Kernow Learning

Attendance Policy 2026/27

V1

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School or Trust Policy	School

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Kernow Learning

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Our Attendance Policy seeks to respond to the research-based recommendations on how to secure strong attendance – these include:

- Ensuring communication with parents offers support and does not build barriers to the trusted relationships we build with families. Informal methods of communication will always be favoured over formal letters
- Providing intensive, nuanced support to families at the earliest opportunity for whom attendance is a significant issue.
- Joined up working and signposting to appropriate agencies to ensure those best placed to offer support are doing so.
- Improve the accuracy of school-level attendance monitoring systems so that information shared with parents is accurate.
- Ensuring the early identification of any SEND or mental health need and making appropriate referrals where necessary.
- Ensuring children feel they belong and that they matter to us in our schools.
- Ensuring our schools are anchors in their communities, so that the community feel able to raise any concerns with our schools.

Our Attendance Policy details the rationale, aims and practice in all Kernow Learning Schools to ensure we work in partnership with families so that every child receives their full entitlement to education.

Our school leaders implement this policy through our Trust ***Operational guidance document 'Securing Strong Attendance'***

1. Policy Statement

1.1. It is a shared endeavour across Kernow Learning that pupils should enjoy learning, experience success and realise their full potential. Our Attendance Policy reflects this and recognises that regular attendance has a positive effect on the motivation and attainment of pupils.

1.2. All schools strive to consistently deliver excellent educational experiences for pupils, improving their life chances and serving the communities of which we are a member.

2. Reference to other relevant policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with existing trust-wide and school policies including (but not limited to) the following policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy
- Behaviour Policy including the Anti-Bullying Policy
- Exclusions and Suspensions Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Allergy Policy

3. Legislation or non-statutory guidance

3.1. This policy meets the requirements of the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance including:

- The Education Act 1996 (as amended)
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended in 2010, 2011, 2013 and 2016)
- The Education (Penalty Notices (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended in 2012 and 2013)

3.2. DfE guidance

- Working together to improve school attendance 2026
- The Equality Act 2010 and schools (DfE May 2014) Equality_Act_Advice_Final.pdf (publishing.service.gov.uk)
- Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (DfE December 2015) Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Keeping children safe in education (DfE) Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- School census guidance (DfE) Complete the school census - Guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Suspension and permanent exclusion School suspensions and permanent exclusions - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Home to school travel and transport guidance (DfE July 2014) Home-to-school travel - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

4. Roles and Responsibilities

See Appendix 2 (see page [20])

5. Equalities Impact Assessment

An equality impact assessment has been undertaken for this policy in accordance with our Trust's equality, diversity and inclusion strategy and the Public Sector Equality Duty.

6. Data Protection Implications

6.1. The personal information the school uses to help manage attendance and absence is governed by the UK GDPR, Data Protection Act 2018 and Data (use and access) Act 2025. Much of this information will be sensitive, to both pupils and their parents/carers, and staff must take care to apply appropriate safeguards to ensure personal information is processed fairly and lawfully and is the minimum amount of data

necessary to achieve our aims, is accurate, and where necessary, kept up to date, is not held for longer than is necessary and remains safe and secure.

6.2. Staff must record personal information accurately, being clear whether something is an opinion, reported by someone else, or fact. It is also important to remember that pupils and parents/carers can ask to see copies of the personal information the school holds about them.

7. Aim 'Every Child in School, on time, every day, learning ready'

7.1. The school aims to meet its obligations regarding school attendance by promoting good attendance; ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled; and acting early in partnership with families to address patterns of absence.

7.2. This policy sets out the school's position on attendance and details the procedures that all parents[1]/carers should follow to report their child absent from the school.

7.3. It is vital that children develop regular attendance habits at an early stage. Therefore, the school will encourage parents/carers of Reception children who are not yet compulsory school age, to send their children to every session that is available to them. If the child is unable to attend the school for any reason, the parent/carer should inform the school of the reason on the first day of absence. If the school is concerned about a pupil's attendance for any reason, the school will contact the parent/carer to discuss the matter, in the first instance.

7.4. The school will support parents/carers to inform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory[2] school age attend regularly and will promote and support punctuality in attending at the start of the school day.

7.5. Pupils should attend the school every day, unless they are not well enough to. Children who attend regularly are more likely to feel settled in school, maintain friendships, keep up with their learning and gain the greatest benefit from their education. The school wants all pupils to enjoy school, grow up to become emotionally resilient, confident and competent adults who are able to realise their full potential. Regular attendance and punctuality are essential in the workplace and children who are used to attending school on time, and on every occasion, unless they are too unwell to attend, will be better prepared for the attendance expectations in the workplace.

7.6. In April 2017 the Supreme Court clarified the definition of regular attendance to be attendance "in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school", therefore if an absence is not authorised by the school, the pupil's attendance is deemed to be irregular.

7.7. Our school will do all it can to encourage pupils to attend. The school will make the best provision it can for any pupil who needs additional support in school or who is prevented from attending school, due to physical or mental health needs or disability. The school recognises for disabled pupils, 'reasonable adjustments' may be needed to the school environment or to policies to support good attendance. Please see DfE guidance documents Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) and Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) or ask the school for printed copies.

7.8. One of the most important factors in promoting good attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, the school strives to provide a happy and rewarding experience for all children, and to foster positive and mutually respectful relationships with parents/carers.

7.9. By promoting good attendance and punctuality the school aims to:

- Make good attendance and punctuality a priority for all those involved in the school community
- Raise pupils' awareness of the importance of good attendance and punctuality
- Provide support, advance and guidance to parents/carers, pupils and staff

[1] Education law defines parents as: all natural parents, whether they are married or not; any person who has parental responsibility for a child or young person; and any person who has care of a child or young person i.e. lives with and looks after the child.

