



# Attendance Policy

## Red Balloon Norwich

**Policy owner:** Mark Anderson (Head of Centre)

**Organisation:** Red Balloon Norwich

**Adoption Date:**

**Approved by:**

**Review cycle:** Annual

**Last reviewed on:** 25<sup>th</sup> August 2025

**Next review due by:** 25<sup>th</sup> August 2026

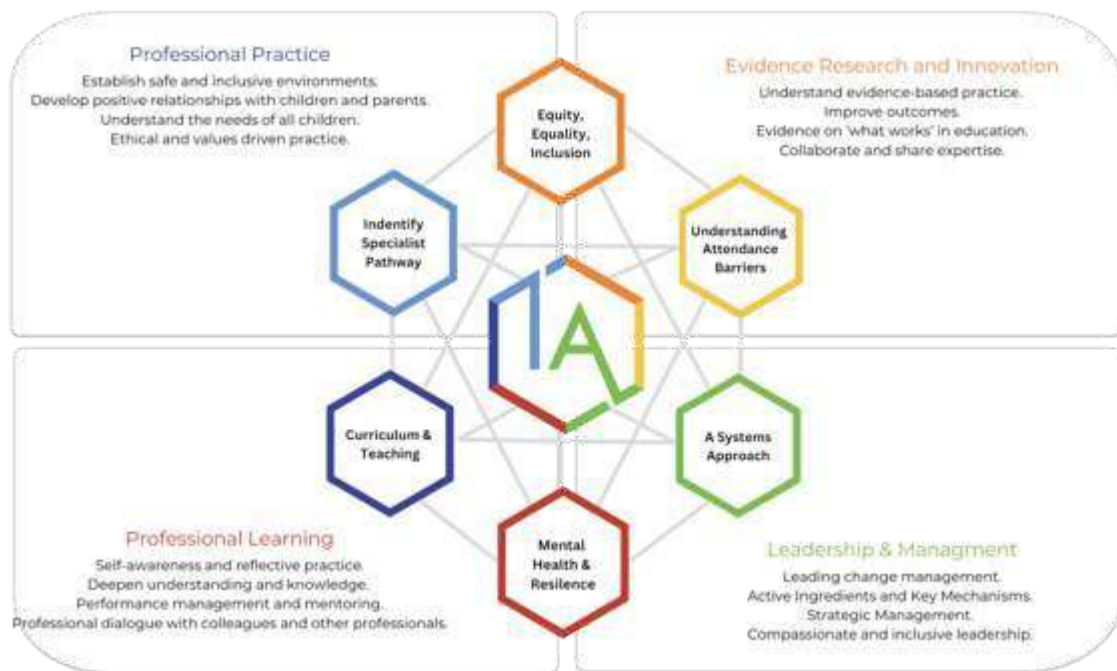
**Name of the Senior Attendance Champion:** Abbey King

## Introduction

Red Balloon Norwich is proudly recognised as an Inclusive Attendance school. Our unwavering commitment to attendance centres around child-centric actions, evidence-informed practices, and a shared understanding of everyone's roles and collective responsibilities to promote exceptional attendance.

### Inclusive Attendance Professional Development Model

The Inclusive Attendance professional development model fundamentally guides our attendance approach. Comprising six tailored Learning Modules, this model empowers us to deepen our understanding by facilitating continuous professional learning for all staff. Within this model, the four domains of practice ensure the provision of professional learning, professional development, evidence-based practices, and exemplary leadership and management to seamlessly integrate theory into practice.



### Annual Inclusive Attendance 7-Month Development Programme

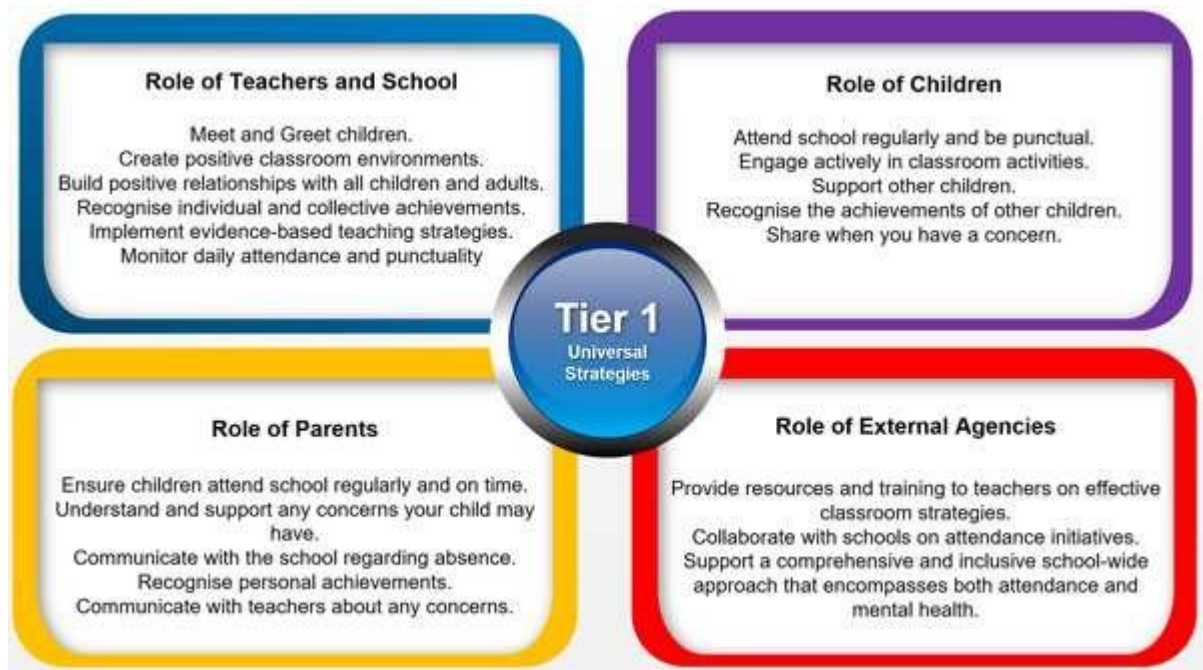
Each year, Red Balloon Norwich review and further enhances attendance practices through dedicated participation in the Inclusive Attendance 7-month development programme. This investment allows us to remain at the forefront of educational change and extends unparalleled support to our children and their families, equipping them with access to the finest possible assistance.

