



Reach For The Stars

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Our Motto

Reach For The Stars

Our Vision Statement

Our vision is to develop an inclusive school, which promotes and achieves excellence, and continues to nurture the values, confidence and skills of pupils, staff and the community, in order to meet the emerging opportunities of the 21st century.

Our vision and values support **Articles 2, 12, 15, 19, 24, 27, 28, 29, 31** of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child.

Our Rights

- ★ **Article 19:** We have the right to be safe.
- ★ **Article 28:** We have the right to quality education.
- ★ **Article 12:** We have the right to give our opinion and listen to others.
- ★ **Article 15/31:** We have the right to join in and be part of a team.
- ★ **Article 29:** We have the right to develop our personalities, talents and abilities.

Our Values



Striving Teamwork All Included Responsibility Success



★ **Striving**

Our aim is that we are a school that:

- **uses our Growth Mind-set (learning from mistakes and always willing to have a go)**
- **never gives up and always find ways of improving**
- **enjoys challenges and aims high**

★ **Teamwork**

Our aim is that we are a school that:

- **encourages and supports each other to be the best we can be**
- **learns from each other**
- **listens to and respects each other's ideas**

★ **All Included**

Our aim is that we are a school that:

- **has high expectations of everyone**
- **encourages everyone to take an active part in learning and life of our school**
- **nurtures and celebrates what makes each and every one of us unique**

★ **Responsibility**

Our aim is that we are a school that:

- **takes ownership of the choices we make**
- **takes ownership/charge of our own learning**
- **looks after each other and our school**

★ **Success**

Our aim is that we are a school that:

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- provides an education that encompasses academic, creative, social, emotional, physical and cultural development.
- celebrates our efforts and achievements

Equal Opportunities and the Single Equality Scheme

We believe that all those who work in Osmani - children and adults - have the right to be treated fairly and with respect by everyone connected with the school.

We aim for Osmani to be a safe, supportive place, where all children and adults feel valued as individuals, whatever their ability, age, disability, gender identity, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The school aims to foster the social and personal skills of cooperation, sharing and mutual respect.

This policy supports the school in addressing Article/s 28, 'Every child has a right to an education,' of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Introduction

This policy has been agreed by the Governors and the Headteacher of Osmani School. It represents our commitment to striving for **97% attendance and 100% punctuality**. It sets out the principles, procedures and practice the school will undertake. Strategies, sanctions and possible legal consequences of poor Attendance and Punctuality are also detailed, as well as rewards for, and benefits of good attendance. This policy will be reviewed, amended as necessary and published in accordance with current legislation and guidance.

Aims:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- To safeguard the welfare, health, social and emotional development of children
- To ensure that all those responsible for children's education, including parents, carers, staff and governors, understand and accept their responsibilities in relation to attendance.
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school
- To improve the life chances of Tower Hamlets children and young people and prepare them to be fully contributing citizens when they reach adulthood by maximising the potential of every individual pupil
- Promoting and supporting good punctuality

There is a link below to the Tower Hamlets website where further information can be found:

<https://www.ths4s.co.uk/Page/4351>

Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE) August 2024, and the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set 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](#)

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- [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 2024 Set out the new National Framework for issuing penalty notices and reflect changes to the law.

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2024/210>

This policy also refers to:

[School census guidance](#)

[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)

[Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

‘The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school’ *Working together to improve school attendance August 2024*

Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school. *Working together to improve school attendance August 2024*

The importance of school attendance

School attendance is the foundation for positive outcomes for all children including their attainment, wellbeing and wider life chances. For the most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided.

Working together to improve school attendance August 2024 states that: ‘The pupils with the highest attainment at the end of Key Stage Two and Key Stage Four have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment.’ This evidence supports the fact that attending school regularly is essential for the best achievement and life-chances.

School also provides a protective factor for children where they feel safe to voice any safeguarding concerns about things that have happened outside of school. These positive and trusting relationships between children and school adults can only be formed through regular school attendance.