[2] A child becomes of 'compulsory school age' on the 1st January, 1st April or 1st September following their 5th birthday and cases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of Year 11.

- Work in partnership with parents/carers and, where appropriate, the wider family and other schools of siblings

Our school does this through the implementation of our operational guidance document 'Securing Strong Attendance'

8. Effects of non-attendance or late arrivals

8.1. Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence may seriously affect their learning. The Department for Education (DfE) defines a pupil as a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year, for whatever reason.

8.2. The table below indicates how, what might seem like just a few days of absence, can result in children missing a significant number of lessons.

Attendance during the School year	Days lost in a year	Which is approximately
95%	9.5 days	2 weeks
90%	19 days	4 weeks

Lost minutes = lost learning, lost socialising, lost schooling				
5 minutes late each day is the same as missing:	**10** minutes late each day is the same as missing:	**15** minutes late each day is the same as missing:	**20** minutes late each day is the same as missing:	**30** minutes late each day is the same as missing:
3 days over the academic year	**6.5 days over the academic year**	**10 days (2 weeks) over the academic year**	**13 days over the academic year**	**19 days over the academic year**
Every minute counts!				
There are only 190 school days in the academic year				
175 non-school days for family time				
100% attendance	**190 days in education**	**No missed days**		
95% attendance	**180 days of education**	**10 missed days**		
94% attendance	**179 days of education**	**11 missed days**	**Cause for concern**	
91% attendance	**172 days of education**	**18 missed days**		
90% attendance	**171 days of education**	**19 missed days**	**Cause of serious concern Persistent absence At risk of not meeting academic potential**	

9. Safeguarding and Attendance

9.1. The school will monitor trends and patterns of absence for all pupils as part of our Trust ***operational guidance document 'Securing Strong Attendance'.*** However, it is recognised that sudden or gradual changes in a pupil's attendance may indicate additional or more extreme safeguarding issues. In line with Government guidance Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) , local procedures and the School's Safeguarding Policy, staff will investigate and report any suspected safeguarding cases to the relevant authorities. As part of the school's safeguarding duty and standard procedures, staff will inform the Local Authority and/or the Police of the details of any pupil who is absent from school when they cannot establish their whereabouts and is concerned for the pupil's welfare.

9.2. If a pupil is not attending as required, where the school deems it appropriate, staff may make home visits to see and speak to the pupil and parents/carers as part of the school's safeguarding and attendance processes. If staff are unable to see and speak to the pupil and parents/carers, they may contact the pupil's emergency contacts and/or other professionals or contacts of the family, who they reasonably expect may be able to provide the school with relevant information.

10. Contents of Attendance Register

The law states that school must take the attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. On each occasion the school must record whether each pupil is:

- Present;
- Absent;
- Attending an approved educational activity; or
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

In line with DfE guidance 2026 regarding registration timing, registers are taken at the same time for all registered pupils, both in the morning and afternoon including those on reduced or bespoke arrangements,

11. Present at School (and Lateness)

11.1. Pupils are marked present if they are in the school when the register is taken. If a pupil leaves the school premises after registration, they are still counted as present for statistical purposes.

11.2. It is the duty of the parent/carers to ensure that children attend school on time. This encourages habits of good timekeeping and lessens any possible classroom disruption and lost learning. However, it is also recognised that pupils are sometimes late due to reasons such as caring for parents/carers or siblings, or transport difficulties.

11.3. If a pupil starts arriving late to the school on a regular basis, the school will work with the pupil and family to find out why the pupil is late or whether there are any 'in-school barriers' and whether any support is needed for the pupil or family, to support the pupil to attend on time.

11.4. The Headteacher will meet with parents/carers of pupils who are frequently late, to further discuss reasons for lateness and seek solutions to enable more punctual attendance.

- Morning registration: Children can arrive at school from 08:35 and classroom doors open at 08:45 where children are welcomed in by a known adult. This is to help them to settle in the classroom ready to learn.
- Our pupils must arrive before 09:00
- Pupils arriving after 09:00 will be marked as late (L) – which still counts as present. See DfE attendance codes at Appendix 1
- If a pupil arrives after the close of registration after 09:30, they will be marked with the **unauthorised absence** code 'Late after registers close' (U) for the morning session. If a pupil arrives late after the registers close due to a valid reason, such as an unavoidable medical appointment, their absence will be marked with the appropriate authorised absence code.

11.5. Afternoon registration

- The afternoon register is taken at 13:00 for children in Reception class, 13:10 for children in KS1 and 13:15 for children in KS2. The register remains open for 15 minutes.
- If a pupil has been out of school during the morning and/or lunchtime session and arrives at school after the times set out above, they will be marked (L) – which counts as present.
- If a pupil arrives 30 minutes after the register has closed for their child's class, they will be marked with the unauthorised absence code 'Late after registers close' (U) for the afternoon session. If a pupil arrives late after the afternoon registers close due to a valid reason, such as an unavoidable medical appointment, their absence will be marked with the appropriate authorised absence code.

12. Effects of late Arrival

When a pupil arrives late to the school, they miss important events like morning routines, socialising, assembly, teacher instructions and introductions; this can seriously disadvantage pupils. However, we would rather children be late to school that not arrive at all and all children receive a warm welcome into school, whatever time they arrive.

13. Authorised Absence

13.1. 'Authorised absence' means that the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away from school or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence. The following information outlines the main circumstances where absence may be authorised by the school.

