

# Belvoirdale Primary School

## Pupil Attendance Policy

### School Times

**8.40am** - School gates open and children wait in the playground.

**8.45am** - Bell is rung, children line up and register opens.

**8.50am to 9.00am** - All children should be in school and ready for learning.

**8.50am** - Gates close

**8.50am** - Children arriving after this time should register at the school office.

**9.00am** - Registers close. REGISTERS ARE SAVED by 9am.

**9.00am to 9.05** - Children arriving between these times will be marked as Late (L)

**9.05am** - Children arriving after this time will be marked as an unauthorised late (U)

Agreed by Governors:

Signed:

Dated:

To be reviewed:

## 1. Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#), through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school
- We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

## 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) and [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set 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 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment](#)

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

## 3. Roles and responsibilities

### 3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents/carers
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
  - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
  - Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs

- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils' needs
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
  - The importance of good attendance
  - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
  - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
  - The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

### 3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising Leicestershire Local Authority to be able to do so
- Working with the parents/carers of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents/carers through all available channels
- Sharing information from the school register with the local authority, including:
  - Notifying the local authority when a pupil's name is added to or deleted from the school admission register outside of standard transition times
  - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who fail to attend school regularly, or who have been marked with an unauthorised absence for a continuous period of 10 school days
  - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who the school believes will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness

### 3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance-Attendance Champion

Richard Dax and Caroline Heath (Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher) are the designated senior leaders responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance

- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

Richard Dax and Caroline Heath can be contacted by Telephone or by email:

01530 832595    [Rdax@belvoirdale.leics.sch.uk](mailto:Rdax@belvoirdale.leics.sch.uk)    [Cheath@belvoirdale.leics.sch.uk](mailto:Cheath@belvoirdale.leics.sch.uk)

### 3.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for: Paula Renee at CAWS Attendance Management

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance, and the headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the Attendance Champion and / or Headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

Richard Dax and Caroline Heath can be contacted by Telephone or by email:

01530 832595    [Rdax@belvoirdale.leics.sch.uk](mailto:Rdax@belvoirdale.leics.sch.uk)    [Cheath@belvoirdale.leics.sch.uk](mailto:Cheath@belvoirdale.leics.sch.uk)

### 3.5 Teachers

Teachers are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1) and submitting this information to the school office by 9:00am each morning.

### 3.6 School Admin staff

School admin staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the headteacher teacher or senior leader where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

### 3.7 Parents/Carers

Where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult the school and/or local authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them)

Parents are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9:00am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child

- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or local authority
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting the school and the School attendance champions Richard Dax and Caroline Heath.

Richard Dax and Caroline Heath can be contacted by Telephone or by email:

01530 832595    [Rdax@belvoirdale.leics.sch.uk](mailto:Rdax@belvoirdale.leics.sch.uk)    [Cheath@belvoirdale.leics.sch.uk](mailto:Cheath@belvoirdale.leics.sch.uk)

### 3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day, on time

## 4. Recording attendance

### 4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an electronic attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, whether every pupil is:

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

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

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- For all pupils of compulsory age whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity, where 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 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

The school day starts at 8:50am and ends at 3:15pm

Pupils must arrive in school by 8:50am

The register for the first session will be taken at 8:50am and will be kept open until 9:00am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1:00pm and be kept open until 1:05pm

### 4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9:00am or as soon as practically possible, by calling/WEDUc the school admin staff, who can be contacted via: 01530 832 595

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised, unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where the absence is longer than THREE days, or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

### **4.3 Planned absence and Absence requests**

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

Wherever possible parents are requested not to take children out of school for medical/dental appointments. Such appointments should be made after school. Where this is not at all possible, parents are asked to try and arrange these in the afternoon (as opposed to the morning) or as close to the end of day as possible. If appointments must be taken in the day then copies of the appointment card /letter must be passed to the office to file.