Promoting positive relationships between school and home

Schools and parents should work in partnership to ensure that all children have access to a high-quality education. This cannot be achieved without the following:

- The school will treat all parents and pupils with dignity and listen to their views.
- All members of staff will foster positive relationships with parents so that they feel welcomed and supported.
- Barriers to school attendance should be removed through a strong and supportive partnership between schools, partners such as the Attendance and Welfare Advisor (AWA) and parents
- Where barriers are outside of the school’s control, all partners should work together to support pupils and parents to access any support they may need voluntarily and offer Early Help. This includes meeting with parents when children are at risk of persistent absence to prevent this from escalating by working out solutions together.

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- Where voluntary support has not been effective, schools should work with the local authority to put a formal support plan in place.

Roles and responsibilities

All members of staff in school must take responsibility for attendance. School should be a calm, orderly, safe and supportive environment. Effective use of school and external resources to support curriculum, bullying, behaviour, special educational needs, pastoral and mental health needs need to be in place to ensure that children feel safe in school. Children should have positive learning behaviours and enjoy learning so that they want to come to school.

The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents/carers
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
- Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
- Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils' needs
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
 - The importance of good attendance
 - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
 - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
 - The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
 - Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data
 - Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils

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- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising the Designated Officer or the Designated Senior Leader to be able to do so
- Working with the parents/carers 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
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents/carers through all available channels
- Sharing information from the school register with the local authority, including:

-Notifying the local authority when a pupil's name is added to or deleted from the school admission register outside of standard transition times

-Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who fail to attend school regularly, or who have been marked with an unauthorised absence for a continuous period of 10 school days

- Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who the school believes will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader (also known as the 'senior attendance champion') is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Helen Vail and can be contacted via calling the main school office on 020 7247 8909 or sending an email to admin@osmani.towerhamlets.sch.uk

The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance, and the headteacher
- Working with attendance and welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher/ (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- The attendance officer is Thofur Ali and can be contacted via calling the main school office on 020 7247

8909 or sending an email to admin@osmani.towerhamlets.sch.uk

Attendance and welfare advisor

The attendance and welfare advisor is responsible for:

- Speaking to parents if their child has persistent absence (below 90%)
- Issuing letters to parents when attendance falls below 90%
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

The attendance and welfare advisor is Boddruhl Islam. He can be contacted by email: Boddruhl.Islam@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance twice a day (at the start of the school day and after lunchtime) on the school's MIS system ScholarPack using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office. If Scholarpack is not available, then the paper register must be completed. (Appendix A)

Admin team

School admin team staff will:

- Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents to the attendance officer in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

Parents/carers

As set out in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, 'Parents are responsible for making sure that their children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full-time education.'

Where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult the school and/or local authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them)

Parents are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends school every and on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 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 that they make with the school and/or local authority
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting Helen Vail (Assistant Headteacher) or Thofur Ali (Home School Liaison Officer), who can be contacted via calling the main school office on 020 7247 8909 or sending an email to admin@osmani.towerhamlets.sch.uk

Pupils

All pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time

Staff CPD

It is important that all staff are provided with necessary training and support to help improve school attendance. All staff are given weekly updates about school attendance through:

- High expectations are set at the start of each academic year by the Attendance Lead through whole school

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CPD session

- Weekly phase meetings
- Weekly Attendance Ambassador visits to classes
- Discussion and advice at pupil progress meeting about improving attendance
- Updates when necessary about whole school strategies to improve school attendance

Recording attendance

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 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
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See Appendix A for the DfE attendance codes updated August 2024.

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 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.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8:35am on each school day and the whistle to go into school will be blown at 8:40am. The register for the first session will be taken from 8:40am and will be kept open until 9:00am. The register for the second session will be taken from 12:55pm and will be kept open until 1:00pm.

Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carers must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9:00am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office on 020 7247 8909 or sending an email to admin@osmani.towerhamlets.sch.uk.

