

Hambleton & Richmondshire Pupil Referral Service



Sunbeck PRS Attendance Policy

Named personnel with designated responsibility for this policy:

Academic Year	Designated Senior Person	Nominated MC Member (if applicable)	Chair of Management Committee
2023-2024	Julie Price		Tom Kelly
2024-2025	Julie Price		Tom Kelly

Policy Review Dates:

Review Date	Changes Made	By Whom	Date Shared With Staff
20/12/2023	Person responsible, part time timetables	Julie Price	
5/11/2024	Updated with changes from Working together to improve attendance document, inc penalty changes.	Julie Price	

Date Ratified by Management Committee	Review Date
November 2024	November 2025

Policy Source:	
North Yorkshire Council <input type="checkbox"/> The Key <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Written by The Sunbeck Centre <input type="checkbox"/>	Veritau <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please state) <input type="checkbox"/> Click or tap here to enter text.

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1. Aims

We recognise that many of our students come to us with a history of poor school attendance. We aim to improve this and secure more positive outcomes for all by taking a holistic approach to attendance and encourage our students to take advantage of the educational opportunities offered to them. Every staff member understands that attendance is their responsibility.

We aim to:

- To improve overall attendance of our students
- To promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence.
- To make attendance a priority for all those associated with the school, including parents, students, teachers and the management committee.

To achieve these aims for our students we are committed to:

- Providing a welcoming, stimulating and safe learning environment.
- Offering a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum.
- Reward those with excellent attendance and those with the greatest improvement.
- Offering support, guidance and training for all those who teach and work with our young people.
- Build strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- › Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- › Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- › Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- › [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- › [The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- › [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment](#)

It also refers to:

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

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The Management Committee

The Management Committee is responsible for:

- monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis.
- holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data

The link member on the Management Committee for Attendance is:

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to Management Committee
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising the attendance lead to be able to do so.
- Working with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers.
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs.

3.3 The attendance lead

The school attendance lead is responsible for:

- Monitors attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- Reports concerns about attendance to the headteacher
- Hosting a fortnightly attendance meeting to review individual pupils' attendance data and support tutors in the development of attendance action plans.
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed.
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers.
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes.
- Works with LA attendance and enforcement officer to tackle persistent absence
- Advises the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The school attendance lead: Julie Price and be contacted via jprice@hrprs.n-yorks.sch.uk

3.4 Key Tutors/Teachers

Key Tutors are responsible for:

- monitoring individual attendance for their tutees
- Pursue absences with parents/carers, notify admin of the reason for absence
- Discuss attendance concerns with students, parents/carers and other agencies.
- Inform parents/carers and other involved agencies via text or email with the fortnightly attendance figures.
- Complete and keep up to date an attendance action plan for all tutees whose attendance falls below 90%
- Mentor pupils to overcome barriers to achieving good attendance
- Inform admin staff of attendance to Teams lessons or sessions off site, including the TMP.
- Confirm attendance at work experience, inform the admin staff. If absent, investigate and inform admin of the reason for absence.

3.5 School Admin staff

School admin staff will:

- Complete attendance records for am and pm sessions.
- Take calls and texts from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis.
- Make initial contact with parents/carers re absence.
- Liaise with transport companies for non-attendance
- Contact alternative provisions to confirm attendance.
- Populate the attendance tracker with attendance figures from SIMs in advance of the fortnightly attendance meeting.

3.6 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every timetabled session.

- Call/text the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the first day of absence and each subsequent day of absence and advise when they are expected to return.
- Provide the school with at least 2 emergency contact number for their child.
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day.
- Keep to any attendance contracts they make with the school or local authority.

3.7 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend every timetabled session on time.
- Attend all timetabled lessons on time.

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

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

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

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

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not.
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity.
- The nature of the circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

The school day starts at 08:45 and ends at 14:15.

Pupils must arrive in school by 08:45 on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 08:45 and will be kept open until 09:30. The register for the second session will be taken at 12:45 and will be kept open until 13:15.

NB. Some pupils arriving by taxi are unable to arrive during these specific times. This is due to taxi contracts beyond our control and in such circumstances, attendance will be recorded accordingly.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 09:00 or as soon as practically possible (see also section 7). This needs to be via a phone call to main reception or the school mobile number.

