

## Attendance and Punctuality Policy

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## Aim of this policy

To support excellent levels of attendance for all students to enable fulfilment of their potential at The Thomas Lord Audley school..

This policy has been prepared with regard to the Academy's statutory duties relating to attendance, including those set out in the Department for Education's statutory guidance entitled [Working together to improve school attendance \(2024\)](#), which is referred to in this policy as the "DfE Attendance Guidance".

## Key principles

- High levels of attendance and punctuality levels are promoted and rewarded.
- It is the responsibility of everybody in the Academy to improve attendance and punctuality.
- Where attendance or punctuality fall short of expected standards, steps will be taken to address this and sanctions may be applied in accordance with the behaviour policy.
- Some students find it harder than others to attend school. The School will work with students, parents and other local partners to remove any barriers to attendance.
- Subject to the terms of this policy, any day-to-day attendance issues that parents or students have should be discussed with their Form tutor or Attendance Officer. Where more detailed support around attendance is required, parents and students should contact the appropriate Year team.

## 1. Roles and responsibilities

### 1.1 The School

The School will:

- develop and maintain a whole-school culture that promotes the benefit of high attendance, including a focus of Attendance is Achievement. Attendance across the school is seen as a whole school priority and will be shared with all stakeholders and underpins the school Values of Ready, Respectful and Responsible. forms part of the schools rewards . Attendance forms part of criteria for the TLA Charter and on a day to day basis attendance is rewarded. Students attendance is recognised through positive communication home, celebration assemblies and through incentives and rewards.
- work with students and their families, building strong relationships, to support high levels of attendance and punctuality and understand any barriers to attendance
- investigate unexplained or unjustified absence, providing support or applying sanctions where appropriate



- take into account individual needs when implementing this policy, including having regard to the School's obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- share information, including returns information required to be shared in accordance with regulations<sup>1</sup> and the DfE Attendance Guidance, and work collaboratively with the local authority, other schools in the area and other partners including, where required, making appropriate referrals in accordance with local procedures, legislation and guidance
- regularly monitor, review and analyse attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require attendance support and to set targets for the future
- ensure that all students can access full-time education, putting strategies in place where this is evidence to suggest that this is not the case
- ensure that the Trust Board and School's leadership team work together to monitor attendance levels and the effectiveness of this policy
- ensure that all legislation and guidance are complied with and reflected in our policies and procedures, including the DfE Attendance Guidance;
- have in place appropriate safeguarding responses for children who are at risk of missing education, having regard to the statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (please refer to our Child Protection policy) [Thomas Lord Audley School Child Protection Policy September2024.pdf](#)
- provide information requested by the Secretary of State, including termly absence data collected by the Department for Education
- regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels
- support students who are returning to education following long term absence
- ensure that effective systems to record and report attendance data are in place, including accurate completion of admission and attendance registers using an electronic management information system
- assign overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance at the School to a designated senior leader, known as the Senior Attendance Champion,
- observe and fulfil the responsibilities set out in guidance issued by the Department for Education ([Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\) \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)) to the extent not covered above or elsewhere in this policy.

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<sup>1</sup> School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024



## 1.2 Parents and carers

We expect parents and carers to:

- ensure that their child arrives at the School on time, in the correct uniform and with the necessary equipment
- promote the importance of regular attendance at home
- follow the correct procedure for reporting the absence of their child from the School (see section 6.3 below)
- avoid unnecessary absences
- keep the School informed of any circumstances which may affect their child's attendance
- not take their child out of education for holidays during term time (see section 6.5 below)
- inform the School in advance of any proposed change of address for their child(ren), along with the name of the parent with whom the child shall live
- observe and fulfil their responsibilities set out in the guidance issued by the Department for Education: [Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\) \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/90000/summary-table-of-responsibilities-for-school-attendance-applies-from-19-august-2024.pdf) .

## 1.3 Students

We expect students to:

- attend the school regularly and on time
- be punctual to all lessons
- follow the correct procedure if they arrive at the school late (see sections 4 and 5 below).

## 1.4 Senior Attendance Champion

The Senior Attendance Champion (“**SAC**”) at the School are Mr K Rowland, Deputy Headteacher and Mrs A Finbow-Jeffery, Assistant Headteacher.

The SAC has overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance at the School and will:

- set a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Make sure attendance support and improvement is appropriately resourced, including where applicable through effective use of pupil premium funding



- establish and maintain effective systems for tackling absence and ensure that these are followed by all staff
- evaluate and monitor attendance expectations and attendance escalation processes.
- have a strong grasp of absence data to focus the collective efforts of the School
- ensure that key attendance messages are communicated to parents and students
- provide data and reports to support the work of the board of trustees (see below).

## 1.5 The Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees will:

- take an active role in attendance improvement, recognise the importance of school attendance and promote it across the Trust and School's ethos and policies
- ensure the School's leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- regularly review attendance data, discuss and challenge trends and help School leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- ensure School staff receive adequate training on attendance, including dedicated training for staff with specific attendance responsibilities and any additional training that would help support pupils or cohorts overcome common barriers to attendance
- share effective practice on attendance management and improvement across its academies
- hold attendance review meetings with the School
- require the Senior Leadership Team to report to the Trustees on the School's attendance at regular intervals
- have a dedicated attendance lead who will drive improvement across the Trust and act as a central point for schools with attendance queries.