### A Multi-Tiered System of Support

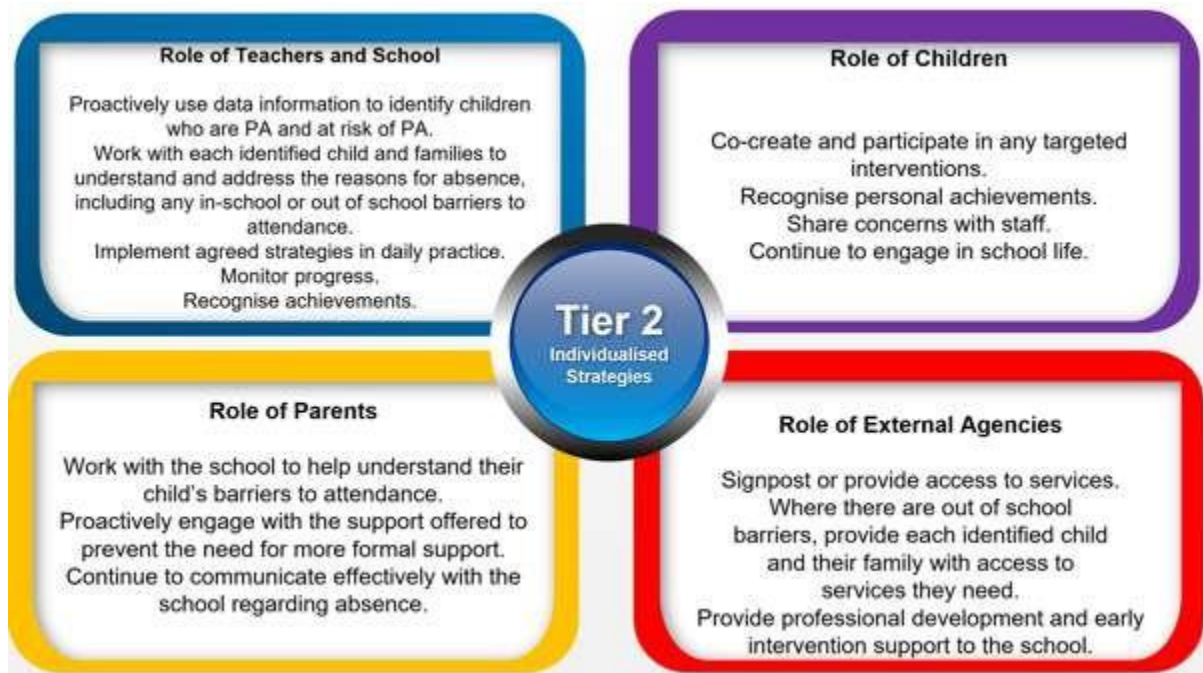
To guarantee a comprehensive approach to attendance, Red Balloon Norwich implement a Multi-Tiered System of Support. A Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) for school attendance involves three tiers of intervention, with roles for teachers, the school, children,

parents/carers, and external agencies – including the Local Authority. Data-driven decision-making and training requirements are pivotal to the implementation of this system. The system aligns with the Department for Education's (DFE) "Working Together to Improve School Attendance" statutory paper 2024.

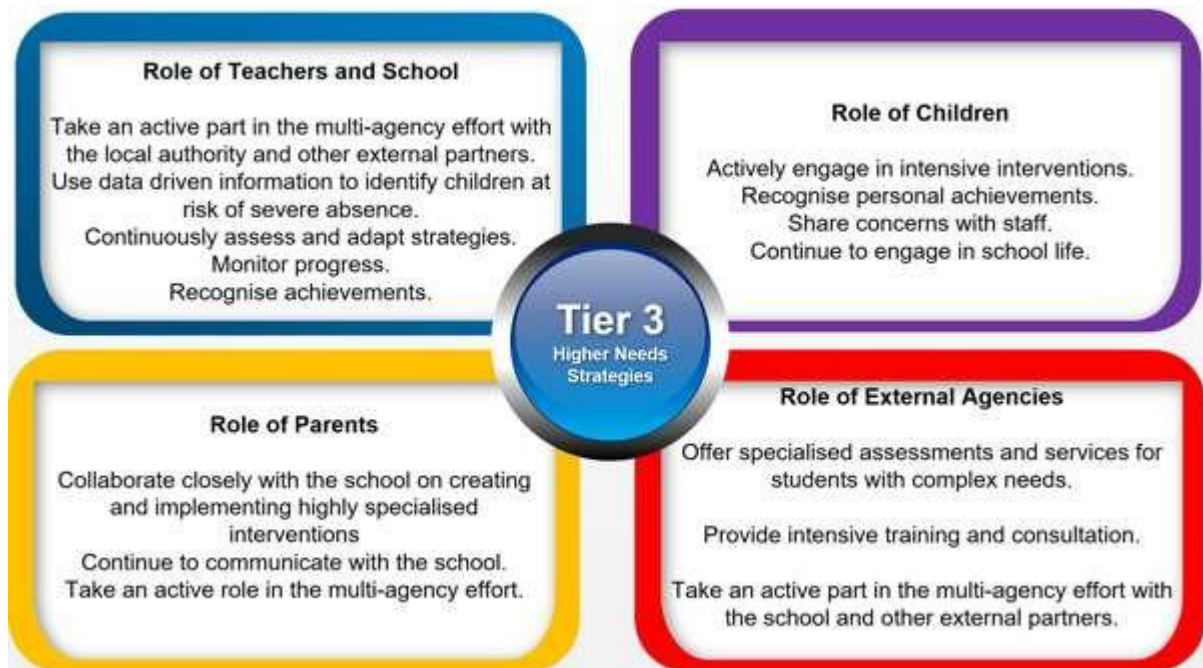
**Tier 1 - Universal Approach: Establishing a baseline universal attendance approach that benefits all children.**



**Tier 2 – Internal individualised Strategies and Early Help Support: Tailoring strategies to individual needs and providing early help support for persistent attendance challenges.**



**Tier 3 - Higher Needs Strategies Support: Furnishing specialised support for children, young people, and families with complex attendance requirements, including access to external agency support when necessary.**



### **Red Balloon Norwich's Recognition-Based Approach**

Our attendance philosophy is rooted in a recognition-based approach that recognises both personal and collective achievements. This approach serves to thwart isolation, prevent victimisation, cultivate positive environments, nurture relationships, foster inclusivity, and ultimately cultivate intrinsic motivation among our children, families, and staff.

At Red Balloon Norwich we recognise our student's achievements with our celebration board where staff create certificates for excellence seen throughout the week, within this system we will recognise individual achievements around attendance. These certificates are given out during circle time at the end of the week to take home.