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

Where the absence is longer than 5 days, or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

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

4.3 Planned absence

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

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

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code
- As most pupils travel from outside the local area the school acknowledges difficulties and issues with transport delays. In such circumstances, a pupil will not be detrimentally affected on their attendance record. However, if the delay is caused by the pupil not being ready for the taxi it will be recorded as above.

4.5 Following up absence

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

- Follow up on their absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason, by a phone call by either their key tutor or admin staff on the first day of absence and then at regular intervals afterwards.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not.
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session.
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer or to contact Police for a welfare visit.

4.6 Reporting to parents

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

- Parents/carers will receive a fortnightly update via either email or text of the current attendance figures.
- Parents/carers receive a termly report including data on attendance.
- Key tutors will contact parents/carers when attendance issue arise, prior to receiving the termly report. This will include the discussion of an action plan.
- Parents/carers will be issue an early intervention letter if their child's attends drops below 90%.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

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

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

These circumstances are:

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

A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion including the length of time the pupil is authorised absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as circumstances linked to the welfare of the pupil.

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

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

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

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

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
- Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority
- Attending work experience
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

5.2 Legal sanctions

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

Penalty notices

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

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

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

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks)
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Notices to improve

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

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

They will include:

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

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

At The Sunbeck Centre we understand that many of our students arrive with a history of poor attendance. We support our students and parents/carers by:

- Discussing with parents/carers any previous issues at the induction meeting, for example, those that have been accessing alternative provisions and, on reduced timetables.
- Outlining our expectations and looking for ways to support attendance.
- Regular focus on attendance in form time by key tutors, including addressing the occasional absences for minor illness.

We celebrate good attendance by:

- Weekly - students with 100% attendance for the week and appropriate engagement in lessons earn a Dominos pizza on Pizza Friday.
- Half termly – a box of chocolates for those students with 100% attendance or those with the greatest improvement, along with appropriate engagement in lessons.
- Half termly certificates for 100% attendance and those who have the greatest improvement.

7. Attendance monitoring

The school monitors and analyses attendance and absence data to identify pupils that require support with their attendance.

7.1 Monitoring attendance

Fortnightly staff meetings are held to review attendance data. Discussions may include, but not limited to:

- Attendance action plans for those whose attendance has dropped below 92%.
- Potential referrals to external agencies for additional support.
- Reviewing timetabled provision and identifying any trends.
- Review meetings with parents/carers.
- Issuing early intervention letters.
- Emailing/texting all parents/carers with their child's most recent attendance figures.
- The attendance lead at our school monitors pupil absence on a fortnightly basis.

The school's attendance lead will report to the management committee on a termly basis with the headline figures. Pupils who fall below the persistent absence (10%) or severe absence (50%) thresholds will be identified and the case outline provided.

7.2 Analysing attendance

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the Management Committee.

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils that need additional support with their attendance.
- Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence.

7.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Email/text parents/carers on a fortnightly basis to inform current attendance figures.
- Provide termly reports which include attendance figures.
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies.

7.4 Reducing persistent absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

- Attendance action plans written for those pupils whose attendance is at risk of persistent absence, when attendance figures fall below 90% and discussed regularly with pupil and parent/carer.
- Early intervention letter sent home when attendance falls below 90%.
- Meeting with parent or carer if issues persist
- Initial warning letter sent home when attendance falls below 90% and will be closely monitored.
- If attendance drops below 50% then a student is said to have severe absence and all relevant services will be involved to produce a specific attendance support plan (including looking at consideration for an EHCP) or a whole family plan across agencies to help overcome the barriers to being in school.

Follow the procedures outlined in the North Yorkshire Attendance Policy – see Appendix 2

8. Part time timetable

Many of our pupils arrive after being on historic part time timetables. On occasion we may continue with a part time timetable to allow for integration on to a full time offer.

Part time timetables are sometimes necessary to enable pupils to access education. **This is only ever a temporary solution** and these timetables are reviewed on a three-weekly basis by the tutor, attendance lead and Senior Leaders. This is also in conjunction with other providers such as connected agencies as well as parents.