The pupil's parent must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise. In all instances, requests for leave must be submitted in writing using the Request for Absence form available from the school office (see appendix)

The Governors of Belvoirdale Primary School have agreed that no absences for holiday requests, day visits or similar will be authorised. This also reflects the DFE guidance and ensures that there are not mixed messages with parents (who may query why some absences have been authorised and others not). This means any time taken out of school will be marked as unauthorised.

Only in very extreme circumstances may the Headteacher on behalf of Governors and at their discretion, allow an authorised absence and this will be the exception and not the norm. Examples of this could be:

A sudden and unexpected bereavement in the family; a serious illness of immediate family; other significantly traumatic family event such as an incident or period of domestic violence; incident or period of mental illness in the family; very traumatic parent separation; a National event of great importance where absence has been agreed by the school.

This is not an exhaustive list but an example of possibilities. In these instances, absence permission will only be granted on one occasion and only if children have demonstrated: at least good previous attendance (i.e. 96% or higher); good punctuality; no immediate concerns for their progress; no other concerns with school life for example needing a measured programme for behaviour or being part of a nurture group.

When making such decisions the Headteacher will consider on balance if the absence requested will be a helpful solution to a difficult situation or circumstance i.e. a preferred option than being in school at that time. A response will be made in writing within 7 days. Governors will periodically review absence requests.

Should an absence be declined and subsequently a claim for illness made on the same day the absence will be recorded as unauthorised as a matter of course. If an absence, claimed as illness, is later suspected of not being so or indeed not needing excessive time away from school, the Headteacher is requested by Governors to record it as unauthorised.

### **4.4 Lateness and punctuality**

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code (L)
- 9.00am to 9.05- Children arriving between these times will be marked as Late (L)
- 9.05am- Children arriving after this time will be marked as an unauthorised late (U)

### **4.5 Following up unexplained absence**

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school will identify the absence as unauthorised.
- Call the parent on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer and/or the attendance champion and procedures.

- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session(s) for which the pupil was absent
- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the pupil's/ Family's support/Social worker/youth offending team officer or any other agency working to support the family.
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with issue a notice to improve letter and/or a penalty notice in accordance with school procedures under section 5.2

## 4.6 Reporting to parents

The school will regularly inform parents/carers about their child's attendance and absence levels in the following ways:

- End of each academic term (Autumn, Spring, Summer)
- At Parents evening Autumn and Spring)
- On school reports (summer term)
- Weekly newsletter
- Where the family falls within the school's attendance monitoring procedures

## 5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

### 5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings.

The headteacher will only grant a **leave of absence** to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the [2024 school attendance regulations](#). These circumstances are:

- *Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad*
- *Attending an interview*
- *Study- leave*
- *A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable*
- *Exceptional circumstances*

A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for. We define 'exceptional circumstances' as:

***Exceptional circumstances are events that are unexpected, unavoidable, and outside of your control that negatively impact your ability to study or attend school. They are serious and unusual relative to the normal challenges of academic study and / or social- life experiences.***

Leave of absence will not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least four weeks (one calendar month) before the absence, and in accordance with the **Belvoirdale Leave of Absence Request Form (see appendix)**. **Evidence to support the request may be required.**

Other valid reasons for **authorised absence** include (but are not limited to):

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart

➤ Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

➤ If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

Other reasons the school may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):

➤ Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school

➤ Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)

➤ Attending provision arranged by the local authority

➤ Attending work experience

➤ If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

## 5.2 Sanctions

Our school will make use of the full range of potential sanctions – including, but not limited to, those listed below – to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

### Penalty notices

The headteacher (or someone authorised by them), local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

If the school issues a penalty notice, it will check with the local authority before doing so, and send it a copy of any penalty notice issued.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

➤ ***Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks)***

➤ ***Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil***

➤ ***Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution***

➤ ***Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate***

Each parent who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

If a **second** penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days.

A **third** penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day). These penalty notices are not included in the National Framework, not subject to the same considerations about support being provided, and do not count towards the limit as part of the escalation process.

In these cases, the parent must pay £60 within 21 days, or £120.