### **The Importance of School Attendance at Red Balloon Norwich**

School attendance is not merely a requirement but a fundamental pillar of education. It plays a pivotal role in shaping academic success, personal growth, and future prospects, making it an indispensable aspect of any educational system. Regular attendance to school can have a significant impact on:

- *Academic Achievement:* Regular attendance directly correlates with academic success. Children who attend school consistently are more likely to keep up with the curriculum, perform better in exams, and improve their life outcomes.
- *Knowledge Acquisition:* School is where children acquire knowledge and skills that are crucial for their personal and professional growth. Missing days means missing out on valuable learning opportunities.
- *Social Development:* School provides a vital social environment for children and adolescents to interact with peers, develop friendships, and learn essential social skills. Consistent attendance ensures children remain connected to their peer group.
- *Building Routine:* School attendance establishes a structured routine in children's lives, teaching them time management and responsibility, which are valuable life skills.
- *Teacher Interaction:* Regular attendance allows for meaningful teacher-child interactions. Teachers can provide personalised support, address questions, and assess individual progress more effectively when children attend regularly.
- *School Engagement:* Children who attend school regularly are more likely to engage in extracurricular activities, sports, and other enriching experiences that contribute to their overall development.
- *Community Well-being:* High levels of school attendance contribute to the overall well-being of communities.

## **Factors Influencing Attendance**

We know that for many of the young people that attend Red Balloon Norwich there have been a number of factors that contribute to absenteeism, such as mental health, bullying, health issues and family circumstance.

Norfolk's figures for both overall and persistent absence are consistently higher than the national average and higher than in many other local authorities that are statistically very similar to Norfolk. The issue is one that affects secondary, primary, and special schools alike; too many children are persistently absent from school.

There are many factors which can impact on a child attending school, if you have any concerns, you should contact the school as soon as possible:

*Health Issues:* Children may experience physical or mental health issues that lead to absences. Chronic illnesses, infections, and mental health conditions can impact a student's ability to attend school regularly.

*Family Circumstances:* Family-related factors such as bereavement, family illness, or caring responsibilities can result in absences from school. In some cases, students may need to take time off to support their families.

*Bullying and Safety Concerns:* Experiences of bullying, harassment, or safety concerns at school can deter students from attending. They may fear for their safety or well-being, leading to increased absenteeism.

*Transportation Issues:* Difficulty in accessing transportation to school, especially in rural areas, can affect attendance. Lack of reliable transportation options can lead to sporadic attendance.

*Socioeconomic Factors:* Families facing financial difficulties may struggle to provide necessary resources for their children to attend school regularly. Issues such as lack of appropriate clothing, food, or a stable home environment can contribute to absenteeism.

*Special Educational Needs (SEN):* Students with special educational needs may require additional support and accommodations to attend school regularly.

*Engagement and Motivation:* Lack of engagement with school activities and a perceived lack of relevance in the curriculum can lead to disinterest in attending. Children who are not motivated may avoid attending school.

*Academic Challenges:* Students facing academic difficulties or feeling overwhelmed by coursework may avoid school. They may fear falling behind or failing in their studies.

*Cultural and Language Barriers:* Children from diverse backgrounds may face challenges related to language barriers or cultural differences. These challenges can affect their attendance and engagement with school.

*Peer Pressure and Social Factors:* Influence from peers can impact attendance. Children may avoid attending school to align with the behaviour of their peers or to engage in social activities outside of school.

*Parental Involvement:* Parental support and involvement in a child's education can positively influence attendance. Lack of parental engagement may lead to increased absenteeism.

## **Supporting Attendance at Red Balloon Norwich**

To address any identified attendance issues effectively, Red Balloon Norwich will implement a range of strategies such as early intervention, support for vulnerable families, intervention

programmes, and creating a positive and inclusive school environment. Understanding the specific factors affecting attendance for individual children and families is crucial for developing any targeted interventions and support systems to improve attendance outcomes.

### **Attendance and Punctuality Expectations at Red Balloon Norwich**

The school day starts at 08:55, we would expect all students to be onsite and in the dining room for registration by this time. Students arriving later than this time will need to sign in at the office with a member of the pastoral team

### **Contact Details of School Staff at Red Balloon Norwich**

Name of Staff Member	Roles and Responsibilities	Contact Details
Ella Parkinson	Attendance Champion	<a href="mailto:Ella.parkinson@rbnorwich.org.uk">Ella.parkinson@rbnorwich.org.uk</a>
Abbey King	Attendance Manager/ Officer	<a href="mailto:Abbey.king@rbnorwich.org.uk">Abbey.king@rbnorwich.org.uk</a>
Abbey King	Safeguarding Leader (DSL)	<a href="mailto:Abbey.king@rbnorwich.org.uk">Abbey.king@rbnorwich.org.uk</a>
Mark Anderson	Head of Centre	Mark.anderson@rbnorwich.org.uk
Samuel Ridge-Ward	Trustee for School Attendance.	Samuel.ridge-ward@rbnorwich.org.uk
Julie Clements	SEN Manager	<a href="mailto:Julie.clements@rbnorwich.org.uk">Julie.clements@rbnorwich.org.uk</a>

### **Strategies for Using Data to Target Attendance Improvement Efforts at Red Balloon Norwich**

Through weekly reporting the pastoral team made up of those responsible for attendance, safeguarding and wellbeing will review data around the whole school cohort's weekly, termly, and yearly attendance to look for patterns of absence. This data is then broken down into demographic groups such as pupils that are looked after children or those entitled to free school meals to look for and address barriers to attendance. Finally using the data, the team will look at individual students, the barriers they are facing and co-create an intervention plan involving the student and their family.

The attendance team's focus this academic year will be on reducing the number of pupils at risk of persistent absenteeism and emotional school-based avoidance.

### **Strategy for Reducing Persistent and Severe Absence at Red Balloon Norwich**

The threshold for persistent absence is when a student's overall absence is 10% or more of their possible sessions, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school. A student's absences may be authorised, unauthorised or a combination of both.

The focus on persistent absence is part of an escalating process that is outlined in local procedures, led by senior leaders, monitored through trustee governance, and understood by the whole school community: staff, students, and parents.

Having assessed the reasons for the PA and analysed its profile, it is important to identify strategies that can be used to address it. In more complex and longer-term cases of poor attendance and persistent absence, interventions may include:

- multi-agency meetings and supportive actions plans
- requests for medical information or information from other services
- use of local authority enforcement processes and procedures
- home visiting
- direct work with children and parents to address root causes of absences
- engaging specialist services
- considering options for provision

Each case is different and getting to know the family and the individual circumstances is crucial.

### **Details of the national guidance for independent settings at Red Balloon Norwich**

The Government have introduced a single national threshold of 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence 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 period of 10 school weeks can span different terms or school years.

As your child attends an independent setting, please be aware that when addressing unauthorised absence from school a penalty notice will not be issued. However, in line with national guidance, the Local Authority (LA) retains the discretion to prosecute parents under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, which can result in a criminal conviction and fine of up to £2,500.

A parent includes any person who is not a natural parent but who has parental responsibility for the child or who has care of the child, as set out in section 576 of the Education Act 1996.

### **Removal from roll**

This refers to the process of a child's name being officially taken off the school's register, typically due to extended non-attendance or other circumstances. Elective Home Education (EHE) is an option that some parents choose after removal from roll, where they take responsibility for providing education to their child at home.

