupil deleted from the register, other than at the normal time of leaving the school.

FABRICATED OR INDUCED ILLNESS (FII)

Absences from school are common and occur for many reasons including legitimate medical and hospital appointments. Concerns that a child's illness may be fabricated or induced are most likely to come from health professionals. However, any agency in contact with a child may become concerned, for example education staff where a child is frequently absent from school on questionable health grounds or nursery staff may not observe fits in a child who is described by a parent to be having frequent fits etc.

If fabricated or induced illness by a carer is suspected, schools should verify the reasons for the child's absences. They should also determine whether reported illness is being used by the child, for example, to avoid unpopular lessons or being bullied. Such concerns should not be dismissed.

The presenting signs and symptoms need careful evaluation for a range of possible causes. Professional must remain open minded to all possible explanations. The following are indicators that should alert any professional to concerns that a child is suffering, or at risk of suffering significant harm as a result of having Illness Fabricated or Induced (FII) by their carer:

- A carer reporting symptoms and observed signs that are not explained by any known medical condition;
- A carer reporting to professionals that a diagnosis has been made by another professional when this is not true, and giving conflicting information to different professionals;
- Missed appointments especially if the appointments are not leading in the desired direction for the carer;
- Physical examination and results of investigations that do not explain symptoms or signs reported by the carer;
- The child having an inexplicably poor response to prescribed medication or other treatment, or intolerance of treatment;
- Acute symptoms that are exclusively observed by/in the presence of the carer;
- On resolution of the child's presenting problems, the carer reporting new symptoms or reporting symptoms in different children in sequence;

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- The child's daily life and activities being limited beyond what is expected due to any disorder from which the child is known to suffer, for example, partial or no school attendance and the use of seemingly unnecessary special aids;
- Objective evidence of fabrication - for example, the history of events given by different observers appearing to be in conflict or being biologically implausible;
- The carer expressing concern that they are under suspicion of FII, or relatives raising concerns about FII;
- The carer seeking multiple opinions inappropriately.

In cases of suspected FII, discussing concerns with parents or carers prior to making a referral may place the child at increased risk. It is in the child's best interest that the parents/carers are not informed of the referral at this stage. A multi-agency decision of when and how parents will be informed of concerns will be made at a strategy meeting. An Individual Health Plan will provide invaluable evidence.

If you are concerned about Fabricated or Induced Illness, in Tameside, you should consult with Multi-Agency Service Hub. In Rochdale consult Children's Social Services.

PERSISTENT ABSENCE (PA)

Pupils categorised as being persistently absent are absent from school for more than 10% of the available sessions for **whatever reason**. A child who is persistently absent will be missing approximately four weeks or more of school a year. In the vast majority of cases, the higher a pupil's absence rate, the greater negative effect on achievement. GAET academies have a range of escalations in place to follow up pupils who are persistently absent, as described in the school appendices.

PART-TIME TIMETABLES

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances GAET recognises that there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet a pupil's 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. A part-time timetable must not be treated as a long-term solution. Any pastoral support programme or other agreement must have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend full-time or be provided with alternative provision.

In agreeing to a part-time timetable, a school has agreed to a pupil being absent from school for part of the week or day and therefore must record it as authorised absence.

Coupled with this, school leaders must ensure and assure themselves that appropriate and regular welfare checks occur.

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