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 will be notified of this in advance.

Planned absence

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Medical appointments

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. Every attempt should be made by parents and carers to book medical and dental appointments outside of the school day. Where this is not possible, proof of the appointment should be brought into school. This should be in the form of a letter, text or email from the medical or dental professional confirming the date and time of the appointment. Children are expected to attend school before and after the appointment and should be out of school for the minimum time required.

Exceptional circumstances

Headteachers have the discretion to authorise leave of absence in term-time. However, in this school that discretion will only be exercised in the **MOST EXCEPTIONAL** circumstances for the shortest possible period.

The School Governing Body also expects applications for leave in term time to normally be refused. However, in exceptional circumstances discretion may be appropriate, although this will very rarely happen and no more than 10 days will normally be agreed. Parents and carers will need to complete the 'Application for leave in term time for exceptional circumstances' proforma, which can be collected from the school office. (Appendix B)

When considering an application for leave in term time for exceptional circumstances, the Headteacher must be convinced that:

- (1) The exceptional circumstances are justified by supporting evidence provided by the parents/carers related to the circumstances and that the supporting evidence is valid;

and

- (2) The evidence necessarily warrants the child being absent from school in term time - does the child have to be absent in term time due to the circumstances or can it wait until the school holidays?

Parents/Carers must provide supporting evidence of any exceptional circumstances and why the leave must be taken in term time instead of in the school holidays. All applications will be considered carefully, including how the pupil's educational progress could be affected. Where the request for leave involves travelling abroad parents are asked to produce the return tickets before leave is approved.

Authorised and unauthorised absences

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school as AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing. Medical evidence may also be required in the form of a copy of a prescription, GP note, etc. Types of absence that are likely to be authorised are illness, medical or dental appointments, which unavoidably fall in school time, as well as emergencies.

We appreciate parents' support in notifying us quickly if their child is going to be absent and the reasons for this. Examples of types of absence that are not considered reasonable and which will **not** be authorised under any circumstances are:

- Going shopping with parents
- Taking time off for birthdays
- Minding other younger children in the family
- Staying at home because other members in the family are unwell
- Day trips and holidays in term time that have not been agreed
- Arriving at school too late to get a present mark
- Truancy

Only the Headteacher can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, until a satisfactory reason is provided. If the reason given is not satisfactory in the school's view, and/or evidence of the reason cannot be provided, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised absence. Absence notes received from parents/carers will be kept for the remainder of the academic year and uploaded onto the child's scholarpack in the child's folder; or longer if there are concerns that

require further investigation or legal action.

Applications for holidays during term time

The guidance from the Department for Education states that applications from parents/carers for pupils to take leave in term time for the purpose of a holiday should not normally be authorised. Parents/Carers are expected to arrange holidays during school holiday periods when children can enjoy them without their education being disrupted. This position is fully supported by the Local Authority and the School Governing Body.

Any applications for holidays in term time will be refused by the Headteacher unless there is evidence of very exceptional circumstances and of why the leave must be taken in term time instead of in the school holidays. If parents and carers still wish to take their children on holiday they will need to complete the 'Application for leave in term time for exceptional circumstances' proforma, which can be collected from the school office at least 10 days before they leave. (Appendix B) This document outlines when they will be departing, returning, staying during their holiday and contact details during this period as a safeguarding measure. They will also need to show the return tickets if they are travelling abroad.

Part-time timetables

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. In some circumstances their education may be provided partially at school and partially at another educational setting or through education otherwise than at a school in line with section 19 of the Education Act 1996 or section 42 or 61 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Time away from school to receive education in other ways must be recorded in the attendance register using the appropriate codes.

In exceptional circumstances, where it is in the pupil's best interests, a part-time timetable may need to be used.