## 2. Registration

- 2.1 The School maintains an attendance register and uses this to record each student's attendance at the start of the school day and again in the afternoon.



Registration session	Present mark issued	Late mark issued	Register closes
Morning	8.30am	8.40 - 9.05 am	[9.05 am)

- 2.2 Students who arrive after the start of a registration session but before the end of the registration session will be marked as late. Where students arrive after the end of a registration session, the process set out at section 5 applies.
- 2.3 The register is marked using the national statutory attendance and absence codes which can be found in the DfE Attendance Guidance.
- 2.4 Where a student attends a registration session but does not attend subsequent lessons, we will treat this as a truancy and non-attendance matter in accordance with the behaviour policy and engage parents where necessary.

### 3. Late arrival

#### 3.1 How we manage lateness:

- The morning registers are marked at **8.30 am**
- Pupils arriving after **8.30 am** are required to come into school via the schools **Students office, sign in via the duty staff and provide a reason for lateness**
- The morning register will close at **9:05am**. Pupils will receive a mark of unauthorised absence (U code) if they arrive after **9.06 am**.

3.2 Pupils will be encouraged to communicate any concerns related to attendance and absence as soon as possible to the relevant member of staff.

3.3 Persistent lateness to both lessons and school will be treated as a disciplinary matter and will be dealt with in line with the schools late procedure and behaviour policy.

#### Late procedure and sanction

When students are late to school or a lesson, they will be registered with a Late mark.

At the end of the week an attendance report is completed for the whole school, if students are late to lessons they are at risk of having a late detention. This is based on the percentage of lessons missed over the week and the detention is on a Thursday evening each week.



10% - 3 lates over the week	30 minute
20% - 6 lates over the week	60 minute
30% - 9 lates over the week	90 minute

If students continue to be late for a number of weeks there is a staged approach in communication home from the Year team to speak to the family.

If lateness continues to persist, the students will have the following actions.

9 – 10 detentions	3 supervised lunch detentions
10 + detentions	1 week of supervised lunch detentions
2 consecutive 90 minutes detentions	1 week of supervised lunch detentions
3 consecutive 60 minutes detentions	1 week if supervised lunch detentions

#### 4. Reasons for absence and how to report or request authorisation

- 4.1 **Authorised absence** - Absence will only be authorised where the School has given approval in advance for a student to not be in attendance or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for the absence. Only the School can authorise absence.
- 4.2 **Unauthorised absence** – absence will be marked as unauthorised where the School is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence.

#### 5. Reporting absence from the Academy

##### 5.1 Absence procedures

Parents will be required to contact the school office via telephone on 01206 547911 before **8.20am** on the first day of their child's absence and each day afterwards if required, ***clearly stating their child's full name, form group and the unavoidable reason for absence.***

Parents and carers will be expected to provide an explanation for the absence and an estimation of how long the absence will last, e.g. one school day.

The Department for Education directs schools towards the NHS guidance and school decision on whether the reason for absence is to be authorised.

The NHS guidance has produced guidance on common illnesses. This guidance is available via NHS – ['Is my child too ill for school?'](#) webpage.



The NHS message is quite clear –

It is ok to allow a child or young person to go to school with some common or minor illnesses.

Common colds, minor coughs, sore throats or headaches alone do not mean they are too unwell to attend school.

**Only absences that are UNAVOIDABLE will be authorised at The Thomas Lord Audley School.**

Where a pupil is absent, and their parent has not contacted the school by **the close of the morning register** to report the absence, administrative staff will contact the parent via an unexplained absence text in the first instance on the first day that they do not attend school. If there is no communication received, staff will then telephone as soon as is practicable to confirm the reason for absence.

The school will always follow up any absences in order to:

- Ascertain the reason and root cause for the absence.
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is being taken.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
- Identify the correct code to use to enter the data onto the school census system.

The school will not request medical evidence in all circumstances where a pupil is absent due to illness; however if a student is away or there is a continued similar reason for absence reported repeatedly (3 times), medical evidence will be requested as the school reserves the right to request supporting evidence where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness. Absence will be recorded as unauthorised until this evidence has been received by the school.

In the case of PA, arrangements will be made for parents to speak to the attendance officer. The school will inform the LA, on a termly basis, of the details of pupils who fail to attend regularly, or who have missed 10 school days or more without authorisation.

If a student's attendance drops below **95 percent**, the attendance team will monitor their attendance, implement early help support as required and call attendance meetings inline with the school's escalation plan. (See Appendix B)

Where a pupil has not returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence, or is absent from school without authorisation for 20 consecutive school days, the school will remove the pupil from the admissions register if the school and the LA have failed to establish the whereabouts of the pupil after making reasonable enquiries.





## 5.2 Appointments

5.2.1 Medical, dental and other essential appointments for a student should take place outside of school hours where this is reasonably possible.

5.2.2 Where an appointment must take place during school time, the student should attend the School for as much of the day as possible and as much prior notice as possible should be given to the Student's form tutor or communicated with the School via [enquiries@tla.school](mailto:enquiries@tla.school) or telephone on 01206 547911, asking for the Attendance Officer.