13.2. Illness

- In most cases, absences for illness which are reported by following the school's absence reporting procedures will be authorised.
- If the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness, the school will request medical evidence to support the absence – such as a prescription, appointment card, or other appropriate form of evidence. Medical evidence will however only be sought where needs are complex, long-term or frequently recurring, rather than as a blanket rule for all short-term illnesses

- If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.
- Where a pupil has a high level and/or frequency of absence, the school may require suitable evidence in order to authorise any future absence where illness has been given as the reason. If this is the case, the school will make the parent/carer/s aware of this expectation in advance.
- The reporting of absence due to illness remains the responsibility of the parent/carer. Absences due to illness which have **not** been reported to the school by the parent/carer on the first and any subsequent days of absence will not be authorised.

13.3. Pupils taken ill during the school day

If a pupil needs to be sent home due to illness, this should be by agreement with an appropriately authorised member of school staff. In such circumstances, the pupil must be collected from the school office by a parent/carer or another authorised adult (unless otherwise agreed between the school and the parent/carer and signed out in the 'signing out' book. No pupil will be allowed to leave the school site without parent/carer confirmation.

13.4. Medical/Dental Appointments

- To avoid lost learning, parents/carers should try to make appointments outside the school hours wherever possible. Where appointments during the school day are unavoidable, the pupil should only be absent for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment. It is not acceptable for a pupil to miss a whole day for an appointment, unless absolutely necessary, in which case the school will need an explanation as to why this is. The school recognises that pupils with a health condition may have a higher number of medical appointments than other pupils and it is therefore possible that at least some of these appointments may be during the school day.
- If a pupil must attend a medical appointment during the school day, they must be collected from the school office by the parent/carer or another authorised adult and singed out in the 'signing out' book. No pupil will be allowed to leave the school site without parent/carer confirmation.
- Advance notice is required for medical or dental appointments, unless it is an emergency appointment. Parents/carers should also provide the school with site or, or a copy of, the appointment card or letter.

13.5. Religious Observance

- The school acknowledges the multi-faith nature of the school community and recognises that religious festivals sometimes fall outside of school holidays or weekends.
- In accordance with the law, the school will authorise one days absence for a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent/carer belongs – this will be marked with the **R** code. In line with Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) , the school will seek from the parent/carer's religious body, about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance.
- Parents/carers should notify the school in advance that their child will be absent for religious observance, so that the school knows whether to expect the pupil into school or not.
- If a parent/carer would like their child to be absent for an additional day, around a religious observance, they should contact the school. The school will consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. If additional absence is authorised, this would be marked with the **C** code.
- The school will ensure a pupil is not penalised for absence due to days of Religious Observance, for example if using attendance rewards.

13.6. Parent travelling for Occupational Purposes

- The Education Act 1996 includes specific reference to the school attendance of children "of no fixed abode". This law is applied when a child is unable to attend school because they are travelling with their parent/carer "who is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require [the parent/carer] to travel from place to place". This is subject to certain limits, depending on the child's age and number of sessions absent.
- The DfE Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) explains that a number of different groups are covered by the generic term Traveller – Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers.

- The school will discuss requests for absence individually with parents/carers as necessary. Parents/carers should let the school know of their plans as far in advance as possible.
- To ensure continuity of education for children from the above groups, wherever possible the child should attend school elsewhere when their family is travelling for occupational purposes. In which case, the child will be dual registered at the school they are attending and at this school, which is their 'main school'.
- The **T** code, which is an authorised absence, should be used for pupils when families are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending another educational provision.
- Children from these groups whose families do not travel for occupational purposes are subject to the same rules as other children in terms of the requirement to attend school regularly.

13.7. Suspensions (previously called fixed-term exclusions)

- If the school decides to send a pupil home for a fixed period due to their behaviour, this will be recorded as a suspension. The school will follow the current School suspensions and permanent exclusions - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Any suspension must be agreed by the Headteacher.
- The school will notify the parents/carers of the suspension. If the pupil is a Child in Care, the school will notify the pupil's carer, social worker and the Local Authority. In other instances, where a pupil is open to Children's Social Care for any reason, the school will also inform the pupil's allocated social worker.
- The pupil must be collected from the school office by the parent/carer or another authorised adult and signed out in the 'signing out' book. No pupil will be allowed to leave the school site without parent/carer confirmation.

14. Absence Reporting and Response

The school will follow our Trust ***Operational guidance document 'Securing Strong Attendance'***

14.1. First Day of Absence Reporting

- Parents/carers are expected to notify the school of the reason for their child's absence on each day of absence.
- If a pupil is absent due to illness which lasts more than one day, the parent/carer should contact the school each day to provide an update, unless otherwise agreed by the school.
- If a pupil is absent due to illness or any other reason, parents/carers should notify the school of the absence as early as possible. This should be before 08:30 on the day of absence and include the specific reason ('unwell' is not sufficient).
- Parents/Carers can notify the school by phone, using the school telephone number: 01326 314070. If leaving a voice message – please include the pupil's full name, date of birth and year group/class.
- The school may contact parents/carers to discuss a pupil's absence in more detail.
- In some cases, the school may require parents/carers to report absence in a different way – if this is the case, the school will contact parents/carers to explain this requirement.

14.2. First Day of Absence Response

The school will follow our Trust ***Operational guidance document 'Securing Strong Attendance'***

- From 09:05, if no contact has been made with the school on the first day of absence, the school office will follow up the absence by contacting the parent/carers. If the parents/carers do not respond to initial contact, the school will phone the pupil's emergency contacts, in priority order. Priority will be given where there is additional support in place, or where pupils are considered more vulnerable e.g. Children in Care; children on Child in Need or Child Protection Plans; Children in kinship care; children who have previously been reported missing; and children where there are, or have been, concerns regarding attendance.
- If the school is unable to establish the pupil is absent and/or is concerned for the welfare of the pupil, staff may require a Welfare Check from the Police.

