



St Erme with Trispen Community Primary School

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St Erme with Trispen School

Attendance Policy

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1. Introduction, aims and why regular attendance is important

Our school is committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all children. A key element of this is ensuring a child's attendance at school. Good attendance is essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances. We believe that attendance should not be considered in isolation. It is part of the bigger picture and is intertwined with the whole ethos and culture of the school. Improving attendance is linked to curriculum, behaviour, special educational needs support, pastoral and mental health and wellbeing. At the heart of what we do is helping children to feel that they belong in school, through helping them to feel safe, welcome, celebrated and championed. At St Erme with Trispen, we want to provide an inclusive, calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environment where all pupils are keen and ready to learn.

Improving attendance is everyone's business. The barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates, and are often specific to individual pupils and families. As a school, we recognise the importance of working in partnership with families to find supportive routes to improve attendance.

Our school has a member of staff who leads on attendance, but attendance involves all staff, governance and families. Everyone has an important role to play. It is very important, therefore, that parents/carers make sure that their child(ren) attends school regularly, and this policy sets out how together we will achieve this. Our school, St Erme with Trispen, is committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

For a child to reach their full educational achievement, a high level of school attendance is essential throughout the whole of their academic career. It is essential for children to attend school regularly in order to maximise the opportunities available to them. We will work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all of our children.

We will support parents to fulfil their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly and will promote and support punctuality in attending school. Regular attendance is important because it affects learning. Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Pupils' absence disrupts teaching routines and will inevitably cause gaps in learning and limit progress. Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is the parents'/carers' legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may

result in prosecution. Failing to attend school on a regular basis is considered a safeguarding matter. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this school, we will adhere to:

- Protecting children from maltreatment whether that is within or outside the home, including online.
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development.
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes in line with the outcomes set out in the Children's Social Care National Framework (Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2023)

We do accept that illness is inevitable on some occasions, however, every opportunity will be used to convey to children and their parents/carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance. St Erme with Trispen schools' attendance target is for all children to achieve 100% with attendance over 97% seen as excellent attendance. A level of attendance under 95% is not considered to be regular attendance with any child who has attendance under 90% classified as a "persistent absentee" (PA). Where a child's attendance falls below 95%, their attendance record is reviewed and action may be taken including referral to the Local Authority's Education Welfare Officer, contact home by a member of staff, invitation to parents to attend an attendance clinic with their child and the Local Authority's Education Welfare Officer, or request for medical evidence. These actions will be considered for all children and activated where necessary to help and support the child and their family to improve attendance at school.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2010](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 Governing Board

The Board of Governors are responsible for:

- Recognising the importance of school attendance and promoting it in line with St Erme with Trispen's ethos and policies.
- Ensuring the school fulfils expectations and statutory duties.
- Regularly reviewing school attendance data, discussing, and challenging trends
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis.
- Ensuring school staff receive adequate training on attendance.

3.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Making sure all teaching and non-teaching staff know the importance of good attendance, are consistent in their communication with pupils and parents, and receive the training and professional development they need.
- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Establishing and maintaining an effective culture of attendance at St Erme with Trispen School
- Whole school absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supervising staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Providing evidence for prosecution to Cornwall Council
- Providing evidence for fixed-penalty notices to Cornwall Council
- Monitoring of attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Working with education welfare officers to reduce absence across the whole school population
- Ensuring the correct use of the school system used to record and monitor attendance
- Agreeing any part-time timetables within the school.

The Attendance Lead is responsible for:

- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Maintaining effective systems for tackling absence
- Having a strong grasp of absence data at the school at individual pupil level and benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Reporting concerns about attendance to the headteacher
- Working with external agencies including education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Advising the Senior Leadership Team when pupil absence crosses thresholds that require action (eg. Advising the Headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices)
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress, including the efficacy of the school's strategies and processes

- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the Headteacher

3.5 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for:

- Taking the class register twice a day and submitting this information to the school office. The register is taken electronically using the eSchools registers.
- Teachers positively promote good attendance and alert the SLT to any concerns they have or any patterns they notice in regard to attendance.