## 5.3 Leave of absence (including holidays during term time)

The School will grant permission for a student to be absent from school in the circumstances described in paragraph 37 of the DfE Attendance Guidance which can be summarised as follows:

- taking part in a regulated performance or employment abroad
- attendance at an interview for entry into another educational setting or future employment
- study leave for public examinations
- temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- other exceptional circumstances.

Parents and carers should make every effort to avoid taking students out of education for holidays or other extended leave during term time.

To request a leave of absence, parents/carers must make the request in advance and in writing addressed to the Head Teacher and, wherever possible, at least 2 school weeks ahead of the planned leave.

Where a leave of absence is requested as above, the Head Teacher will consider the specific facts and circumstances relating to the request. The decision:

- will be confirmed in writing
- is solely at the Head Teacher's discretion and
- is final.

Where permission is granted, the Head Teacher will confirm the number of days and dates of absence which are authorised.

If permission is not granted and the parents/carers proceed to take their child out of the School, the absence will be marked as unauthorised and parents may be issued with a penalty notice or be subject to prosecution by the local authority (see section 7 below).



#### 5.4 Religious observance

We recognise that students of certain faiths may need to participate in days of religious observance. Where a day of religious observance:

- falls during school time and
- has been exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the student belongs,
- the absence from the School will be authorised.
- We ask that parents/carers notify the School in advance where absence is required due to religious observance.
- Parents/carers can notify the School by writing to the student's form tutor or communicating with the school via [enquiries@tla.school](mailto:enquiries@tla.school) or by telephone on 01206 547911, asking for the Attendance Officer.

#### 5.5 Coronavirus (Covid-19)

There may be circumstances in which students cannot attend school due to Covid-19. The School will adhere to any current guidance issued by the Department for Education relating to the recording of attendance in relation to Covid-19.

#### 5.6 Addressing poor attendance and punctuality

The School will use data to target attendance improvement efforts to the students or groups of students who need it most. In doing so, the School, led by the SAC, will:

- monitor and analyse weekly attendance patterns, proactively using data to identify pupils at risk of poor attendance
- provide regular attendance reports to class teachers and relevant leaders
- identify students who need support from wider partners as soon as possible and deliver this support in a targeted manner
- conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly and fully year data to identify patterns and trends
- benchmark School attendance data at each level against local, regional and national level
- monitor the impact of school strategies and actions to improve attendance on particular pupils and particular groups
- work with the local authority, Sigma Trust and other local partners to identify groups



- hold regular meetings with the parents or carers of students who the School and/or local authority consider to be vulnerable

5.7 Our procedures for managing unexplained absences can be found at Appendix A

5.8 Where absence or punctuality is a cause for concern, for example because there is:

- a pattern of unauthorised absence
- a question over the reasons provided for a particular absence or late arrival
- persistent truancy or lateness

We will make contact with the parents/carers with a view to working together to support improved attendance and/or punctuality.

5.9 In cases where the School has been unable to establish a clear reason for absence and/or has welfare concerns about the student a home welfare check may be carried out.

5.10 Failure to attend or arrive at lessons and school on time may also be dealt with as a disciplinary matter in accordance with the School's late procedure and the behaviour policy. (See 3.3 for details)

5.11 Absence will be classed as persistent where it falls below 90% across the academic year. Absence at this level is very likely to hinder educational prospects and we expect full parental cooperation and support to urgently address these cases. Intervention steps may include implementation of an attendance action plan, referral to other agencies and/or seeking to put in place an attendance contract.

5.12 Where out of school barriers to attendance are identified, the School will signpost and support access to any additional services. See our *{Attendance is Achievement Escalation Plan in Appendix B*

5.13 Where parents/carers have failed to ensure that their child of compulsory school age is regularly attending the School and wider support in accordance with this policy is not appropriate or effective, we may consider issuing a penalty notice. A penalty notice is a financial penalty (£80 if paid within 21 days, £160 if paid within 28 days) imposed on parents which is intended to change behaviour.

5.14 When considering whether to issue a penalty notice, we will have regard to:

- the National Framework for penalty notices as set out in paragraphs 175 – 201 of the DfE Attendance Guidance; and
- the local authority's Code of Conduct for issuing penalty notices.

5.15 In the event that a penalty notice is issued but is not paid within 28 days, the local authority will decide whether to proceed to prosecution. The local authority also has



separate powers to prosecute parents if their child of compulsory school age fails to attend school regularly.

### 5.16 National Framework for Penalty Notices

There is now a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England, of 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period. The 10 sessions of absence do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence (G, O and/or U coded within the school's registers). The 10 school week period can span different terms, school years or education settings. Sanctions may include issuing each parent (for each child) with a Penalty Notice for £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days (for the first offence). A second Penalty Notice issued within a three year period will result in a fine of £160 per parent, per child. If a third offence is committed the matter may be referred to the local authority for consideration of prosecution via the Magistrates Court. If prosecution is instigated for irregular school attendance, each parent may receive a fine of up to £2500 and/or up to 3 months in prison. If a parent is found guilty in court, they will receive a criminal conviction.

6. This policy will be reviewed at least biennially or sooner as the trustees consider necessary in response to the ongoing review of attendance data. Schools are responsible for updating local information as it changes to reflect up to date practices.