## Notices to improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

They will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under [section 7 of the Education Act 1996](#)
- Details of the support provided so far
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

## 6. Strategies for promoting attendance

Good Attendance at Belvoirdale is promoted, supported and celebrated in the following ways:

- ✓ 100% Certificates in the summer term
- ✓ 100% Prize draw to win a bike in the summer term
- ✓ Weekly newsletter updates and assembly celebrations of pupils with improving and continuously good attendance

## 7. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

1. Attendance Champions meet every two weeks to analyse the attendance data and to identify and monitor attendance concerns using the Attendance Tracker EXCEL data sheet.
2. Strategies are discussed to ensure that the whole story is ascertained and that consideration is given to all families and their backgrounds. A knowledge of historical and current intervention is considered and cross referenced with specific groups such as SEND, PP, Disadvantaged and Agency involvement.
3. Support is offered to all pupils and families whose attendance falls below 95%
4. **STAGE ONE:** Parents of Pupils whose attendance is 95% or below are monitored and receive **Attendance Letter ONE**
5. **STAGE TWO:** Parents of Pupils whose attendance falls below 90% are monitored and invited to attend an attendance meeting with the Attendance Champions via **Attendance Letter Two**.
6. Support is agreed and personalised targets are put in place and reviewed after an agreed time
7. **STAGE THREE:** Attendance has not improved and referral is made to issue a penalty notice

### Individual Support for Pupils and Families

- ✓ ELSA
- ✓ Breakfast club
- ✓ Part time timetable
- ✓ Referral to early intervention
- ✓ Regular contact with school
- ✓ Parenting/SEND/ support groups are sourced

### 7.2 Pupils absent due to mental, physical ill health, SEND and/or Complex needs

Where a pupil has an education health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that related to the pupil's needs, the school will inform the local authority and seek guidance from appropriate agencies such as the Inclusion Service.

Children with complex needs such as wellbeing and mental health needs and or EBSA (Emotionally Based School Avoidance) will have an individual and personalised approach. Support may include:

- ✓ Pupil, parent and teacher voice exercise to triangulate the issues as well as support from Early help, Nursing service, School Elsa and or wider family members.
- ✓ RAG-Rating concerns and issues will help to identify school avoidance.
- ✓ Reduced timetable
- ✓ Phased return
- ✓ Daily/Morning contact (phone call) with home
- ✓ Alternative provision

### 7.3 Pupils returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence

Pupils returning to Belvoirdale after a prolonged absence of any kind will receive the following support:

- ✓ Reduced timetable
- ✓ Phased return
- ✓ Daily/Morning contact (phone call) with home
- ✓ Alternative provision

## 8. Attendance monitoring

### 8.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) half-termly, termly and yearly across the school

1. Attendance Champions meet every two weeks to analyse the attendance data and to identify and monitor attendance concerns using the Attendance Tracker EXCEL data sheet.
2. Strategies are discussed to ensure that the whole story is ascertained and that consideration is given to all families and their backgrounds. A knowledge of historical and current intervention is considered and cross referenced with specific groups such as SEND, PP, Disadvantaged and Agency involvement.
3. Support is offered to all pupils and families whose attendance falls below 95%
4. **STAGE ONE:** Parents of Pupils whose attendance is 95% or below are monitored and receive **Attendance Letter ONE**
5. **STAGE TWO:** Parents of Pupils whose attendance falls below 90% are monitored and invited to attend an attendance meeting with the Attendance Champions via **Attendance Letter Two**.
6. Support is agreed and personalised targets are put in place and reviewed after an agreed time
7. **STAGE THREE:** Attendance has not improved and referral is made to issue a penalty notice

### Support for Pupils and Families

- ✓ ELSA
- ✓ Breakfast club
- ✓ Part time timetable
- ✓ Referral to early intervention
- ✓ Regular contact with school
- ✓ Parenting/SEND/ support groups are sourced

### DfE Monitoring and Reporting

Specific pupil information will be shared with the DfE on request as part of the 2024 attendance initiative.

Data will be 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.

The school will benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement, and share this with the governing board.

### 8.2 Analysing attendance

Belvoirdale will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and
- Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

### 8.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
- Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severed absence, and their families (see section 8.4 below)
- Provide regular attendance reports to appropriate staff to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders.
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

### 8.4 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. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's strategy for improving attendance.