14.3. Pre-agreed Absence

- Parents/Carers are not required to contact the school on the day of an absence if the parent/carer has already formally notified the school prior to the day of absence and the absence has been agreed

in advance. For example, a planned hospital appointment or an exceptional term time leave of absence which has already been agreed by the Headteacher in writing.

14.4. Emergency Contacts

Parents/carers will be asked to supply at least two emergency contacts for each child. It is the responsibility of parents/carers to keep these contact details up to date by communicating with the school office. The school will also remind parents/carers about this through parents/carers' evenings, newsletter reminders etc.

15. Following up Unexplained Absences

The school will follow our Trust ***Operational guidance document 'Securing Strong Attendance'***

15.1. The school will follow up any absences where the parent/carer has not made contact to explain the reason. Following up on unexplained absences can take up a considerable amount of school resources, therefore, the school expects parents/carers to report all absences. If a parent/carer does not contact the school on the morning of each absence, the absence may not be authorised, unless the school is satisfied there is a good reason why the pupil is unable to attend and why the parent/carer was not able to contact the school by the required time on the day of absence.

15.2. When the school establishes the reason for the absence, it will be marked as authorised or unauthorised depending on the reason. If the school is unable to establish the reason for absence, **having followed the school's 'securing strong attendance' procedures,** the absence will be marked as unauthorised, using the **O** code. No pupil will be left on an N code for a period longer than 5 working days.

15.3. If a pupil is not attending and the school is unable to establish the reason why and/or confirm the pupil's whereabouts, the school will take appropriate action which will depend on the circumstances of each case. This could include, but is not limited to: contacting the pupil's emergency contacts, or other contacts of the family who the school reasonably expect may be able to advise of the pupil's whereabouts; contacting other professionals; contacting 'siblings' schools; home visits to the family address; making enquiries with neighbours; requesting a Welfare Check from the Police; and making referrals to Children's Social Care.

16. Rewarding Good and improved Attendance

16.1. The school will regularly review any reward systems to ensure they are not negatively impacting on individual pupils or groups of pupils.

16.2. The school recognises that rewarding good and improved attendance should be carefully considered to ensure it does not make pupils who have poor attendance, feel marginalised, worried or guilty about their low attendance rate and any impact it may have on the pupil's own learning or the learning or rewards for the class as a whole.

Generally, rewards for attendance will not be used across Kernow Learning as we recognise that concerns with attendance for our children are rarely something they themselves can control or impact.

17. Support for School Attendance

17.1. Communicating with parents/carers where attendance is a concern

When the school has concerns about the attendance of a pupil, staff will do their best to make the parents/carers aware of the concerns about their child's attendance in the most accessible way possible, communications will be provided in accessible formats and can be offered in different languages if requested.

17.2. Pupils who are reluctant to attend

- Sometimes pupils can be reluctant to attend. The school encourages parents/carers and pupils to be open and honest about the reason for the pupil's absence. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or for a parent/carer to give in to pressure to let the child stay at home. This can give the impression to the child that attendance does not matter and can make things worse. The school needs to understand the reasons why a pupil is reluctant to attend, in order to be able to support pupils and parents/carers in the best way.
- The school's aim is to work in partnership with parents and carers to remove barriers to good school attendance. Staff strive to establish good working relationships with the families of our pupils through good communication and regular meetings to address ongoing attendance concerns. If necessary, staff signpost our families to specialist support services who can work with the family and school in a multi-agency approach.

- Remote education will only be used as a last resort and as part of a reintegration plan rather than a default substitute for attendance

17.3. Child-on-child Abuse

- All pupils have an absolute right to be educated in a safe and secure environment and to be protected from others who may wish to harm, degrade or abuse them physically, verbally, and emotionally both in person and online. There is no justification whatsoever for bullying behaviour and it should not be tolerated in any form. Differences including race, religion, gender, sexual orientation and ability are absolutely repudiated as reasons for bullying.
- The school recognises that a pupil may be reluctant to attend if they are experiencing any kind of child-on-child abuse. The school constantly strives to promote a positive and inclusive culture where all pupils feel valued, have a strong sense of 'belonging' and are fully supported if things go wrong.
- The school takes all reports of child-on-child abuse extremely seriously. All incidents will be investigated, appropriate measures will be taken for all pupils involved, including working with and making referrals to external agencies where appropriate.
- The school recognises that child-on-child abuse is a rarely witnessed event, and that the most likely source of information will be through hearsay (either direct from the victim, or indirectly through witnesses or parents).
- If a parent/carer thinks their child is experiencing child-on-child abuse, or is concerned their child may be involved in child-on-child abuse in any way, they are encouraged to report this to the school as quickly as possible, so that appropriate measures can be taken.
- Please see the school's Behaviour Policy and Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy for more information on how child-on-child abuse is addressed.

17.4. Children in Care

- Foster Carers do not have parental responsibility for the children in their care, although they are responsible for ensuring their regular school attendance.
- If a Child in Care is not attending the school, or there are concerns about their attendance, the school will seek advice from the Local Authority and the child's social worker, as well as communicating with the pupil and foster carer.