### Policy history

Date	Owner	Approved by	Comments
September 2024	SHo	Board of Trustees	Initial implementation
March 2025	SHo	Board of Trustees	General review



**Appendix A – First Day Calling Procedure**
**Managing Unexplained Absence – Thomas Lord Audley School**

When no reason for absence has been provided by the parent, the Schools Attendance team will follow these steps below.

Pupils deemed at risk, also known as the School’s Vulnerable List are defined at the following pupils:

- Children subject to a child protection plan
- Children on a Child In Need Plan
- Looked After children

If these children are absent and there has been no contact - school will notify the key worker/ social worker or youth offending worker within the hour.

<b>Day 1 of absence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Send absent text to parent/carers</li> <li>● Telephone parents/carers if a response is not received following the text, leave a message if possible.</li> <li>● Record actions on Arbor</li> </ul>
<b>Day 2 of absence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Send absent text to parent/carers</li> <li>● Telephone parents/carers if a response is not received following the text, leave a message if possible</li> <li>● If no response - telephone all contacts on Arbor, if no answer leave message to return call</li> <li>● If an international dialling tone is heard, leave a message advising of this and ask for a call back.</li> <li>● This may indicate they are on holiday and have not notified the school</li> <li>● If you believe this to be the case, send a ‘believe absence is a holiday’ letter available on Essex Schools Infolink (ESI).</li> <li>● Letters should be sent separately to both parents</li> <li>● Record all actions on Arbor</li> </ul>



<b>Day 3 of absence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Send absent text to parent/carers</li> <li>● Telephone parents/carers, if a response is not received following the text leave a message if possible</li> <li>● Telephone all contacts on Arbor, if no answer leave message asking them to return the call</li> <li>● Make home visit - if there is no answer leave calling card and move to next step</li> <li>● Send a letter of concern for absence via email, to all parents/carers and those with day-to-day care</li> <li>● Record all actions on Arbor</li> </ul>
<b>Day 4 of absence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Send absent text to parent/carers</li> <li>● Telephone parents/carers if a response is not received following the text, if there is no answer, leave a message if possible</li> <li>● Telephone all contacts on Arbor, if no answer leave message to return call</li> <li>● Record all actions on Arbor</li> </ul>
<b>Day 5 of absence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Telephone parent / carers and leave a message if possible and then follow up with an absence text</li> <li>● Telephone all contacts on Arbor, if no answer leave message to return call</li> <li>● If you believe this family are not on holiday and are concerned about the child's welfare request a welfare visit from the police</li> <li>● Record all actions on Arbor</li> </ul>
<b>Day 6 – 8 of absence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Send absent text to parent/carers</li> <li>● Telephone parents/carers if a response is not received following the text, leave a message if possible</li> <li>● Telephone all contacts on Arbor, if no answer leave message to return call</li> <li>● Either send a further letter or make a further home-visit. If there is no answer leave calling card and move to next step</li> <li>● Record all actions on Arbor</li> </ul>



<b>Day 9 - 10 of absence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Send absent text to parent/carers</li> <li>● Telephone parents/carers if a response is not received following the text, leave a message if possible</li> <li>● Telephone all contacts on Arbor, if no answer leave message to return call</li> <li>● If you have not done so already, and you believe the family are not on holiday and are concerned about the child's welfare, request a welfare visit from the police</li> <li>● Send a further concern letter separately to both parents / carers by first class post stating: You are making a referral to the Local Authority as their child is now considered Missing from Education</li> <li>● Submit the Missing Pupil Checklist on Essex School InfoLink, which notifies the Local Authority Children Missing Education Team</li> </ul>
<b>Missing Pupil Checklist</b>	<p>Must be completed by the 10<sup>th</sup> day of absence, when one of the following criteria applies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A pupil has gone missing and no contact can be made with parent/carer to establish reason for absence</li> <li>● A pupil ceased to attend the school and forwarding address of the family is not known</li> <li>● A pupil has not returned from holiday within 10 school days of the expected date of return</li> <li>● A pupil fails to take up their place at the start of the academic year and the whereabouts of the young person is unknown</li> </ul> <p><u>School must continue investigations, while the Local Authority undertake their investigations.</u></p>
<b>Day 11 - 19 of absence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Send absent text to parent/carers</li> <li>● Telephone parents/carers if a response is not received following the text, leave a message if possible</li> <li>● Telephone all contacts on Arbor, if no answer leave message to return the call</li> <li>● Make another home visit during this period and leave a calling card</li> <li>● Inform parents / carers in writing that their child is at risk of being removed from roll</li> <li>● Record all actions on Arbor</li> </ul>
<b>Day 20 of absence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Send absent text to parent/carers</li> <li>● Telephone parents/carers if a response is not received following the text, leave a message if possible</li> <li>● Telephone all contacts on Arbor, if no answer leave message to the return call</li> </ul>



	<p><u>You cannot remove a child from roll until you have received notification from the Local Authority</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Record all actions on Arbor.</li> </ul>
<b>Coding:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>These absences must be coded as O for unauthorised absence due to no reason provided from parents/carers</li> </ul>