Belvoirdale will:

8. Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
9. Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
10. Cross reference discussions and actions with Safeguarding team meetings (fortnightly)
11. Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
  - ✓ Discuss attendance and engagement at school
  - ✓ Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
  - ✓ Explain the help that is available
  - ✓ Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
  - ✓ Review any existing actions or interventions
12. Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant
13. Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
14. Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 5.2, above)
15. Implement the Attendance Champion procedures below to ensure regular and consistent support to all families:
  16. Attendance Champions meet every two weeks to analyse the attendance data and to identify and monitor attendance concerns using the Attendance Tracker EXCEL data sheet.

17. Strategies are discussed to ensure that the whole story is ascertained and that consideration is given to all families and their backgrounds. A knowledge of historical and current intervention is considered and cross referenced with specific groups such as SEND, PP, Disadvantaged and Agency involvement.
18. Support is offered to all pupils and families whose attendance falls below 95%
19. **STAGE ONE:** Parents of Pupils whose attendance is 95% or below are monitored and receive **Attendance Letter ONE**
20. **STAGE TWO:** Parents of Pupils whose attendance falls below 90% are monitored and invited to attend an attendance meeting with the Attendance Champions via **Attendance Letter Two.**
21. Support is agreed and personalised targets are put in place and reviewed after an agreed time
22. **STAGE THREE:** Attendance has not improved and referral is made to issue a penalty notice

## 9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every term. The policy will be reviewed by the governing body annually.

## 10. Links with other policies

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- SEND Policy

## Appendix 1: Attendance codes

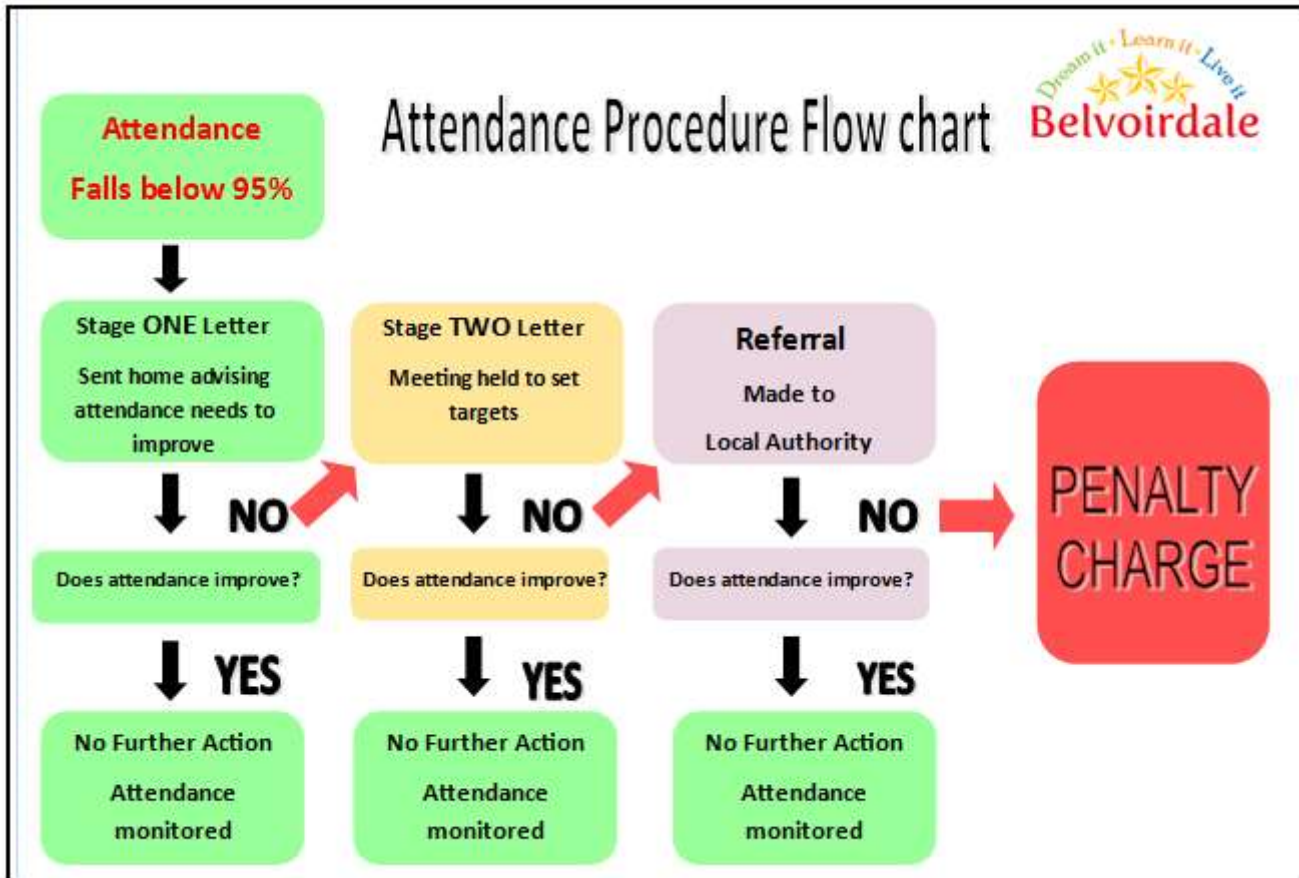
The following codes are taken from the DfE's [guidance on school attendance](#).