3.6 School Office staff

School Office staff are responsible for:

- Taking calls from parents about absence and record any explanations provided on the school system.
- Any unexplained absences are promptly followed up by the designated office staff or Attendance Support Officer with an electronic message or telephone call home to the parents/carers to ascertain the reason for the non-attendance.
- Ask parents/carers to provide any medical evidence if needed.

3.7 Parents/Carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every session on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 8.45am on the day of the absence (and each subsequent day of absence unless a doctor's note has been provided), and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with at least 2 emergency contact numbers for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

Who is considered a parent in education law? Section 576 Education Act 1996 defines a 'parent' widely to include:

- a biological parent of the child (even if they do not have Parental Responsibility and even if the child does not reside with that parent).
- any person who is not a parent but has Parental Responsibility for the child (for example through a Residence Order, Child Arrangements Order, Special Guardianship Order, Step-Parental Responsibility Order, Adoption Order, or Care Order).
- someone who has care of the child

4. Recording Attendance

4. Recording attendance:

The school's admission registers and daily attendance registers are kept in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024

4.1 Attendance register

- We keep an attendance register using an MIS and place all pupils onto this register. The register is an accurate reflection of a pupil's attendance and a legal document which may be used as evidence in court. The decision on whether to authorise an absence rests with the Headteacher.
- A staff member takes the attendance register at the start of each morning session of each school day and once during each afternoon session. On each occasion they record whether each registered pupil is physically present in school or, if not, then they will be marked as the 'N' code. School office staff will then mark the reason for each child that is absent and why they are not in school by using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from regulation 10 of the School Attendance Regulations 2024 (See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes). The office staff will make any notes on the register with details of the reason for the absence.
- At School, pupils must arrive in school by 8.45am on each school day. The register for the first session will be taken at 8:45am and will be kept open until 9.15 am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1.00pm and will be kept open until 1.30pm.

4.2 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.
- After the register has closed, children will be marked as unauthorised late, using the appropriate code. This means that children arriving after this time will receive a mark that shows them to be on-site, but this will not count as a present mark. It will mean that they have an unauthorised absence unless the explanation for the late arrival is accepted by the headteacher, in which case they will be marked as late using the appropriate code.
- If a child has a persistent late record, the parent will be asked to meet with a member of the school staff and/or the Education Welfare Officer to resolve the problem. Parents are encouraged to approach the school if they are having problems getting their child to school. If the school and parents, working together, are unable to resolve any ongoing lateness issues, the school reserves the right to bring forward the close of the register. This means that the child's lateness will be recorded as unauthorised, which could result in the Education Welfare Service considering enforcement proceedings against the parent. The school will inform the parent in writing should this action be necessary

5. Understanding types of absence

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

- Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for an unavoidable reason like illness/medical appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies, or other unavoidable cause. However, the school encourages parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.
- Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. Examples of this type of absence include:
 - Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
 - Truancy before or during the school day
 - Absences which have never been properly explained or where supporting evidence has not been received
 - Children who arrive at school too late to get a mark
 - Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
 - Day trips and holidays in term time.

The parents of any pupil who has attendance below 93% may be asked to provide medical evidence. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents, and the child. Some children may be reluctant or anxious about attending school. It is important that parents are open with the school about reasons for absence. Many children will experience normal but difficult emotions that make them nervous about attending school, such as worries about friendships, schoolwork, examinations or variable moods. It is important to note that these pupils are still expected to attend school regularly - in many instances, attendance at school may serve to help with the underlying issue as being away from school might exacerbate it, and a prolonged period of absence may heighten anxious feelings about attending in future.

5.1 Following up absence:

If any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, the school will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason
- Ensure the schools safeguarding protocol and process is followed
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use
- Message or telephone all contacts on the first day of absence to follow up on unexplained absence.