## Appendix B - Attendance Escalation Plan

The Thomas Lord Audley School has adopted the following attendance monitoring procedures, to ensure that pupils' attendance meets the expected standard, and effective intervention is provided where pupils' attendance falls below the standard:

1. The Aquinas attendance tracking sheet is updated daily with live data from Arbor. The SLT lead and Attendance Officer monitor **weekly, half termly, termly and annually** attendance to date.
2. Attendance is discussed by form teachers where pupils discuss their weekly attendance. Any attendance/punctuality trends noticed by the Year teams or any staff members are passed immediately to the SLT lead.
3. Contact is made with parents on the first day of absence for any pupil absence not reported. 'N' codes are used to indicate that the pupil is absent for a reason not yet provided; these N codes are reported to the SLT and attendance officer daily.
4. Contact is made to the parents of any pupils marked using the N code. Any N codes not established after a week are recorded as an unauthorised absence.
5. If a pupil's attendance falls to **95 percent**, the attendance team speaks to the pupil in school to discuss any issues or problems to ascertain root cause and how the school can help to improve their attendance. The tutor or Year team may also make a phone call home to discuss this with parents, if necessary.
6. If a pupil's attendance falls below **the school's expected standard**, there is communication with home explaining that the pupil's attendance is now being monitored, and the attendance officer/pastoral member staff/ or member of SEND staff contacts the parents to discuss this pending the outcome.
7. The pupil's attendance is monitored for **four weeks** and, if attendance does not improve after this time, parents are required to attend a meeting in school with the classroom teacher/form teacher/ pastoral staff/Attendance Officer and set targets for their child, as part of an attendance action plan. If parents are unwilling to cooperate, or are genuinely unable to attend, a referral may be required to Aquinas who will then conduct/facilitate a home visit.
8. After the **four-week** monitoring period, and if targets are met, communication is sent home to congratulate the pupil and their parents on improving attendance. Monitoring and communication with the parents continues until attendance stabilises.
9. If targets are not met, the pastoral member of staff makes a referral to Aquinas. Education welfare protocol is followed, and an attendance contract is drawn up. A two - **four-week** monitoring period is established and, if there are no improvements, a final written warning is issued to the parents if there is no improvement after an additional **four weeks**, a fixed-penalty notice is issued.



**Thomas Lord Audley School  
Attendance Escalation Intervention**



**Universal support**

- Positive meet and greet during arrival to school, beginning of lessons, Break and Lunch duties
- Extended tutor period to settle students into the school day
- Highlight, discuss and champion attendance in Assemblies (Attendance Champions, SLT, HOY)
- Breakfast club is accessible for all students
- Extracurricular activities to encourage belonging and nurture protective factors
- Parental communication through the school year
- Personalised termly attendance nudge letters including access to early help

Attendance drops below 97 - 95%

**Need for Speed**

- Attendance concerns tracked through Year team meetings
- Tutor attendance conversations
- Aquinas monitor unauthorised absences and implement interventions



- Meet with the student
- Phone call home to gather more information from parent/carer if required
- Complete Root Cause of attendance

Attendance drops below 95%

**Regain Traction - Enhanced support**

- Attendance monitored by Year teams
- Monitoring letter sent to Parent/carers
- Tutor attendance dialogue
- Planned interventions to motivate attendance
- Aquinas monitor unauthorised absences and implement interventions



- Meet with the student
- Communication home to gather more information and views from parent/carer and CYP.
- Complete Root Cause conversation > Implement any supportive actions
- Consider EBSA pathway
- Consider 'Lets Talk we Miss You' attendance difficulties questionnaire

Attendance drops below 90%

**Persistent Absence - Intensive Support**

- Attendance monitored by Year teams
- Student discussed at attendance diagnostic meetings
- Tutor or Year team attendance dialogue



- Meet and check in with the student
- Communicate or meet with parent/ carer with the pupil in for a meeting to gather more detailed views



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planned interventions to motivate attendance</li> <li>Aquinas monitor unauthorised absences and implement interventions</li> <li>Aquinas Early Help and TAF meetings offered</li> <li>Aquinas Contract meetings initiated</li> <li>Legal Warnings and Notice to improve initiated</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement attendance action plan - to be reviewed every 2 weeks</li> <li>Consider EBSA pathway</li> <li>Completion 'Lets Talk we Miss You' attendance difficulties questionnaire</li> <li>Complete School stress survey &gt; Implement any action required</li> <li>Complete EBSA Risk and Resilience Scales</li> </ul>
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Attendance drops below 50%	<p><b>Severely Absence - Intensive Support</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Close attendance tracking by Year teams</li> <li>Students discussed at attendance diagnostic meetings</li> <li>Aquinas monitor unauthorised absences and implement interventions</li> <li>Tutor or Year team attendance dialogue</li> <li>Planned interventions to motivate attendance</li> <li>Student add to Year group Panel meetings</li> <li>Aquinas TAF and Review meetings</li> <li>Aquinas Contract meetings initiated</li> <li>Legal Warnings, Notice to improve initiated</li> <li>Legal Penalty Notice or Prosecution</li> </ul>	<p>→</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meet and check in with the student</li> <li>Invite parent/ carer with the pupil in for a meeting to gather more detailed views</li> <li>Review / Implement action plan - to be reviewed every 2 weeks</li> <li>Consider EBSA pathway</li> <li>Complete EBSA Risk and Resilience Scales</li> <li>Complete School stress survey &gt; Implement any action required</li> <li>Create link staff for the student from the school (Normally Year team or Tutor)</li> </ul>
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Emotionally-Based School Avoidance (EBSA) is used to describe occasions where it has been established through assessment that a pupil's absence is because of an emotional distress e.g. anxiety. EBSA doesn't just mean not attending school entirely as students may have good attendance but still show signs of EBSA.