### **Elective Home Education**

A child can only be de-registered when the school receives, in writing, the parent's intention to educate their child other than at school. The pupil must be de-registered on receipt of such a letter.

Parents are not legally obliged to notify the local authority if their child is being home educated. The school should inform SHE as soon as the parents have made the decision to home educate.

Red Balloon Norwich will work with the Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP) team to ensure, where applicable, a child's EHCP is maintained. If their child is at a special school, parents must seek permission from the local authority before they can de-register.

Red Balloon Norwich has no authority in law to refuse a family the right to home educate. However, Red Balloon Norwich has a statutory duty to intervene if there is reason to believe that the parents are failing to provide a full-time, suitable, and efficient education.

At Red Balloon Norwich, if a letter of intention to educate a child other than at home is received, the school will inform the Services to home education team and your child's EHCP Co Ordinator to complete the cessation of placement process.

Further information about EHE can be found at <https://www.schools.norfolk.gov.uk/article/29759/Services-to-home-educators>

## **Day-to-Day Processes for Managing Attendance at Red Balloon Norwich**

### **First Day Calling and Safeguarding**

Parents/carers are responsible for contacting the school on the first day of absence from school by no later than 08:30am.

If on the first day of absence contact with a parent/carer and other named family members has not been made and there are no safeguarding concerns, the school will email to enquire about the absence and provide 24 hours for the family to make contact.

If on the third day of absence, despite school efforts to contact the family has been exhausted including a home visit to the family home, intervention through a call to Norfolk County Council's Children's Services will be made to seek further advice and a request for a welfare call will be made to Norfolk Police.

If on the fifth day of absence there is still no response from a family a referral to Children's Services Advice and Duty Service (CADS) will be made by the Designated Safeguarding Lead providing information around the current concern and actions already taken to support the child/family.

### **School Times of the Day at Red Balloon Norwich:**

The school day begins at 08:55 and ends at 15:30.

AM Registration opens at 08:55 and closes at 09:25.

PM Registration opens at 12:40 and closes at 13:10.

Children are expected to arrive on time and attend all scheduled lessons and activities.

## **Coding of Attendance**

Attendance will be recorded using the DFE's statutory attendance codes, please refer to the appendix for coding.

## **Reporting a Child's Absence**

Parents or carers must contact the school on the first day of their child's absence to provide the reason for the absence via the school office on 01603 622288 or via the email address [attendance@rbnorwich.org.uk](mailto:attendance@rbnorwich.org.uk)

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

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the student's parent/carer to provide 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/carers will be notified of this in advance.

## **Requesting Absence Leave**

[Working together to improve school attendance](#) advises all schools that they should only grant a leave of absence during term time in exceptional circumstances, considering each request on a case-by-case basis. If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the Head of centre to determine the length of time the pupil can be away from school.

Parents or carers must request leave of absence for their child in writing at least 14 school days in advance, otherwise Red Balloon Norwich will be unable to consider your individual circumstances, and the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. The Head of centre is not obligated to reconsider authorising leave if an application is not made in advance.

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the student's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment and medical evidence of the appointment is received.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the student should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

## **Holiday Request**

Holidays during term time will not be authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances. Although we recognise the value and benefits of family holidays, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for a family holiday as the Government '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.'

Holiday requests must be made in writing, and a decision will be communicated to the parents or carers within 7 school days.

## **Definitions**

In the context of school attendance and education in the UK, the terms "Persistent Absence," "Risk of Persistent Absence," and "Severe Absence" are used to describe different levels of irregular attendance by students. These terms are important for tracking and addressing attendance issues.

### **Persistent Absence (PA):**

**Definition:** Persistent Absence is a term used to describe a level of student absence from school that is considered to be a significant cause for concern.

**Threshold:** In England, a student is considered to be persistently absent when they have an attendance rate of 90% or below. This means they have missed 10% or more of their school sessions.

### **Risk of Persistent Absence:**

**Definition:** The term "Risk of Persistent Absence" refers to a situation in which a student's attendance is at a level that suggests they are at risk of becoming persistently absent.

**Threshold:** While there is no specific threshold for "Risk of Persistent Absence," it is typically used to describe students whose attendance is consistently low and becoming a concern, as the school communicates to parents in days, we identify 10 days or more as Risk of PA and we will follow internal school procedures.

### **Severe Absence (or Severe Persistent Absence):**

**Definition:** The term "Severe Absence" or "Severe Persistent Absence" is used to describe the most serious cases of non-attendance.

**Threshold:** Particular focus and support will be provided to pupils who are absent from school more than they are present (those missing 50% or more of school). These severely absent pupils may find it more difficult to be in school or face bigger barriers to their regular attendance and as such are likely to need more intensive support across a range of external agency partners.

### **Absence Definitions**

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

### **Authorised Absence**

- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave.
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave.
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave
- An absence due to a family emergency

### **Unauthorised Absence**

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason.
- Truancy before or during the school day.
- Absences which have never been properly explained.
- Arrival at school after the register has closed.
- Absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
- Absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed.
- Leaving school for no reason during the day.

### **Children Missing Education (CME)**

Red Balloon Norwich supports their commissioning Local Authorities who have a duty to identify any student who is of compulsory school age who is not receiving education by:

- Addressing poor or irregular attendance
- Referring poor attendance to the placing LA
- Investigating any unexplained absences as part of our wider safeguarding duties
- Keeping our admissions registers accurate and up to date
- Holding more than one emergency contact number for each student wherever possible
- Amending our registers as soon as changes to our roll are made
- Notifying the LA within 5 days if a student starts or leaves school at a non-standard transition point (for example, joining mid-year or leaving before your school's final year) and provide them with all the information held within the admission register about the student  
Ensuring staff receive safeguarding training which includes identifying who are most at risk of going missing from education with regard to Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025).
- Making reasonable enquiries and where necessary safeguarding referrals in line with local authority guidelines for students who aren't attending which applies to students who:
  - Haven't returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence, **or**

- Have been absent without authorisation for 20 consecutive days

Further guidance on CME can be found in the DfE (Department for Education) statutory guidance Children missing education

### **Policies and Practice**

This attendance policy operates within the framework of statutory attendance regulations outlined in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 and subsequent amendments. Red Balloon Norwich adhere to the following key attendance acts in the UK:

*Education Act 1996:* The Education Act 1996 is the primary piece of legislation that sets out the legal framework for school attendance in England and Wales. It outlines the responsibilities of parents, carers, and schools in ensuring regular school attendance. Sections 444-447 of the Act deal with offenses related to non-attendance and penalties for parents and carers.

*Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006:* These regulations specify the procedures for registering pupils and maintaining attendance records in schools in England. They also define the circumstances in which a pupil can be marked as absent or present.

*Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013:* These regulations amended the 2006 regulations and introduced stricter rules on authorizing term-time holidays. Under these regulations, headteachers are only allowed to grant leave of absence in exceptional circumstances.

*School Attendance Code of Practice:* The School Attendance Code of Practice provides guidance to schools, local authorities, and parents on the law and procedures relating to school attendance and absence. It sets out the principles for promoting good attendance and dealing with poor attendance.

*Local Authority School Attendance Guidance:* Each local authority in the UK may provide its own guidance and policies on school attendance. Schools should be aware of and follow the specific guidance issued by their local authority.

*Department for Education (DFE) Guidance:* The DFE periodically issues guidance documents and updates related to school attendance. Schools should stay informed about the latest DFE guidance 2024 and follow any recommendations or requirements outlined in these documents.

*Child Employment Legislation:* Legislation such as the Children and Young Persons Act 1933 and the Children (Performances) Regulations 1968 govern the employment and attendance of children involved in performances, modelling, and other activities outside of regular school hours.

*Children Missing Education (CME) Statutory Guidance:* This guidance outlines the responsibilities of local authorities in identifying and tracking children who may be missing education, including those who are not on a school roll or are not receiving suitable education.

*Section 19 of the Education Act 1996 (England and Wales)* outlines the duty of local authorities in ensuring that suitable education is provided for children of compulsory school age.

### **Additional Policies aligned to the Attendance Policy at Red Balloon Norwich**

- Behaviour Support Policy

- Curriculum Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- SEND (Special Education Needs) statement
- Internal Attendance Procedures RBN
- Pupil Premium statement

### Effective Interventions and Signposting

The whole staff team at Red Balloon play a role in effective interventions for young people who face barriers to school attendance. We ensure that our curriculum is broad and interest based, all staff are trained in the PACE approach<sup>1</sup> and implement this into the way that they communicate with the young people that attend here, an onsite counsellor is available for all young people to see and the pastoral support team are here to offer Tier 2 support.

An example of the support available is an early help assessment plan (EHAP) which provides the opportunity for professionals, school, the young person and their family to map out the current worries/concerns and create an action plan centred around the young person's voice to overcome these barriers.

Local & National support services		
Local	JustOne Norfolk – Advice from local NHS providers	<a href="https://www.justonenorfolk.nhs.uk/school-life/resources-for-families/school-attendance/">https://www.justonenorfolk.nhs.uk/school-life/resources-for-families/school-attendance/</a>
National	The Mix – free counselling support and mental health resources for under 25s	<a href="https://www.themix.org.uk/">https://www.themix.org.uk/</a>
National	Young Minds – Support for school avoidance	<a href="https://www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/parents-a-z-mental-health-guide/school-anxiety-and-refusal/">https://www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/parents-a-z-mental-health-guide/school-anxiety-and-refusal/</a>
Local	Young People and Norfolk SEND Youth Forum - SEN information and advice for young people	<a href="https://www.norfolksendiass.org.uk/young-people/youth-forum">https://www.norfolksendiass.org.uk/young-people/youth-forum</a>

### Roles and Responsibilities

**Teachers/Learning support mentors:** In the United Kingdom, teachers play a vital role in monitoring and promoting school attendance. Ensuring regular and punctual attendance is essential for the academic success and well-being of children.

Here are some key aspects of the role of Teachers/Learning support mentors in supporting children's attendance:

**Monitoring Attendance:** Teachers are responsible for monitoring the daily attendance of their children. They should maintain accurate attendance records, noting both present and absent students.

**Promoting Punctuality:** Teachers should encourage students to arrive at school on time each day. Punctuality is essential for a smooth start to the school day and minimises disruptions in the classroom.

**Early Intervention:** Teachers should identify patterns of poor attendance or lateness and intervene early to address any underlying issues. This may include communicating with the student, their parents or guardians, and relevant support services.

<sup>1</sup> PACE is an approach developed by Dr Dan Hughes, an American psychologist who works with traumatised children. PACE stands for Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity and Empathy. These principles help to promote the experience of safety in your interactions with young people. Children need to feel that you have connected with the emotional part of their brain before they can engage the thoughtful, articulate, problem solving areas.

**Providing Support:** Teachers can provide academic and emotional support to children who may be experiencing attendance challenges. Identifying the root causes and addressing them proactively can help improve attendance.

**Setting Expectations:** Teachers can set clear expectations for attendance and punctuality in their classrooms. This includes communicating the importance of regular attendance for learning and academic progress.

**Creating a Welcoming Classroom Environment:** Teachers should strive to create a positive and welcoming classroom environment where students feel motivated and engaged. A supportive atmosphere can encourage attendance.

**Identifying Barriers:** Teachers should be alert to potential barriers to attendance, such as bullying, health issues, or family problems. Identifying these barriers and reporting them to school staff can lead to effective interventions.

**Implementing School Policies:** Teachers should adhere to and implement the school's attendance policies and procedures.

**Attendance Records:** Accurate attendance records are crucial. Teachers should submit attendance data promptly to the school's administrative team. This information is used for reporting to local authorities and the Department for Education (DFE).

**Collaboration:** Collaborating with other school staff, such as attendance officers, counsellors, and administrators, is essential for addressing attendance concerns effectively. Teamwork ensures a coordinated approach to supporting students.

**Supporting Positive Behaviour:** Teachers can implement strategies to reinforce positive behaviour related to attendance, such as recognising attendance and punctuality.

**Safeguarding:** Teachers should be aware of safeguarding protocols and report any concerns related to a child's safety or well-being promptly to the appropriate school staff.

**Professional Development:** Continuous professional development will enhance teachers' skills in addressing attendance issues and implementing strategies to promote regular attendance.

**Role Modelling:** Teachers can serve as role models by demonstrating punctuality and a commitment to their own professional responsibilities.

### ***School Attendance Champion: Ella Parkinson***

**Attendance Champion:** The role of an Attendance Champion in improving children's attendance in schools is critical in ensuring that students attend school regularly and achieve their educational potential. Attendance Champions have a multifaceted role that encompasses various responsibilities and strategies aimed at enhancing attendance rates.

Here are some key aspects of the role of attendance champion in supporting children's attendance:

**Developing and Implementing Attendance Policies:** Attendance Champions work closely with school leadership and staff to develop and implement effective attendance policies and procedures.

**Data Analysis:** Attendance Champions collect and analyse attendance data to identify trends and patterns. They use this information to pinpoint areas of concern, such as high levels of persistent absence, frequent lateness, or particular year groups or demographic groups with attendance challenges.

**Early Intervention:** Recognising that early intervention is crucial, Attendance Champions identify children at risk of poor attendance. They collaborate with teachers, parents, and support staff to address attendance issues as soon as they arise.