5.2 Reporting to parents

Attendance is reported to parents twice a year, once at our Autumn term parents' evening and again in the Spring term when we send our annual school reports home. Parents may request attendance figures for their child from the office at any time. Letters are sent out regularly to parents/carers of children whose attendance is a concern. For those parents/carers of persistent absentees or children who are at risk of persistent absence a letter is sent home giving them a visual comparison between their child and their peers to help them understand the impact of the absence. Please note: a pupil is classified as a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this. We monitor all absence thoroughly. PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully. The school looks at ways to support the family with improving attendance and may involve the education welfare officer as needed.

5.3 Legal sanctions

There is a National Framework for issuing penalty notices that reflects changes to the law introduced through the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024. Where a child is absent from school without authorisation, the parent(s) will be committing an offence under the Education Act 1996. Schools must consider on a case-by-case basis whether to ask the local authority to issue a penalty notice to a parent when their child's absence is recorded as unauthorised after 10 school sessions within any 10-school week period. This will typically equate to 5 days of unauthorised absence from school. A school week is a week in which the school meets at least once. Penalty Notices are issued per liable parent, per child and each carry a fine of £80 if paid within 21 days or £160 if paid after this but within 28 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in legal action. Within the law there is an escalation process for repeat cases where any second attendance related penalty notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the first is charged at a flat rate of £160. A third penalty notice cannot be issued within 3 years of the first, and prosecution or other attendance intervention should be considered instead. Absence not authorised by the school may result in a prosecution in the Magistrates' Court under Section 444(1) or Section 444(1A) of the Education act 1996, leading to a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a custodial sentence. Cornwall Council may also apply for the costs incurred in taking the matter to Court. Schools will collaborate with the Education Welfare Officer who will oversee this process on behalf of school

5.4 Leave of Absence in term time

All schools can grant a leave of absence when a pupil needs to be absent from school with permission. All schools are expected to restrict leaves of absence to the specific circumstances set out in regulation 11 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance or employment abroad: in line with a licence issued by a local authority or Justice of the Peace or a body of persons approval (BOPA). (For full details please see code C1)

- Attending an interview: for entry into another educational institution or for future employment where requested in advance by a parent the pupil normally lives with.
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable: where the pupil is of compulsory school age, both the parent who the pupil normally lives with and school agree the pupil should temporarily be educated on a part-time basis for exceptional reasons and have agreed the times and dates when the pupil will be expected to attend school as part of that timetable.

Exceptional circumstances All schools can grant a leave of absence for other exceptional circumstances at their discretion. All applications should be made in writing to the Head of School at least 20 school days prior to the requested leave date. Schools are then expected to consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the school to determine the length of the time the pupil can be away from school. The DfE does not allow leave of absence to be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours. 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. Taking holidays in term time will affect a child's schooling as much as any other absence and parents are expected to help schools by not taking children away in term time. Any savings parents think they may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to a child's education. Here at St Erme with Trispen School, we work together and seek advice from the Education Welfare Team to ensure consistency and fair implementation of our policy. Where the decision is made not to authorise leave in term time, school will inform parent/carers in writing by retuning the term time absence form and keeping a copy for the school. On any occasion that school refuses a request for leave in term time, should a parent/carer proceed with the leave it will be recorded as code (G) (family holiday not agreed or in excess of agreement), on the school's register. Where a leave of absence has been unauthorised, penalty notices will be considered in line with Cornwall Council's Code of Conduct for issuing Penalty Notices in respect of unauthorised absence or children present in a public place whilst excluded from school. In the case of repeated fines, if a parent receives a second fine for the same child within any three-year period, this will be charged at the higher rate of £160. Fines per parent will be capped to two fines within any three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action like a parenting order or prosecution will be considered. Please, see legal sanction section above.