Part time timetables are considered only to assist the pupil to engage in their education following a period of time absent from school, arriving at Sunbeck on a part time timetable or other issues, for example anxiety, cognition load and SEMH needs. This is also a temporary solution and will again be reviewed on a three-weekly basis.

If a pupil attends part of the day, they will be expected to complete work from home. It may be paper-based, online or on TEAMS. This will be arranged with parents/carers at the attendance meeting or induction and work will then be provided on a weekly basis. Pupils will be expected to return the work in order for it to be marked and assessed. If a pupil has no access to a laptop one may be provided. If a part time pupil does not attend school and does not access Teams, the Attendance Lead will follow the same PACE caution process and tutors will follow the same safeguarding checks as for the full-time learners. (Appendix 2)

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum 2 years by the Attendance Lead. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full Management Committee.

10. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

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

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

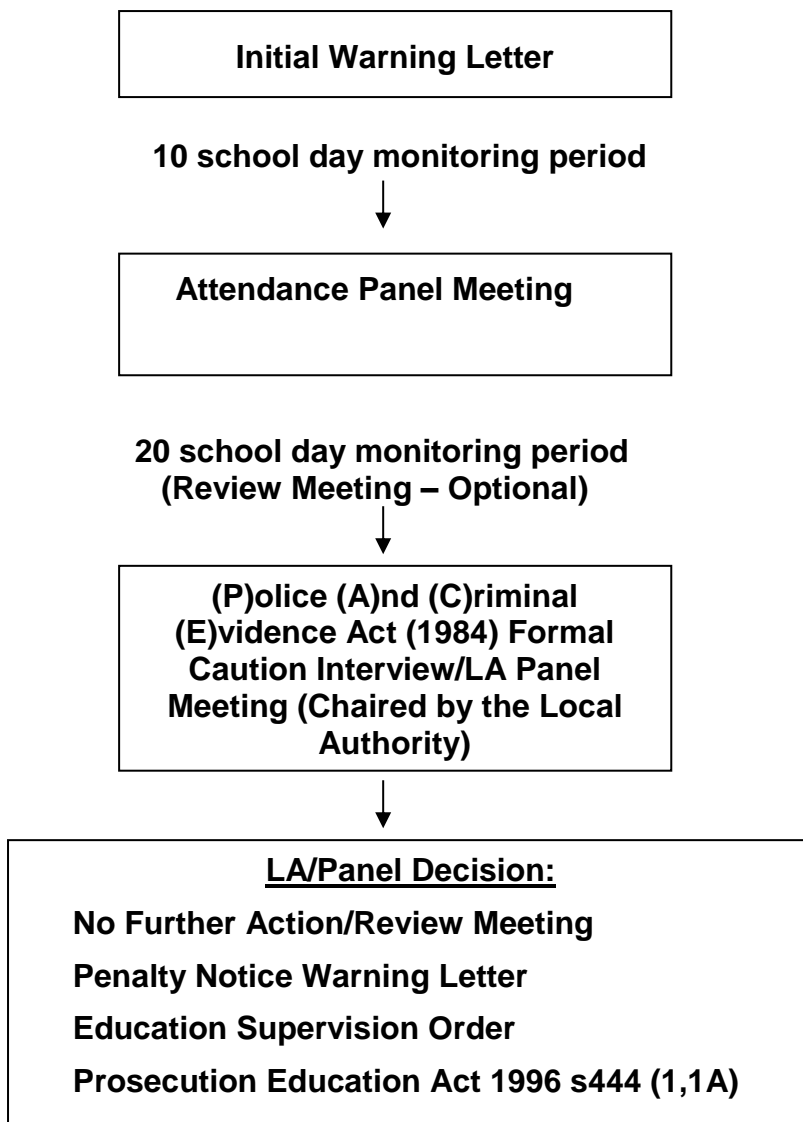
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling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

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

Appendix 2:

Flow Chart of School/LA Attendance Procedure – Time restricted

The following procedure will be undertaken by the school should there be no significant improvement in your child's attendance and unauthorised absence continues to be recorded.



If at any stage in the above procedure your child's attendance improves significantly the school will not proceed to the following stage.

However, your child's attendance will continue to be monitored by the school and should there at any time in the future become further concerns the above procedure will be continued onto the next stage or recommenced from the first stage depending on the severity of the situation.