**Supporting Families:** Attendance Champions work closely with parents and guardians to build positive relationships and engage them in improving their child's attendance. They may conduct home visits, organise meetings, and provide guidance on strategies to promote regular attendance.

**Mentoring and Coaching:** Some Attendance Champions offer mentoring or coaching to children with attendance problems. They help children understand the importance of attending school regularly and provide strategies for overcoming barriers.

**Providing Resources:** Attendance Champions may connect families with resources and services that can help alleviate attendance-related challenges, such as housing support, counselling, or healthcare services.

**Monitoring and Reporting:** Attendance Champions continuously monitor attendance records and report attendance data to school leadership, governing bodies, and local authorities as required. They ensure that accurate records are maintained.

**Interventions and Incentives:** Attendance Champions design and implement interventions and incentives to motivate children to attend school. This may include recognition for attendance, recognition programmes, or targeted interventions for specific groups of students.

**Legal Compliance:** Attendance Champions are knowledgeable about legal requirements related to attendance, including regulations governing authorised and unauthorised absences. They ensure the school complies with these regulations.

**Safeguarding:** Attendance Champions are vigilant for safeguarding concerns related to attendance. They recognise signs of neglect or abuse and report them to designated safeguarding officers or authorities, as necessary.

**Community Engagement:** Attendance Champions may collaborate with community organisations, social services, and local authorities to address attendance issues within the broader community context.

**Continuous Improvement:** Attendance Champions regularly evaluate the effectiveness of attendance strategies and interventions. They adapt their approaches based on data and feedback to achieve sustained improvements in attendance rates.

**Promoting a Positive School Culture:** Attendance Champions contribute to creating a school culture where attendance is valued, and students feel motivated and supported to attend regularly.

**Trustees:** School governors or trustees play a crucial role in supporting children's attendance in schools in the UK. Their responsibilities encompass strategic oversight, policy development, and ensuring that the school meets its statutory obligations regarding attendance.

Here are some key aspects of the role of trustees in supporting children's attendance:

**Policy Development:** Governors/trustees collaborate with school leadership to develop and review attendance policies. These policies should align with statutory requirements and provide clear guidance on attendance monitoring, reporting, and interventions.

**Statutory Compliance:** Governors/trustees ensure that the school complies with all relevant statutory requirements related to attendance. They are responsible for monitoring the school's adherence to attendance regulations.

**Strategic Oversight:** Governors/trustees take a strategic approach to attendance. They consider attendance as a key performance indicator and monitor trends and patterns in attendance data.

**Monitoring Attendance Data:** Governors/trustees review attendance data regularly to identify trends and areas of concern. They may request reports on attendance rates, persistent absence, and unauthorised absences.

**Accountability:** Governors/trustees hold school leadership accountable for attendance outcomes. They may question school leaders about their strategies for improving attendance and the effectiveness of interventions.

**Policy Implementation:** Governors/trustees ensure that attendance policies are effectively implemented throughout the school. They may inquire about the practical application of attendance policies and procedures.

**Setting Targets:** Governors/trustees collaborate with school leaders to set attendance targets and goals. They help establish benchmarks for improving attendance rates.

**Reviewing Interventions:** Governors/trustees assess the effectiveness of attendance interventions and strategies. They may request reports on the impact of interventions and whether they have led to improved attendance.

**Parental Engagement:** Governors/trustees support efforts to engage parents and guardians in promoting attendance. They may encourage the school to develop strategies for involving parents in attendance improvement initiatives.

**Training and Development:** Governors/trustees ensure that school staff, including teachers and support staff, receive training and development related to effective attendance monitoring and intervention strategies.

**Safeguarding:** Governors/trustees are vigilant for safeguarding concerns related to attendance. They work closely with the designated safeguarding lead to address any safeguarding issues that arise.

**Community Links:** Governors/trustees may establish links with community organisations, local authorities, and social services to access additional resources and support for students with attendance difficulties.

**Challenge and Support:** While supporting school leadership in attendance improvement efforts, governors/trustees also challenge when necessary. They ask probing questions and seek assurances that the school is taking appropriate action to address attendance issues.

**Continuous Improvement:** Governors/trustees regularly evaluate the school's approach to attendance and seek ways to continuously improve attendance outcomes.

**Senior Staff:** Senior staff in UK schools play a critical role in supporting attendance for children. They provide leadership, set the tone for the school's attendance culture, and oversee the implementation of policies and strategies to promote regular attendance.

Here are some key aspects of the role of the Senior leadership team in supporting children's attendance:

**Leadership:** Senior staff, including the headteacher/principal and deputy headteacher/vice principal, lead by example. They emphasise the importance of regular attendance and set high expectations for all staff and students.

**Policy Development:** Senior staff are responsible for developing, reviewing, and implementing attendance policies in line with statutory requirements. They ensure that policies are clear, effective, and communicated to all stakeholders.

**Monitoring and Reporting:** They monitor attendance data regularly, analysing trends and patterns. Senior staff use this data to identify students at risk of poor attendance and to measure the impact of attendance improvement strategies.

**Setting Expectations:** Senior staff establish clear expectations for staff regarding attendance monitoring, recording, and intervention. They ensure that staff understand their roles in promoting regular attendance.

**Professional Development:** They provide training and professional development opportunities for staff, including teachers, teaching assistants, and support staff, to enhance their knowledge and skills in attendance-related matters.

**Early Intervention:** Senior staff support early intervention efforts by identifying children with attendance issues and working with staff to implement targeted interventions. They ensure that appropriate support is provided to address attendance barriers.

**Parental Engagement:** They promote parental engagement in attendance improvement initiatives. Senior staff encourage open communication with parents and guardians and may organise meetings or workshops to involve parents in addressing attendance challenges.

**Data Analysis:** Senior staff use attendance data to inform decision-making. They set attendance targets and benchmarks for improvement and regularly review progress toward these goals.

**Supporting Vulnerable Students:** They are attentive to the needs of vulnerable students, including those with medical conditions, special educational needs, or safeguarding concerns. Senior staff ensure that these students receive appropriate support to attend school regularly.

**Recognising Attendance:** They may implement incentives and recognition programmes to recognise children and reinforcing a positive attendance culture.

**Enforcing Policies:** Senior staff enforce attendance policies consistently and fairly, addressing unauthorised absences promptly. They communicate the consequences of poor attendance to students and parents.

**Safeguarding:** Senior staff are alert to safeguarding concerns related to attendance. They collaborate with designated safeguarding leads to address any child protection issues arising from attendance concerns.

**Continuous Improvement:** They continuously assess the effectiveness of attendance strategies and interventions, adjusting as needed to achieve sustained improvements.

**Promoting a Positive Culture:** Senior staff actively promote a positive school culture where regular attendance is recognised, and children feel motivated to attend school regularly.