17.5. Disability related Absence

- The school will ensure 'reasonable adjustments' are made for disabled pupils (defined as those with a 'physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities'). This may include changes to the physical environment, curriculum or the way information is provided, as well as providing auxiliary aids and equipment, or tailored services.
- The school recognises that some disabled pupil may need additional support to attend regularly and that, for some pupils, they may have more absence due to their disability, for example due to attending medical appointments. The school will ensure disabled pupils are not penalised for absence related to their disability and will support the pupil and family to access support from external agencies where appropriate.

17.6. Young Carers

- The school recognises that pupils who are Young Carers may have caring responsibilities that impact on their punctuality and/or attendance. Where this is the case, the school will work with the pupil and family to encourage them to access appropriate support, including direct support from Young Carers and any other support the pupil and family may need; the school will also provide support in school where appropriate.

17.7. Parents who live separately

Where appropriate, the school will involve all parents/carers to ensure each are aware of their child's attendance pattern and are able to support the child's attendance to improve. Where a child lives with different parents/carers on different days the school will take this into consideration when working with the parents/carers.

17.8. Complex Family circumstances

- The school will not usually request legal sanctions from the Local Authority in cases where poor attendance is symptomatic of complex family circumstances. In such circumstances the school will take a holistic approach to the issue and involve other agencies as necessary. The exception to this

will be where parents/carers fail to accept or engage with support offered by the school and/or other agencies or fail to implement the suggested changes. When referring for legal sanctions, the school will show that the parent/carer has been warned they are at risk of receiving a Penalty Notice or other legal sanction.

- If the school has safeguarding concerns about a pupil who is absent, staff will share information with other agencies as deemed necessary.

17.9. Formal non-attendance process
Where there are continued concerns about a pupil's attendance which are not resolved informally, parents/carers may be asked to meet with the school to discuss the matter more formally. In some cases, this may result in a formal record of support plan being produced. The school may also invite other involved professionals, where relevant. This will only ever be done as a last resort as where possible, we will work collaboratively with families to understand and improve attendance.

18. Leave of Absence – leave requests and sanctions for unauthorised absence

18.1. The law does not grant parents/carers the automatic right to take their child out of school during term time for holidays or other absence such as trips and visits.

18.2. The school will not authorise any leave of absence in term-time unless satisfied the reason for absence is exceptional. The school will consider each application individually.

18.3. Parents/carers are asked not to make plans to take their child out of school without making a request to the school first. The request should be made by the parent/carer with whom the child normally lives.

18.4. A request for planned holiday/trips/visits absence must be discussed with the Headteacher and put in writing, with good notice, at least four weeks before the absence.

18.5. Parents may be required to provide the school with additional evidence to support a leave of absence request.

18.6. The school will consider the individual facts and circumstances of the case; following consultation with other staff as required, including the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

18.7. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the school's discretion.

18.8. The absence should be for the shortest time possible – if an absence is agreed, the Headteacher will decide how many days of absence will be authorised. If the pupil is absent for more days than were authorised by the school, the remaining days absent will be recorded as unauthorised absence.

18.9. Any holidays and other absence such as trips and visits which have not been agreed by the school will be recorded as unauthorised.

18.10. Parents/carers should be aware unauthorised absence may result in a Penalty Notice or Prosecution.

18.11. If the school has any concerns about possible safeguarding risks, staff will follow the necessary protocols.

19. Unauthorised Absence

19.1. Unauthorised absence is where the school is not satisfied with the reason given for the absence, or where no reason has been provided.

19.2. Unauthorised absences may result in Legal Sanctions, usually Penalty Notices or Prosecutions.

19.3. Unauthorised absence includes (but is not limited to) absences due to:

- Reasons which have never been properly explained to the school
- Arriving at the school after the register has closed. (Although late arrival for a reason such as a medical appointment will usually be an authorised absence).
- Shopping
- Having a haircut
- Birthdays
- Waiting at home for something to be fixed, or a parcel to be delivered

- Parent/carer's or sibling's illness (unless very exceptional circumstances apply and have been agreed in writing by the school)
- Day trips
- Holidays in term time (unless exceptional circumstances are agreed in writing, in advance, by the school

19.4. Where the school has cause for concern about the reason for a pupil's absence, staff may seek additional information or evidence from parents/carers regarding the absence, and/or make a home visit to verify the reason. If the reason cannot be verified and the school has cause to believe the reason given for absence may not be genuine, parents/carers may be asked to provide satisfactory proof of the reason before the school authorises the absence. If satisfactory proof is not provided, the school may record the absence as unauthorised.

20. Penalty Notices and Prosecutions

20.1. Under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, if a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school his/her parent(s) are guilty of an offence. This applies to both resident and non-resident parents who may both be subject to legal sanctions if their child fails to attend school regularly. It also applies to others who may not be the parent but may have day to day care of the child. If an absence is not authorised by the school, the pupil's attendance is deemed to be irregular.

20.2. Penalty notices and prosecution proceedings are issued to each parent/carer with responsibility for the child and are issued to each child with unauthorised absence. For example, in the case of Penalty Notices, if two siblings have unauthorised absence, and there are two parents/carers with responsibility for the children, four Penalty Notices would be issued.

20.3. The school will refer cases of unauthorised absence that meet the threshold for a Penalty Notice to the Local Authority for legal action, unless there are reasonable grounds for not doing so. This will include unauthorised absence due to term time holiday or other trips/visits, and other types of unauthorised absence. When referring for legal sanctions, the school will show that the parent/carer has been warned they are at risk of a Penalty Notice or other legal sanction. The outcome of a referral to the Local Authority may be a Penalty Notice or Prosecution.

20.4. See DfE Statutory Guidance on School behaviour and attendance: parental responsibility measures - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) for more information.