Early Intervention and support is our approach to EBSA. Staff are trained to look for behaviours and approach this as a holistic and supportive view. Once a child has been identified as experiencing EBSA or at risk of developing EBSA, intervention should happen quickly before behaviours become entrenched.

### Universal support systems

Trauma Perceptive Practice approach, Student-School connection and early help promoting resilience Support via the Attendance and pastoral team, whole school interventions, Rewards and incentives

Stage 1  Monitor 6 to 12 Weeks	Identified student attendance concerns EBSA student concerns raised by staff  Attendance concerns tracked through Year team meetings Monitor attendance Aquinas tracker	→ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Contact home via Year teams /KW to ascertain views</li> <li>● Complete Root Cause analysis</li> <li>● Complete 'Lets Talk We Miss You'</li> <li>● Complete ladder of strength</li> </ul>
Stage 2  Monitor 6 to 12 Weeks	Continued decrease in Student attendance  Significant decrease in Student attendance	→ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Parental Meeting</li> <li>● Complete ladder of strength</li> <li>● Personalised attendance action plan</li> <li>● Complete Risk and Resilience profile</li> <li>● Implement supportive interventions</li> </ul>
Stage 3  Monitor 6 to 12 Weeks	Continued decrease in Student attendance  Increase in student concerns	→ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Continue Parental attendance meetings and action plan</li> <li>● Implement supportive interventions</li> <li>● Involvement of Inclusion Partner</li> </ul>
Stage 4	Attendance continues to decrease	→ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Continue Parental attendance meetings and action</li> <li>● Complete weekly Safeguard check</li> </ul>



Continue to monitor	<p>Increase student concerns and increase periods of time away from school</p> <p>Student refuses to access school</p> <p>Student deemed 'Missing in Education'</p>
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- Consider use of Bridge room
- Complete Education Access Referral
- Consider use of Alternative Provision

## Appendix C - Attendance is Achievement: Attend Today, Achieve tomorrow!

### Attendance vs lost learning



Attendance during one school year	Equivalent Days	Equivalent Sessions	Equivalent Weeks	Equivalent Lessons Missed
95%	9 Days	18 Sessions	2 Weeks	54 Lessons
90%	19 Days	38 Sessions	4 Weeks	114 Lessons
85%	29 Days	58 Sessions	6 Weeks	174 Lessons
80%	38 Days	72 Sessions	8 Weeks	228 Lessons
75%	48 Days	96 Sessions	10 Weeks	288 Lessons
70%	57 Days	114 Sessions	11.5 Weeks	342 Lessons

### Every Minute Counts

If your child arrives late to school everyday, their learning begins to suffer. Below is a graph showing how being late to school everyday over a school year adds up to lost learning time.



## Appendix D

### 1 [Working Together To Improve Attendance](#)

### 2. [Summary of responsibilities for attendance](#)

#### All pupils

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



## Pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered to prevent the need for more formal support.</p>	<p>Proactively use data to identify pupils at risk of persistent absence.</p> <p>Work with each identified pupil and their parents to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-school barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Where out of school barriers are identified, signpost and support access to any required services in the first instance and act as lead practitioner if attendance is the only issue and/or the local threshold for formal early help is not met.</p> <p>If the issue persists, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the local authority and other partners. If a case meets the local threshold for formal early help/family support, this includes conducting the early help assessment and acting as the lead practitioner where all partners agree that the school is the best placed lead service. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the school, continue to work with the local authority and partners.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Hold a regular conversation with every school to identify, discuss and signpost or provide access to services for pupils who are persistently or severely absent or at risk of becoming so.</p> <p>Where there are out of school barriers, provide each identified pupil and their family with access to services they need in the first instance.</p> <p>If the issue persists, and there are multiple needs consider whether the threshold for early help is met and facilitate access where it is. Regardless, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the school and other partners. Provide the lead practitioner in cases where threshold is met and all partners agree that a local authority service is best placed to lead. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the local authority, continue to work with the school and partners.</p>

## Persistently absent pupils

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





## Severely absent pupils

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

## Support for cohorts of pupils with lower attendance than their peers

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Not applicable.</p>	<p>Proactively use data to identify cohorts with, or at risk of, low attendance and develop strategies to support them.</p> <p>Work with other schools in the local area and the local authority to share effective practice where there are common barriers to attendance.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Track local attendance data to prioritise support and unblock area wide attendance barriers where they impact numerous schools.</p>