**Parents:** Parents play a crucial role in supporting attendance in schools in the UK. Their involvement and commitment to their child's education can have a significant impact on

attendance rates.

Here are some key suggestions that parents can implement to support children's attendance:

**Establish a Routine:** Parents should establish a daily routine that includes regular school attendance. Consistency in waking up, getting ready for school, and arriving on time helps children develop good attendance habits.

**Communicate with the School:** Establish open lines of communication with the school. Inform the school promptly if your child is going to be absent due to illness or other reasons. This helps the school keep accurate attendance records.

**Ensure a Healthy Lifestyle:** Promote good health practices, including proper nutrition, regular exercise, and adequate sleep. A healthy child is less likely to miss school due to illness.

**Positive Attitude Towards Education:** Encourage a positive attitude towards education. Discuss the value of school and the opportunities it provides for the child's future.

**Set Expectations:** Clearly communicate your expectations about attendance to your child. Emphasize the importance of attending school regularly and on time.

**Attend Parents Evening:** Participate in parent-teacher conferences and meetings. These provide an opportunity to discuss your child's progress and address any attendance or academic concerns.

**Monitor Progress:** Keep track of your child's progress and attendance. Be aware of any sudden changes in attendance patterns that may signal underlying issues.

**Promote a Love for Learning:** Encourage curiosity and a love for learning. Explore educational activities and resources outside of school to spark your child's interest in different subjects.

**Lead by Example:** Demonstrate the importance of commitment and responsibility by being punctual and dependable in your own daily activities.

**Stay Informed:** Stay informed about school policies and attendance guidelines. Understand the consequences of excessive absenteeism.

**Seek Support if Needed:** If your child is facing challenges that affect attendance, such as health issues or academic struggles, seek support from the school, healthcare professionals, or relevant agencies.

**Encourage Peer Relationships:** Encourage your child to form positive relationships with peers. Friendships can make school a more enjoyable and supportive environment.

**Celebrate Achievements:** Celebrate your child's achievements and milestones at school. Recognize their efforts and successes to boost their self-esteem and motivation.

**Collaborate with the School:** Work collaboratively with the school to address any attendance issues. Explore support services or interventions if necessary.

**Young People:** Young people also play a significant role in attending school regularly and ensuring their educational success.

Here are some key roles and responsibilities that children can take on to support their attendance in school:

**Commitment to Learning:** Children should recognise the value of education and commit to attending school regularly. They can understand that attending school is essential for gaining knowledge, skills, and opportunities for the future.

**Punctuality:** Children should strive to arrive at school on time each day. Being punctual helps them settle into the daily routine and ensures they do not miss important instructions or activities.

**Positive Attitude:** Maintaining a positive attitude towards school and learning can make attending school a more enjoyable experience. Children should be open to new experiences and willing to engage in classroom activities.

**Responsibility:** Children can take responsibility for their own education by completing homework and assignments on time. They should also ensure they have the necessary materials and supplies for school.

**Communication:** If a child is unable to attend school due to illness or other reasons, they should communicate this to their parents or guardians, who can then inform the school. Encouraging open communication helps keep attendance records accurate.

**Peer Relationships:** Building positive relationships with peers can make school a more welcoming place. Children should be friendly, respectful, and inclusive in their interactions with classmates.

**Participation:** Actively participating in classroom activities, discussions, and group projects can enhance a child's learning experience and motivation to attend school.

**Safety Awareness:** Children should follow safety guidelines and rules at school to ensure their well-being. They should report any safety concerns to teachers or school staff.

**Respect for Teachers and Staff:** Respecting teachers and school staff fosters a positive school environment. Children should follow instructions, be courteous, and seek help or clarification when needed.

**Problem-Solving:** Encourage children to develop problem-solving skills to address any challenges they may encounter at school. This includes seeking help with academic difficulties or addressing issues with classmates.

**Goal Setting:** Children can set academic and personal goals for themselves. Having goals can provide motivation and a sense of purpose for attending school regularly.

**Healthy Lifestyle:** Maintaining a healthy lifestyle through proper nutrition, regular exercise, and adequate sleep contributes to overall well-being and can reduce the risk of illness-related absences.

**Attendance Awareness:** Children can develop awareness of the importance of attendance and its impact on their education. They should aim to achieve good attendance records and strive for excellent attendance.

**Ownership of Learning:** Encourage children to take ownership of their learning by asking questions, seeking clarification when needed, and demonstrating curiosity about various subjects.

**Seeking Support:** If a child is facing challenges that affect attendance, such as bullying or academic difficulties, they should seek support from teachers, school counsellors, or trusted adults.

## **Safeguarding Children and Attendance at Red Balloon Norwich**

The school has a duty to safeguard the welfare of all students. Any concerns about a child's attendance will be investigated promptly to ensure their well-being.

Unexplained or extended absences will trigger safeguarding procedures, including home visits and communication with relevant agencies.

We follow ***Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025*** guidance to ensure safe practices.

### **Review**

This Attendance Policy will be reviewed annually by the school's governing body to ensure its effectiveness and compliance with statutory requirements. Any amendments will be communicated to staff, parents, and carers, as necessary.

## Appendix 1: Coding Attendance in line with DFE guidance 2024:

### **Code A (Present at the school):**

- Pupils must be present during registration to be counted.
- If a pupil leaves after registration, they are still counted as attending for statistical purposes.

### **Code L (Late arrival before the register is closed):**

- The pupil arrives after the register starts but before it closes.
- Schools should discourage late arrival and set a consistent time limit for open registration, not exceeding 30 minutes.
- If a pupil arrives late after the register closes, mark them as absent using code U or another appropriate absence code.

### **Code K (Attending education provision arranged by the local authority):**

- Pupil attends educational provision arranged by the local authority, not by the school.
- Examples include attending courses at college or receiving home tutoring.
- Schools must record the nature of the provision and ensure notification of absences.

### **Code V (Attending an educational visit or trip):**

- Pupil attends a school-arranged educational visit or trip supervised by school staff.
- Must take place during the recorded session.
- If pupil does not attend, record absence using relevant absence code.

### **Code P (Participating in a sporting activity):**

- Pupil attends an approved educational sporting activity.
- Criteria for recording attendance include approval by the school, educational nature of the activity, and appropriate supervision.
- Schools must ensure safeguarding measures and record absences with relevant codes.

### **Code W (Attending work experience):**

- Pupil attends work experience as part of their education arranged by the local authority or school.
- Criteria for recording attendance are similar to other approved educational activities.
- Schools must ensure safeguarding measures and record absences with relevant codes.

### **Code B (Attending any other approved educational activity):**

- Pupil attends an approved educational activity other than sports or work experience.
- Criteria for recording attendance are similar to other approved educational activities.
- Schools must record the nature of the activity and ensure safeguarding measures.