A part-time timetable should:

- Have the agreement of both the school and the parent the pupil normally lives with.
- Have a clear ambition and be part of the pupil's wider support, health care or reintegration plan.
- Have regular review dates which include the pupil and their parents to ensure it is only in place for the shortest time necessary.
- Have a proposed end date that takes into account the circumstances of the pupil, after which the pupil is expected to attend full-time, either at school or alternative provision. It can, however, be extended as part of the regular review process. In some limited cases, a pupil with a long-term health condition may require a part-time timetable for a prolonged period.

When a part-time timetable is required, the school will inform the local authority and complete the necessary documentation. Refer to the document below which outlines the borough's guidelines:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1yM2GDopYl6WwIVnTeWmKchbWfrJ9ljcZhKfk-SGNV6k/edit?usp=sharing>

Where the pupil has a social worker, the school is expected to keep them informed and involved in the process. If the pupil has an education health and care plan, the school should discuss the part-time timetable with the local authority so that any support package that is in place can be reviewed as swiftly as possible. In agreeing to a part-time timetable, a school has agreed to a pupil being absent from school for part of the week or day and therefore must record the absence accordingly (normally using code X or C2).

Arranging Education for Children Who Cannot Attend School because of Health Needs

DfE published guidance in December 2023 about **arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs**. Please see below for a link to the document:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/657995f0254aaa000d050bff/Arranging_education_for_children_who_cannot_attend_school_because_of_health_needs.pdf

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

School should: 'Set high expectations for the attendance and punctuality **of all pupils** and communicate these regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels. In doing so, schools should help parents to understand what is expected of them and why attendance is important to their child's attainment, wellbeing, and wider development.' *Working together to improve school attendance August 2024.*

The attendance manager and a member of SLT stand by the main entrance each morning and record the names of any children who are late. They also speak to parents and remind them of their duty to ensure that their child arrives at school on time every day. The 'Late Register' is monitored by the attendance manager and AWA each half term and appropriate action is put in place. Letters are sent out to parents if their children are frequently late by the AWA and the attendance manager (Appendix C)

If children are regularly late for school, this will impact their learning. At Osmani, phonics and guided reading are taught in the morning and both of these subject areas are essential for learning across the curriculum.

If a pupil is persistently late, the School's Attendance Welfare Advisor will arrange to meet with the family as soon as the pattern is identified.

Following up unexplained absences

First day absence contact

Parents are expected to notify the school if their child is unable to attend for any unavoidable reason, such as illness etc. If the school does not receive notification, a text, telephone call or email on the first day of absence will be made by the school attendance manager to try to ascertain the reason. First day contact will be carried out as early as possible in the school day, in order to notify parents whose children may have set off for school, but not arrived. If there is no satisfactory explanation, the absence will be unauthorised.

Second day absence contact

If the child is still absent on the second day without contact from the family, a telephone call will be made to the home. If no contact is made, a home visit will be made, maintaining social distancing. The emergency contacts that the school has on record will also be contacted to see if they have any information on the child's whereabouts. The attendance manager will inform the AWA of any absences that are of a concern such as repeated patterns.

Continuing Absence

In the event of an absence of three or more days without contact from the family, the Attendance and welfare Advisor will be notified as well the Headteacher. The AWA will investigate further and parents are required to attend a formal review meeting with the Attendance Welfare Advisor. There may ultimately be court action or a Penalty Notice recommended if there is no improvement.

Children Missing in Education

Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE, Revised September 2022 and Appendix 4 of the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding policy.

A child going missing from education, particularly repeatedly, can be a warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues. This might include abuse or neglect, such as sexual abuse or exploitation or child criminal exploitation, or issues such as mental health problems, substance abuse, radicalisation, FGM or forced marriage.

There are many circumstances where a child may become missing from education, but some children are particularly at risk. These include children who:

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- Are at risk of harm or neglect
- Are at risk of forced marriage or FGM
- Come from Gypsy, Roma, or Traveller families
- Come from the families of service personnel
- Go missing or run away from home or care
- Are supervised by the youth justice system
- Cease to attend a school
- Come from new migrant families

We will follow our procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of going missing in future. This includes informing the local authority if a child leaves the school without a new school being named, and adhering to requirements with respect to sharing information with the local authority, when applicable, when removing a child's name from the admission register at non-standard transition points.