20.5. See Education Welfare Service | Cornwall Services for Schools for more information.

20.6. Legal Sanctions for Unauthorised Absence

Sanction	Potential Outcome	When Used
Penalty Notice	The penalty is £80 (per parent/carer, per child) payable within 21 days, rising to £160 if paid between 22 and 28 days. (Failure to pay may result in prosecution). Penalty Notices cannot be paid in instalments.	For low level offences, as a tool to support improved attendance. They are an alternative to prosecution and may not be issued if prosecution is considered to be a more appropriate response to a pupil's unauthorised absence. If a pupil has an extended period or repeated periods of unauthorised absence, a prosecution may be considered instead of a Penalty Notice.
Prosecution under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996	If found guilty, parents/carers may be fined up to £1,000 and ordered to pay court costs. The court may also impose a Parenting Order.	It is for the Local Authority to determine whether a Section 444(1) or Section 444(1A) prosecution is most appropriate. First prosecutions are usually under S444(1)
Prosecution under Section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996	If found guilty, parents/carers may be fined up to £2,500 and ordered to pay court costs.	If a parent/carer is prosecuted more than once, or in extreme cases of non-attendance, the Local Authority may decide to prosecute under S444(1A).

	Other court outcomes include community sentences, such as Curfew Orders, Unpaid Work (Community Payback) or a prison sentence of up to three months. The court may also impose a Parenting Order.	A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of issue of the first. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action should be taken instead. This will often include considering prosecution, but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions.
Education Supervision Order (ESO) under Section 36 of the Children Act 1989	The order is placed on the child and a supervisor from the Local Authority is appointed by the court, to give directions to the child and its parents, with a view to securing that the child is properly educated. Parents can be prosecuted if they persistently fail to comply with a direction.	The Local Authority must consider applying for an ESO before prosecuting under S444 Education At 1996. A Local Authority may apply for an ESO instead of, or as well as, proceeding with a prosecution.

21. Mental Health, Wellbeing, Special Educational Needs and Disability

Under the Equality Act 2010, schools are required to make 'reasonable adjustments' for disabled pupils (defined as those with a 'physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities.' Some specified medical conditions, HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer are all considered as disabilities, regardless of their effect). This may include changes to the physical environment, curriculum or the way information is provided, as well as providing auxiliary aids and equipment, or tailored services. Failure to make appropriate adjustments may impact on a pupil's attendance.

Need	Action	Contact
Mental health and wellbeing	Parents/carers who have concerns about their child's mental health and wellbeing can contact the school's Safeguarding or Inclusion Team	01326 314070 falmouth@kernowlearning.co.uk
Identified special educational needs or disability (SEND)	Parents/carers are encouraged to contact the school's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENDCo) should they have any concerns about their child. Any pupils with SEND should have attendance issues considered as part of their individual support plans or Education Health Care Plans; attendance should be part of any subsequent reviews.	senco.falmouth@kernowlearning.co.uk
Unidentified SEND	Parents/carers who think their child may have unidentified special educational needs are also encouraged to contact the school's SENDCo	senco.falmouth@kernowlearning.co.uk
Urgent health concerns	Parents/carers should contact their GP or the NHS Helpline by phoning 111 for advice if they are concerned about their child's mental or physical health and wellbeing. In case of emergency parents/carers should dial 999. After seeking emergency advice and support, parents/carers should also let the school know as soon as is practicable.	Contact your GP or the NHS Helpline by phoning 111 01326 314070
Health needs impacting on attendance	If a pupil is frequently absent from the school due to particular health need(s) the school may ask to meet with parents/carers (and other professionals where appropriate) to draw up an Individual Health Care Plan to support the pupil's attendance.	01326 314070

	Also see DfE guidance Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)	

22. Phased Return to Full-Time Education

22.1. In line with the expectations of the Department for Education, all pupils of compulsory age are entitled to a full-time education, suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and any special educational needs or disabilities that they may have.

22.2. In very exceptional circumstances there may be a need for a temporary reduced timetable to meet a pupil's individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full-time education and a reduced timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package.

22.3. If, for any reason, the school is unable to provide a pupil with a full-time education due to the pupil's needs, staff will work with the pupil, parents/carers and other agencies where appropriate, to come to an arrangement that is deemed to be in the best interests of the child wherever possible.

22.4. Any reduced timetable should be in place for the shortest amount of time possible, it must not be treated as a long-term solution. It should be reviewed at least every two weeks, whilst arrangements are made to support the pupil's return to full-time education at the school, or where appropriate, at alternative provision.

22.5. A decision to place a pupil on a reduced timetable should be approved by the Headteacher and must be agreed by the parents/carers. The SENDCo and DSL, as well as any other relevant members of staff, should also be aware of such arrangements and involved with decision making where appropriate. Discussions and agreements should be clearly documented in writing and relevant information should be recorded in Cpoms. The school will be mindful of any additional safeguarding risks to the pupil when they are not timetabled to attend school and will therefore consider carefully whether a reduced timetable is an appropriate measure. Reduced timetables are never used to manage a child's behaviour.

22.6. If the pupil's reduced timetable means the pupil is expected to arrive at the school after the register closes in the morning and/or be absent for the school's afternoon registration period, any such am and/or pm registrations must be recorded with the **C2** code 'Leave of absence authorised by the school'.

23. Approved Educational Activity / Alternative Provision

23.1. When pupils are attending educational activities off the school site, that have been approved by the school, the register will be marked to show this is the case.

23.2. Approved Sporting Activity

If a pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity off the school site, which is of an educational nature, approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the Headteacher, such activity should be marked using the **P** code 'Approved Sporting Activity'.