6. Pupils with Ongoing Medical Conditions

Parents/Carers should inform the school of any medical conditions that could impact on Attendance and Wellbeing. A Healthcare Plan should be agreed with Health Services on how to ensure the pupil is able to access their full potential and attend school. In some cases, a child can be educated at home whereby the school environment is detrimental to either condition or causes a risk (of infection etc.) to said pupil. Pupils should not be penalised if their absence from school is related to their medical condition, such as attending hospital appointments. To avoid being fined for non-attendance, parents must obtain permission from the school in advance of the appointment, so that the absence can be treated as authorised. An absence can also be authorised if the child is too ill to attend school and the school is notified of that as soon as possible. A school should not encourage non-attendance, such as sending a pupil with medical conditions home frequently or preventing a pupil from staying for normal school activities, including lunch. This will only be justified if it is in accordance with the pupil's individual healthcare plan and is necessary. If a child is regularly sent home at lunch or placed on a part-time timetable which has not been fully agreed to, these absences may amount to unofficial exclusions.

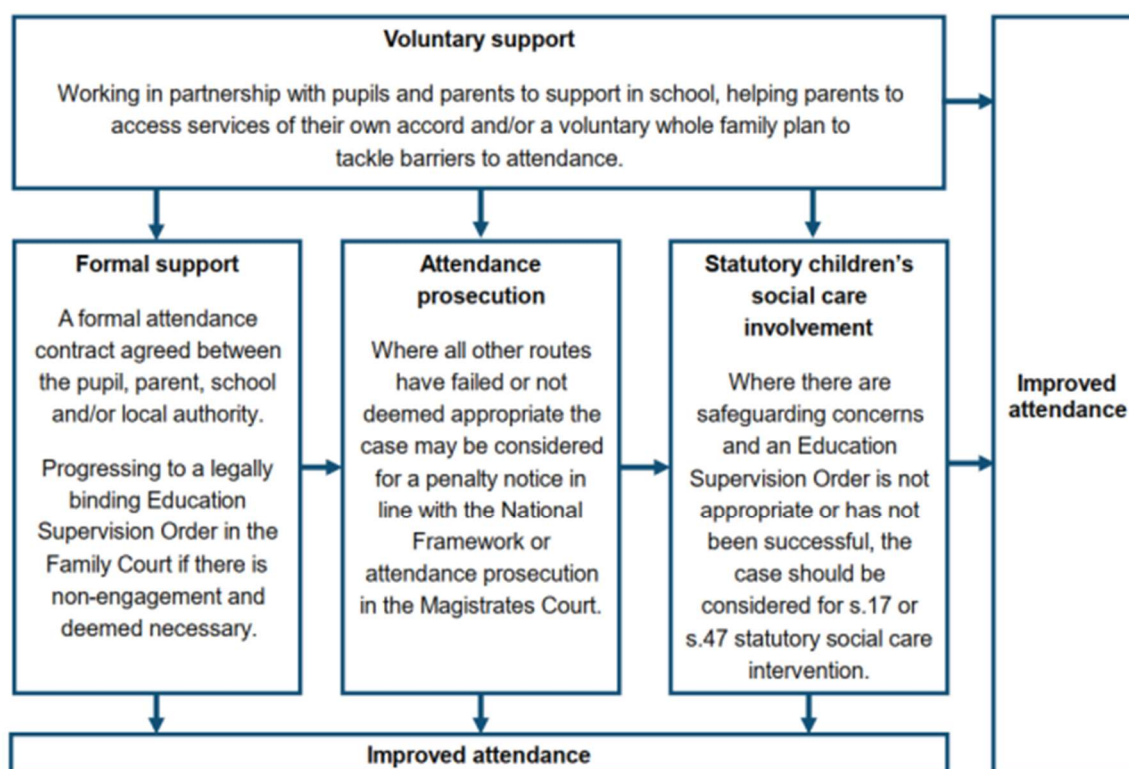
The Equality Act 2010 states that the school must make reasonable adjustments to ensure that children and young people with a disability are not put at a substantial disadvantage compared to other students. Therefore, some pupils may be exempt from consequences of poor attendance due to their medical conditions, but only if their poor attendance is supported with medical evidence from medical practitioners.