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
<b>Attending a place other than the school</b>		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
<b>Absent – leave of absence</b>		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend

<b>C2</b>	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
<b>C</b>	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
<b>Absent – other authorised reasons</b>		
<b>T</b>	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>I</b>	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
<b>E</b>	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
<b>Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause</b>		
<b>Q</b>	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
<b>Y1</b>	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
<b>Y2</b>	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
<b>Y3</b>	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
<b>Y4</b>	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
<b>Y5</b>	Criminal justice detention	<p>Pupil is unable to attend as they are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In police detention</li> <li>• Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or</li> <li>• Detained under a sentence of detention</li> </ul>

<b>Y6</b>	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
<b>Y7</b>	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
<b>Absent – unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
<b>O</b>	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
<b>U</b>	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
<b>Administrative codes</b>		
<b>Z</b>	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
<b>#</b>	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

## Appendix 2: Attendance Monitoring and Flow chart of procedures





## Appendix 3: School Times

### School Times

**8.40am** - School gates open and children wait in the playground.

**8.45am** - Bell is rung, children line up and register opens.

**8.50am to 9.00am** - All children should be in school and ready for learning.

**8.50am** - Gates close

**8.50am** - Children arriving after this time should register at the school office.

**9.00am** - Registers close. **REGISTERS ARE SAVED by 9am.**

**9.00am to 9.05** - Children arriving between these times will be marked as Late (L)

**9.05am** - Children arriving after this time will be marked as an unauthorised late (U)

## Appendix 4: Attendance Letter STAGE ONE

### ATTENDANCE CONCERN

Date: .....

Dear Parent,

Your child's attendance has now fallen below 95% and is a cause for concern.

Please ensure your child attends school on time, every day. Our School Attendance policy clearly states that any child's attendance that falls below 95% is an immediate cause for concern. Please look to improve your child's attendance as soon as possible.

If you require any advice or support, please contact Mr Dax or Mrs Heath at school and we will be happy to help.

In accordance with our attendance policy, if your child's attendance does not improve you will be required to meet with ourselves to discuss next steps.

Under the new DFE guidance and legislation, Belvoirdale is committed to ensuring that every child attends school.

On the reverse of this letter, you will find there are a number of ways that we can work together to improve your child's attendance.

Yours sincerely

Richard Dax

Headteacher

## Appendix 5: Attendance Letter STAGE TWO

### ATTENDANCE CONCERN

Date:

Dear Parent/Carer,

**CHILDS NAME** attendance is a concern and currently stands at .....% with:

- ..... session/s of absence coded as authorised
- ..... session/s of absence coded as unauthorised
- ..... late marks

In view of the above, please come into school on .....to discuss your child's attendance.