## Support for pupils with medical conditions or SEND with poor attendance

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered.</p>	<p>Maintain the same ambition for attendance and work with pupils and parents to maximise attendance.</p> <p>Ensure join up with pastoral support and where required, put in place additional support and adjustments, such as an individual healthcare plan and if applicable, ensuring the provision outlined in the pupil's EHCP is accessed.</p> <p>Consider additional support from wider services and external partners, making timely referrals.</p> <p>Regularly monitor data for such groups, including at board and governing body meetings and with local authorities.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Work closely with relevant services and partners, for example special educational needs, educational psychologists, and mental health services, to ensure joined up support for families.</p> <p>Ensure suitable education, such as alternative provision, is arranged for children of compulsory school age who because of health reasons would not otherwise receive a suitable education.</p>



## Support for pupils with a social worker

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered.</p>	<p>Know who the pupils who have, or who have had, a social worker are.</p> <p>Understand how the welfare, safeguarding, and child protection issues that they are experiencing, or have experienced, can have an impact on attendance – whilst maintaining a culture of high aspiration for the cohort.</p> <p>Provide additional academic support and make reasonable adjustments to help them, recognising that even when statutory social care intervention has ended, there can be a lasting impact on children's educational outcomes.</p> <p>Work in partnership with the local authority at a strategic and individual level, sharing data on attendance including, at an individual level, informing the pupil's social worker if there are any unexplained absences and if their name is to be deleted from the register.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Ensure that all Children's Social Care practitioners, understand the importance of good attendance for pupil's educational progress, for their welfare and their wider development – and understand their role in improving it.</p> <p>Through the work of Virtual School Heads, they should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake systemic monitoring and data sharing of the attendance of children with a social worker in their area: developing and implementing targeted cohort level interventions to improve attendance.</li> <li>• Provide advice, challenge and training to schools on how to promote and secure good attendance for children with a social worker.</li> <li>• Develop whole system approaches, with social care, to support the attendance of children in need.</li> </ul>

## Looked after and previously looked after children

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand the child's barriers to attendance – including the development of Personal Education Plans.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered.</p>	<p>Have high expectations for the cohort – with expert support and leadership provided by the designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after pupils.</p> <p>Work in partnership with the local authority Virtual School Head to develop and deliver high quality Personal Education Plans for looked-after children that support good attendance.</p> <p>Work directly with parents to develop good home-school links that support good attendance. For previously looked-after pupils this could include discussion on use of the Pupil Premium Plus funding managed by the school.</p>	<p>Designate a member of staff to have responsibility for the promotion of the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after pupils.</p> <p>Monitor and review attendance of the cohort and consider how school policies, including behaviour policies, are sensitive to their needs and support good attendance.</p>	<p>Promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children – doing everything possible to minimise disruption to education when a pupil enters care.</p> <p>(LA that looks after the child:) Appoint an expert Virtual School Head (VSH) – will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor, report on, and evaluate the education outcomes of looked after children, including their attendance, as if they attended a single school- whenever they live or are educated.</li> <li>• Ensure schools know when they have a pupil looked after by the authority on their role and that information is shared with the school on issues that may impact on their attendance.</li> <li>• Ensure that all looked-after pupils have high quality, up to date, effective Personal Education Plans developed in partnership with schools, social workers and carers – including, where necessary, clear interventions and use of pupil premium plus funding to support good attendance.</li> <li>• Provide expert advice and information on the education of previously looked-after pupils to schools and parents – including their attendance.</li> </ul>



## Monitoring

Parents:	Schools:	Academy trustees and governing bodies:	Local authorities:
<p>Schools regularly update parents on their child's attendance.</p> <p>(If parents feel the school and/or local authority have not delivered what they are expected to they should discuss the case with the school and/or local authority's attendance support team.)</p>	<p>The school's Senior Attendance Champion will ensure all school based staff complete their attendance responsibilities in line with the school's policies and procedures.</p> <p>The governing board or academy trust will hold the headteacher or executive leadership to account for their delegated responsibilities and for compliance with regulatory and statutory requirements. They will review progress and provide challenge when required. The board will help school leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most and ensure that school staff receive adequate training on attendance.</p> <p>Ofsted will expect schools to do all they reasonably can to achieve the highest possible attendance as part of the behaviour and attitudes judgement. This includes, where attendance is not consistently at or above what could reasonably be expected, that schools have a strong understanding of the causes of absence (particularly for persistent and severe absence) and a clear strategy in place that takes account of those causes to improve attendance for all pupils.</p> <p>Ultimately, in cases where a school has not met expectations or statutory duties the Secretary of State can consider a complaint.</p>	<p>DfE Regions Group considers multi academy trusts' efforts on attendance as part of decision making.</p> <p>Ofsted considers governing bodies' efforts as part of inspections.</p>	<p>DfE Regions Group monitors local authority efforts as part of regular interaction.</p> <p>Ofsted may consider the local area partnership's approach to improving attendance of children and young people with SEND as part of the SEND Area Inspection, and the local authority's approach to improving attendance for children with a social worker through inspecting local authority children's services.</p> <p>Ultimately, in cases where a local authority has not met expectations or statutory duties the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman or the Secretary of State can consider a complaint.</p>



## Appendix E

### ESSEX CODE OF CONDUCT: PENALTY NOTICES FOR PARENTS OF TRUANTS AND PARENTS OF PUPILS EXCLUDED FROM SCHOOL ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR ACT 2003 SECTION 23