23.3. Alternative Education Provision

- Attendance staff in the school will be notified of Alternative Provision (AP) arrangements and updated about any changes in arrangements, so they can ensure the school's registers are marked accordingly. Attendance staff and other relevant colleagues will communicate closely with the AP setting.
- The school will follow up with pupils and parents/carers on any attendance concerns, in conjunction with the AP.
- If a pupil is only being offered part-time AP, the school will ensure the pupil is offered additional educational provision, which together with the AP equates to a full timetable, unless there are exceptional reasons why not. Pupils will only be offered part-time educational provision for the shortest time possible, and this will be regularly reviewed with the pupil and parents/carers with the aim of the pupil accessible fulltime education as quickly as possible.

23.4. Alternative Education Provision: Dual Registration and Use of the **D** code

- If a pupil from the school is attending another state-funded DfE registered school, Pupil Referral Unit or Alterative Provision School, for part or all of their education, the pupil will be dual registered at this school (Dual – Main) and the other setting (Dual – Subsidiary).

- If a pupil is attending an AP which is not a state-funded DfE registered school, Pupil Referral Unit, or Alternative Provision School, the pupil cannot be dual-registered; examples are Impact Mentoring and Education. See 'Off-site educational activity (**B** or **K** code) section, for more information.
- When a pupil from the school is dual registered with another setting, the school will ensure the pupil and parents/carers are clear about the pupil's timetable; i.e. when the pupil is expected to attend the school or the other setting, and what the arrangements are for register marking, including the use of the D code. The school will also be clear which setting will be following up any absences. Where pupils are dual-registered, the AP should provide the school with attendance updates weekly, unless otherwise agreed with the alternative setting. However, if attendance and/or safeguarding concerns are identified at any point, the AP is expected to raise these with the school immediately and a course of action will be agreed in writing between the school and the AP.
- A dual registered pupil must not be removed from either setting's roll without the agreement of the other setting.

23.5. Alternative Education Provision: Off-site educational activity (B code)

- If a pupil is attending an AP setting which is not another school, Pupil Referral Unit or Alternative Provision School, for part or all of their education, the school will mark the sessions which the pupil attends at the alterative setting as code B (off-site educational activity). The school will mark any sessions attended at the school with the relevant present code, and any absences with the relevant absent code. Such AP's should provide attendance updates daily, unless otherwise agreed, so the school can mark the register accordingly.
- Some AP settings are registered as Independent Schools and, as such, are able to offer full-time provision where required. However, some AP settings are not registered schools and are therefore only legally allowed to offer part-time education to pupils.
- Unless otherwise agreed with the AP, the AP is expected to notify the school by 9.30am on the morning of any individual pupil absences, to ensure the school is made aware of any attendance concerns as soon as possible and takes follow up action as necessary.
- If attendance and/or safeguarding concerns are identified at any point, the AP is expected to raise these with the school immediately and a course of action will be agreed in writing between the school and the AP.

23.6. Managed Moves

- Any pupil on a Managed Move (MM) must be dual registered at their main school (the 'sending school') and their subsidiary school (the 'receiving school').
- If a pupil from this school is attending another school on a MM, the pupil will be dual registered at the other school. This school will mark the pupil with the registration code D during the time they are expected to attend the other school. The school the pupil is attending for the MM period (the receiving school) will mark the pupil present or absent, according to their attendance pattern. The receiving school will be expected to follow up any pupil absences in the same way they would for their other pupils, in conjunction with this school where appropriate. They will also communicate the pupil's attendance with this school on a regular basis, in line with the MM review process.
- If a pupil from another school is attending this school on a MM, the pupil will be dual registered at this school. This school will mark the pupil present or absent, according to their attendance pattern, whilst the sending school will mark them with the registration code D. This school will follow up any absences in the same way as for all other school pupils, in conjunction with the other school where appropriate. This school will also communicate the pupil's attendance to the sending school on a regular basis, in line with the MM review process.
- At the end of the agreed MM period (or sooner in some circumstances) a decision will be made as to whether the MM will be made permanent or not. At this stage the pupil will either: (a) go permanently on the roll of the receiving (subsidiary) school – single registration (in which case the pupil will come off roll at the 'main' school); or (b) be expected to return to the main school (in which case the pupil will come off roll at the 'subsidiary' school).
- A Dual Registered pupil must not be removed from either school's roll without the agreement of the other school.

24. Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances (as set out in DfE guidance)

In accordance with the Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) the school will record pupils as Code Y 'Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances' in the following circumstances (such circumstances are not recorded as absences):

- The school site, or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause

- The transport provided by the school, or the Local Authority, is not available and the pupil's home is not within statutory walking distance.
- A local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the pupil from attending the school.
- The pupil is in custody, but still on the school's roll. (If the school has evidence that the pupil is attending educational activities, those sessions can be as 'present at approved educational activity').

25. Children Missing Education (CME) and removing pupils from roll

25.1. If the school has reason to believe the pupil may no longer be living at the address held on record and staff are unable to confirm the whereabouts of the pupil through the school's usual processes, staff will make Pupil Tracking referrals as appropriate, referring to our Trust ***Operational guidance document 'Securing Strong Attendance'***

25.2. If a parent/carer notifies the school in writing that the pupil and family are moving out of the area and the pupil no longer requires a place, the school will remove the pupil from roll from the date of moving and will, at the same time, notify the Local Authority using the CME referral form.

25.3. The school will add and delete pupils from roll in line with the law and will complete the Local Authority CME referrals and 'grounds for deletion' notification forms in accordance with the Local Authority guidance.