### **Code D (Dual registered at another school):**

- Used when a pupil is registered at more than one school, indicating absence with leave to attend the other school.
- Main examples include attendance at a pupil referral unit, hospital school, or special school temporarily.
- Schools must promptly follow up on unexpected or unexplained absences to avoid double counting.

### **Code C1 (Leave of absence for regulated performance or employment abroad):**

- Schools grant leave for pupils to participate in regulated performances or employment abroad under specific circumstances.
- Criteria for granting leave include licenses issued by local authorities or exemptions.
- Schools must record the absence using this code and consider its impact on the pupil's education.

### **Code M (Leave of absence for medical or dental appointment):**

- Schools encourage appointments outside of school hours; otherwise, prior agreement is necessary.
- Leave of absence is granted under specific conditions, including exceptional circumstances.
- Absences for medical or dental appointments are recorded using this code.

**Code J (Leave of absence for interview for employment or admission):**

- Schools can grant leave for pupils to attend interviews for employment or admission to another educational institution.
- Applications for leave must be made in advance, and leave is granted based on specific criteria.
- The interview must occur during the recorded session, and the absence is classified as authorized.

**Code S (Leave of absence for studying for a public examination):**

- Schools can grant leave for pupils to study for public examinations under specific conditions, agreed in advance with parents.
- Study leave should be granted sparingly, and provisions must be made for pupils who choose to continue attending school for revision.
- Absences for studying for public examinations are recorded using this code.

**Code X (Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school):**

- Schools can grant leave for non-compulsory school-age pupils to attend school part-time under certain circumstances.
- Absences for non-compulsory school-age pupils are recorded using this code, with exceptions noted.
- For pupils subject to a part-time timetable, this code should not be used, and appropriate absence codes should be applied.

**Code C2 (Leave of absence for compulsory school age pupil subject to part-time timetable):**

- Schools can grant leave for compulsory school-age pupils to temporarily reduce their timetable to part-time in exceptional circumstances, agreed upon with parents.
- Absences for pupils with part-time timetables are recorded using this code, ensuring agreement between the school and parents.

**Code C (Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances):**

- Schools may grant leave of absence at their discretion, but only for exceptional circumstances.
- Each application is assessed individually, considering specific facts and circumstances.
- Absences for exceptional circumstances are recorded using this code, ensuring compliance with regulations and discretion exercised by the school.

**Pregnant pupils:**

- Maternity leave for pregnant pupils is treated similarly to other leave of absence for exceptional circumstances.
- Schools should act reasonably and grant an appropriate period of leave considering individual circumstances, at their discretion.

**Code T (Parent traveling for occupational purposes):**

- Used when a pupil's parent(s) is traveling for trade or business, and the pupil is traveling with them.
- Schools should only request proof of occupational travel when genuine doubt exists about the reason for absence.
- Pupils should ideally attend schools where their parents are traveling, being dual registered at both their main school and the one they're temporarily attending.
- Classified as authorized absence for statistical purposes.

**Code R (Religious observance):**

- Used when a pupil is absent on a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by their religious body.
- Schools may seek guidance from the parent's religious body to ascertain such days.

- Strategies such as setting term dates around religious observance days are encouraged.
- Classified as authorized absence for statistical purposes.

**Code I (Illness - not medical or dental appointment):**

- Indicates a pupil's inability to attend school due to illness, both physical and mental health related.
- Schools should not routinely request medical evidence but may do so when necessary.
- Classified as authorized absence for statistical purposes.

**Code E (Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made):**

- Used when a pupil is suspended or permanently excluded, and no alternative provision has been arranged.
- Alternative provision should be arranged within six consecutive school days of suspension or permanent exclusion.
- Classified as authorized absence for statistical purposes.

**Code Q (Unable to attend school because of a lack of access arrangements):**

- Indicates a pupil's inability to attend school due to a failure by the local authority to provide access arrangements.
- Classified as not a possible attendance for statistical purposes.

**Code Y1 (Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available):**

- Used when a pupil can't attend because the school is beyond walking distance and the usual transport provided by the school or local authority is unavailable.
- Walking distances for different age groups are specified.
- Classified as not a possible attendance for statistical purposes.

**Code Y2 (Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel):**

- Indicates a pupil's inability to attend school due to widespread travel disruptions caused by emergencies at the local, national, or international level.
- Classified as not a possible attendance for statistical purposes.

**Code Y3 (Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed):**

- Used when part of the school premises is unusable, and the pupil cannot practically be accommodated in the remaining usable parts.
- Classified as not a possible attendance for statistical purposes.

**Code Y4 (Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed):**

- Applied when the entire school site is unexpectedly closed, such as due to adverse weather.
- Attendance registers are not taken, and pupils are marked with this code to signify the closure.
- Not applicable for planned closures like weekends or holidays.
- Classified as not a possible attendance for statistical purposes.

**Code Y5 (Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention):**

- Used when a pupil is unable to attend due to being in police detention, remanded, or serving a sentence of detention.
- Communication with the Youth Offending Team is encouraged to support educational needs during detention.
- Classified as not a possible attendance for statistical purposes.

**Code Y6 (Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law):**

- Applied when a pupil's travel or attendance at school would violate public health guidance or legislation related to disease transmission.
- Classified as not a possible attendance for statistical purposes.

**Code Y7 (Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause):**

- Used for an unavoidable cause preventing a pupil from attending school, not covered by other specific codes.
- The nature of the unavoidable cause must be recorded.

- Classified as not a possible attendance for statistical purposes.

**Code G (Holiday not granted by the school):**

- Used when a pupil is absent for a holiday that the school did not approve in advance.
- Schools cannot retrospectively grant leave of absence, and absence for holidays without prior approval is considered unauthorized.
- Classified as unauthorized absence for statistical purposes.

**Code N (Reason for absence not yet established):**

- Employed when the reason for a pupil's absence has not been determined before the register closes.
- Schools must make efforts to ascertain the reason for absence promptly.
- If the reason cannot be established within five school days, the absence must be amended to Code O.
- Classified as unauthorized absence for statistical purposes.

**Code O (Absent in other or unknown circumstances):**

- Used when no reason for absence is established, or the school is not satisfied with the reason given, which doesn't align with authorized codes.
- Classified as unauthorized absence for statistical purposes.

**Code U (Arrived in school after registration closed):**

- Applied when a pupil arrives late after the register has closed but before the end of the session.
- Schools should discourage late arrival and set a specific time limit for registering attendance.
- Late arrival beyond the specified time results in the pupil being marked as absent.
- Classified as unauthorized absence for statistical purposes.

**Administrative Code Z (Prospective pupil not on admission register):**

- Utilized to set up registers in advance for prospective pupils who have not yet officially joined the school.
- Aims to streamline administrative processes.