### Helping parents to understand the changes to fines for term time holidays

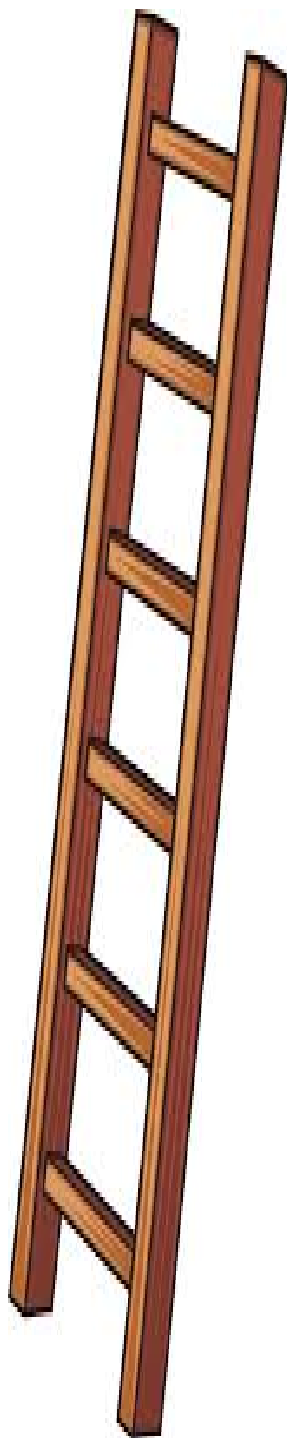
With the introduction of the new National Framework for Penalty Notices, the following changes will come into force for Penalty Notice Fines issued for unauthorised holidays recorded by schools after 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024.

<p><b>Who may be fined?</b></p> <p>Penalty Notice Fines are issued to each parent who allows their child to be absent from school.</p> <p><u>For example:</u> 3 siblings absent for term time leave, would result in each parent who allowed the holiday receiving 3 separate fines.</p>	<p><b>National Threshold</b></p> <p>There will be a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England of 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period.</p> <p>For example: a 5 day holiday would meet the national threshold.</p> <p>The 10-school week period can span different terms or school years.</p>
<p><b>First Offence</b></p> <p>The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for an unauthorised term time holiday the fine amount will be:</p> <p>£80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.</p> <p>Increasing to £160 if paid between days 22-28.</p>	<p><b>Second Offence (within 3 years)</b></p> <p>The Second time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence the amount will be:</p> <p>£160 per parent (who allowed the holiday), per child, payable within 28 days.</p>
<p><b>Third Offence and Any Further Offences (within 3 years)</b></p> <p>The third time an offence is committed a Penalty Notice will not be issued and local authorities will need to consider other available measures to address the absence concerns. This may mean that cases are presented before a Magistrate's Court. Prosecution can result in criminal records and fines of up to £2,500.</p> <p>Cases found guilty in the Magistrates' Court can show on the parent's future DBS certificate due to 'failure to safeguard a child's education'.</p>	



## Appendix F - Attendance Reward Ladder

<b>Thomas Lord Audley School</b> <b>Attendance Reward Ladder</b>	
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Reward Strategy	Description
TLA credits are rewarded for daily attendance	Attendance helps support students accessing the required credits for their TLA Bronze, Silver and Gold awards.
TLA Charter award	Attendance is a leading contributor to students accessing their TLA Charter award.
Weekly 100% attendance emails and attendance lottery	Students with 100% weekly attendance receive a weekly congratulations email and are entered in a draw for each year group where they can win a queue jump pass for them and a friend for a week.
Weekly Tutor competition	The best tutor group attendance is celebrated and collects a certificate in their Year group assemblies. Each half term the tutor group with the highest attendance wins a prize.
Celebration assemblies	100% attendance for each individual term 100% cumulative attendance certificates for each term and the academic year.
Attendance reward event	Students with 100% for the term have access to the end of term event. This has included movie events and bouncy castles previously. Student voice is used to lead the reward event.
Fresh Start initiative	This is initiated in January for all students. Each Term we reset student's attendance data for the purposes of rewards, allowing all students to access termly rewards and to have a fresh start.
Attendance Leagues	Attendance leagues are run by the Form Tutor and Assistance Head of Year with targeted groups. This is based upon the most improved attendance over a half term period.

## Appendix G - Aquinas School Attendance Provisions

Aquinas is an independent organisation that works with the Sigma Trust and other schools across Essex, Southend and Suffolk. Aquinas' role is to support the school's pastoral and safeguarding teams, specifically by identifying and attempting to resolve any barriers to their regular attendance at school through supportive measures.

Every Aquinas Team Member is Community Safety Accredited (CSAS) by Essex Police, is child protection level 3 trained and is a member of the National Association of Social Workers in Education (NASWE).

The Academy will share certain personal information with Aquinas for the following reasons:

1. Educational Responsibilities: Schools have a legal obligation to ensure regular student attendance as part of providing a suitable education. This is supported by various laws and regulations, such as the Education Act 1996, which mandates schools to monitor and report student attendance.
2. Safeguarding and Welfare: Ensuring students are attending school regularly is a critical part of safeguarding their welfare. Schools must be aware of students' attendance patterns to identify any potential issues that could affect their education or wellbeing

[Sigma Trust Privacy Notice .pdf](#) and <https://www.aquinasprovisions.com/privacy.html>