The Children and Families Act 2014 includes a duty on schools to support children with medical conditions. This is inclusive of children with conditions such as diabetes. Schools must make arrangements for supporting pupils at schools with medical conditions and in meeting that duty they must have regard to the statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

7. Strategies for promoting attendance

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents, pupils and all members of school staff. The school will provide parents with details on attendance through regular correspondence and remind parents about the importance of good attendance on the newsletter. Schools talk to the children about the importance of good attendance and meet to discuss attendance issue with families, offering relevant support when needed. St Erme with Trispen school follows the following government guidance: **Expect:** Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils **Monitor:** Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns. **Listen and understand:** Discuss with pupils and parents and to listen to and understand barriers to attendance **Facilitate support:** Explore support that might overcome the barriers, this might include in school support and external agencies such as the Early Help Hub. **Formalise support:** This may include formalising support through an attendance contract or education supervision order. **Enforce:** Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention: a penalty notice in line with the National Framework or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

Providing support first before attendance legal intervention



8. Attendance monitoring

8.1 The school office/attendance officer monitors pupil absence on a daily basis and attendance is reviewed every month with the Headteacher. Attendance and absence data is analysed regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and the school uses this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families. The school looks at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develops strategies to address these patterns. Pupil-level absence 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 compare attendance data to the national average and share this with the school governors throughout the year.

8.2 Reducing persistent and severe absence

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If it is greater than 50% the pupil is considered to be severely absent. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to our strategies for improving attendance.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- Send letters to parents of those children who are at risk of becoming persistently absent
- Close monitoring of identified children who are at risk of becoming persistently absent.

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every year by St Erme with Trispen School.

Appendix 1. Attendance codes

The following national codes will be used to record attendance information.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Present
\	Present (pm)	Present
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
B	Educated Off-site (NOT dual registration) at an establishment approved by the school	Approved Education Activity
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience (final two years of compulsory education).	Approved Education Activity
K	Attending provision arranged by local authority	Approved Education Activity

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Leave of absence granted by the school- Other Authorised, exceptional circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description). School should approach each case individually. C code to be used at Headteacher's discretion. C1- employment-In a performance supported by a licence issued by a local authority or a BOPA; C2- Agreed temporary part-time timetable	Authorised absence
E	Excluded (No alternative provision).	Authorised absence
H	Family Holiday (Agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness not medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	J1- Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution	Authorised absence
M	Medical/dental appointments	Authorised absence

R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
Unauthorised absence		
G	Family holiday (Not agreed, <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence (these should not stay on school's register for more than 5 days. If no reason has been provided after 5 days, schools should change the code to O).	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (Not covered by any other code/description) or if school is not satisfied the reason given is an authorised absence.	Unauthorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances (eg school closed due to weather) Y1-planned transport by county not available Y2- large scale transport closure in the area Y3-partial school closure Y4-whole school closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Prospective pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

Appendix 2

There are 175 non-school days in a year and 190 school days each year.

190 school days in each year 190 days for your child's education	7 days absence	10 days absence	19 days absence	28 days absence	47 days absence
	183 days in school	180 days in school	171 days in school and the equivalent of a month not in school that year	162 days in school If it 85% each year, your child is missing the equivalent of a year of education over their time at primary school	143 days in school
100%	96%	95%	90%	85%	75%
<p>Good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Best chance of success -Gets your child off to a flying start -Helps their confidence, social development as well as their academic progress -Over 97% is considered excellent attendance 	<p>Some Concern</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Harder for your child to make progress -School starts tracking your child's attendance closely. - -Medical evidence may be required to authorised further absences linked to illness 	<p>Worrying</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Your child is now classified as 'persistently absent' - Education Welfare Officer involvement is likely 	<p>Serious Concern</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Having a significant impact on your child's education and well-being -Legal Action may be taken -At 50% your child is classified as 'severely absent' 		