25.4. The school will seek advice from the CME team if unsure about any individual cases.

25.5. When removing a pupil from roll due to Elective Home Education (EHE) or Permanent Exclusion, the school will also follow relevant LA EHE and Exclusion notification processes.

25.6. If a pupil on roll lives in a different Local Authority area, the school will follow the other LA's processes where appropriate.

26. Reporting to Parents/Carers

The school will include each pupil's attendance information in termly to parents through parent evenings and provide parents/carers with a copy of their attendance summary for the year in Term 6 (end of the Summer Term). If parents wish to see a copy of their child's attendance summary at any other time during the year, they can ask for a printed copy at the school office.

Where a pupil's attendance drops below 95%, the school will contact parents/carers to highlight this, unless there is good reason not to.

27. Recording Information on Attendance and Reasons for Absence

27.1. All absences are recorded in the school's attendance register. Information about the reason for the absence, how it was reported and by whom, and any additional information pertinent to the absence may also be recorded.

Appendix 1: Department for Education (DfE) Attendance Codes

Unauthorised		Authorised	
G	Holiday not granted	C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.
N	Reason not yet established	C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
U	Arrived in school after registration closed. DfE guidance states that registers should only be open for half an hour from the beginning of the school day.	C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances: Where no reason for absence is established or the school is not satisfied that the reason given is one that would be recorded using one of the codes statistically classified as authorised.	J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
		H	Holiday
		I	Illness (NOT medical or dental appointments)
		M	Medical / dental appointment
		S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination
		T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes
		E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made

Arriving after school has started:

Between 9am and 9.30am = L

After 9.30am = U

Attendance Not Required: Dual Registered Pupils (Not counted as a possible session)		Attendance Not Required (Not counted as a possible session)	
D	Dual Registration (attending other establishment where there is a dual enrolment) e.g.: • APA or Community Hospital Education Service (CHES) • Managed Move (attending another school for a trial period (e.g. 6 weeks). • Nursery Class which is part of a State Maintained school.	Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
W	Attending work experience	Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
B	Attending any other approved educational activity.	Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
		Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
		Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause

X	Non-compulsory school age absence
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register
#	School closed to pupils & staff e.g. for school holidays and INSET days

Appendix 2: Roles and Responsibilities

Kernow Learning Board of Trustees
The Board of Trustees is responsible for approving local adaptations to our Trust template Policy and monitoring its implementation and effectiveness. The Board of Trustees and LGB are responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school at least 6 times a year. It also holds the Headteacher to account for the implementation of the Attendance Policy.

The Headteacher
The Headteacher is the lead on attendance for each school and is responsible for ensuring that the school is supportive, warm, welcoming, nurturing and an exciting place to be for all children. They are also responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to the LGB.

The Headteacher supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and meets with families to discuss attendance where appropriate.

The Headteacher makes requests for penalty notices and requests for other legal action, to the Local Authority where necessary.

The Senior Leadership Team
The Senior Leadership Team also support other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and implementing the attendance policy, meeting with families to discuss attendance where appropriate.

The Senior Leadership Team have a deep and clear understanding of attendance by group, such as gender, pupils entitled to Free School Meals, Pupil Premium pupils, pupils with SEND, Children in Care and attendance by Ethnicity and Language (English/EAL).

The Senior Leadership Team privileges and acts to improve the attendance of pupils that may fall into smaller groups, or the attendance of individual pupils with protected characteristics.

Attendance Team
The Attendance Team consists of the Headteacher, wider Safeguarding team and Office staff. They will:

- Ensure staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities in relation to attendance and have the required knowledge and skills to fulfil them.
- Look at potential links between attendance and safeguarding. Depending on the level of concern, the Attendance Team will involve class teachers and other relevant staff and co-ordinate meetings with parents/carers. Where considered necessary a formal action plan will be produced.
- Is the point of contact for parents/carer who have their own concerns about their child's attendance.
- Monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil level.
- Tracks pupils' attendance & update Edgen
- Devises and implements action-plans for pupils with low attendance
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents/carers to discuss attendance issues in a timely manner
- Refers to and liaises with outside agencies where appropriate
- Take forward penalty notices and requests for other legal action to the Local Authority
- Removes pupils that no longer attend the school from the school roll in line with legislation and guidance and report off roll students to the Local Authority
- Co-ordinates requests for Term-time Leave of Absence.
- Makes Children Missing Education referrals to the Local Authority where appropriate (this includes liaison with the DSL and Safeguarding Team).

Office Staff
School office staff are expected to take calls from parents/carers about absence and record the information on Edgen. They are the first line of communication regarding absences and will pass on any concerns to the Attendance Team and/or Safeguarding Team as appropriate.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
The DSL provides safeguarding support and advice to attendance colleagues as appropriate, taking safeguarding action where necessary. The DSL meets with the School Attendance Officer/Team weekly to review the attendance of the pupils on the school's Vulnerable List and agrees any action needed.

Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO)
The SENCO is kept up-to-date by the Attendance Team to review the attendance of the pupils on the school's Vulnerable List/SEND Register and agrees any action needed.

Class Teachers

- Class Teachers are responsible for ensuring that the classroom is supportive, warm, welcoming, nurturing and an exciting place to be for all children.
- Class teachers are responsible for recording their pupils' attendance twice daily, using the correct codes, and submitting this information via electronic registers.
- Where there are attendance concerns, either raised by the class teachers themselves or by the Attendance Team, they will 'check-in' with the pupil to find out about any reasons for absence as part of their responsibilities under the school's Safeguarding Policy.
- Class teachers may also be asked to meet with parents/carers whose child has a falling level of attendance and is flagged as a concern by the Attendance Team.