Yours sincerely

Richard Dax

Headteacher

## Appendix 6: Attendance Parent Meeting Form



Date	
Names	
Current attendance	
Notes from Meeting	
Actions	
Review date	

## Appendix 7 Absence Request Form:

### PARENTS/CARERS PLEASE NOTE:

BELVOIRDALE PRIMARY SCHOOL and The DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance. The definition of exceptional circumstances can be found on the reverse of this form and in the Belvoirdale Attendance policy on the school website.

### A penalty notice may be issued if:

The National Framework for Penalty Notices issued by DfE in AUGUST 2024, requires all schools in England to consider issuing a PENALTY NOTICE when:

- TEN (10) sessions (equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence have occurred within a rolling 10 school week period. These sessions do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence.
- The 10-school week period can span different terms or school years.

**Second Offence** (within 3 years) The Second time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence the amount will be: £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.

**Third Offence** a Penalty Notice will not be issued and the case could be presented straight to the Magistrate's Court. Prosecution can result in Criminal records and fines of up to £2,500. Cases found guilty in Magistrates' Court may show on the parent's future DBS certificate due to 'failure to safeguard a child's education'.

PARENTS/CARERS SECTION				
Surname of Child		First Name		
Date of birth	Year	Class		
Full name of Mother				
Full name of Father				
Address of child				
Postcode		Telephone number		
Reason for request				
Departure Date		Return Date		
Would your child miss any national tests or examinations?				Yes / No
Is his/her attendance above 95% over the past 12 months?				Yes / No
Has (s)he had leave during term-time in the last 12 months? (If so, please give dates, reasons, and number of school days leave)				Yes / No
Parent/Carer signature		Date		
Holiday in term time		Approved _____ school days Not approved _____ School days		

Reasons		
Date parent/carer informed of approval/non-approval		
Headteacher signature		Date

Please refer to The Belvoirdale Attendance policy 2024 which is available on request or by viewing in full on the Belvoirdale website-Information-Policies

### Absence requests

In order to have complete clarity and equality for all parents, Governors have agreed that no absences for holiday requests, day visits or similar will be authorised. This also reflects latest DFE guidance and ensures that there are not mixed messages with parents (who may query why some absences have been authorised and others not). This means any time taken out of school will be marked as unauthorised.

Only in very extreme circumstances may the Headteacher on behalf of Governors and at their discretion, allow an authorised absence and this will be **the exception and not the norm**. Examples of this could be:

*a sudden and unexpected bereavement in the family; a serious illness of immediate family; other significantly traumatic family event such as an incident or period of domestic violence; incident or period of mental illness in the family; very traumatic parent separation; a National event of great importance where absence has been agreed by the school.*

This is not an exhaustive list but an example of possibilities. In these instances, absence permission will only be granted on one occasion and only if children have demonstrated: at least good previous attendance (i.e. 96% or higher); good punctuality; no immediate concerns for their progress; no other concerns with school life for example needing a measured programme for behaviour or being part of a nurture group.

When making such decisions the Headteacher will consider on balance if the absence requested will be a helpful solution to a difficult situation or circumstance i.e. a preferred option than being in school at that time. A response will be made in writing within 7 days. Governors will periodically review absence requests.

Should an absence be declined and subsequently a claim for illness made on the same day the absence will be recorded as unauthorised as a matter of course. If an absence, claimed as illness, is later suspected of not being so or indeed not needing excessive time away from school, the Headteacher is requested by Governors to record it as unauthorised.

## APPENDIX: 8: Impact on Attendance

Every School Day Counts		
Attendance during the school year	Equates to days absent	Which is approximately
96%	6 days	1 week
94%	10 days	2 weeks
90%	19 days	4 weeks
85%	29 days	6 weeks
80%	38 days	8 weeks
75%	48 days	10 weeks
70%	57 days	11.5 weeks
65%	67 days	13.5 weeks

We will use the following thresholds in reporting to parents:

98% and above	Excellent
96.5-97.9%	Good
95-96.4%	Satisfactory
90-94.9%	Cause for Concern
Below 90%	Unacceptable