Staff will be trained in signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns which may be related to being missing, such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.

If a staff member suspects that a child is suffering from harm or neglect, we will follow local child protection procedures, including with respect to making reasonable enquiries. We will make an immediate referral to the local authority children's social care team, and the police, if the child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger.

Non starters

Pupils who are allocated places but fail to start are also treated as CME. If the school has been unable to make contact with the family during a ten-day period after their expected arrival, they will refer the pupils to the Pupil Services.

When a child/ren have not returned to school after a holiday and are taken off the school roll

The government allows 21 school days for children to be away on any form of special leave. However, the school does not authorise the leave. On the 22nd day of the leave they can automatically be taken off-roll. **(see Appendix B: Osmani's, 'Children Leaving,' form which is kept as a record).**

Losing the school place

Parents are responsible for returning their child to school on time. After 4 weeks (20 school days) of unauthorised absence, the pupil's name may be removed from the register. Parents will then have to re-apply for admission when they return but it may not be possible for the pupil to return to this school.

Vulnerable Children

Children who are Looked After (LA), subject to a Child Protection Plan (CP) or Children in Need (CIN) will be treated with highest priority and will be known to the Attendance Welfare Advisor. Any unexplained absence will be followed up immediately by a telephone call to the home, a home visit or by a call to the Child Protection **Line Tel: 020 7364 3444**, in order that a same-day visit can be made. Children with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) will be treated with similar priority in order that their time in school can be maximised, and their learning supported to the greatest extent possible.

Children joining/leaving Mid Year (not standard transitions)

We use the Tower Hamlets web-based tool, 'School Access Module,' (SAM) to notify the local authority about any

new intake or leavers.

National Framework for penalty notices

A Penalty Notice is intended to prevent the need for court action and should only be used where it is deemed likely to change parental behaviour. If a parent has been offered support to improve school attendance and this has not worked, then a penalty notice should be the next step.

If there are concerns about school attendance, an attendance contract which is a formal written signed agreement between school and/ or Local Authority and parents. It should contain:

- Details of the requirements the parent(s) is expected to comply with.
- A statement from the school and/or local authority agreeing to provide support to the parent(s) to meet the requirements and setting out details of the support.
- A statement by the parent that they agree to comply with the requirements for the period of time specified by the contract.

This is a voluntary agreement but any non-compliance should be recorded by the school as it may be used as evidence in court where an application is made for a parenting order.

Penalty notices must be issued in line with the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 and can only be issued by the Headteacher or someone authorised by them such as a Deputy or Assistant Headteacher.

In Tower Hamlets, a referral to issue a penalty notice should be made using the following online form:

https://towerhamlets-self.achieveservice.com/service/BASS_Attendance_referral

The threshold is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks. A school week means any week in which there is at least one school session. This can be met with any combination of unauthorised absence (e.g. 4 sessions of holiday taken in term time plus 6 sessions of arriving late after the register closes all within 10 school weeks). These sessions can be consecutive (e.g. 10 sessions of holiday in one week) or not (e.g. 6 sessions of unauthorised absence taken in 1 week and 1 per week for the next 4 weeks). The period of 10 school weeks can also span different terms or school years (e.g. 2 sessions of unauthorised absence in the Summer Term and a further 8 within the Autumn Term). Also, decide if issuing a penalty notice in this case is appropriate after considering any obligations under the Equality Act 2010 such as where a pupil has a disability.

The first penalty notice issued to a parent in respect of a particular pupil will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. A second penalty notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil is charged at a flat rate of £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 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.

If a pupil has moved schools, checks should be made to see if any penalty notices have been issued in the last 3 years. This includes if a pupil attended a school in a different local authority. The payment must be paid directly to the local authority regardless of who issued the penalty notice. If the penalty is not paid by the end of the 28 day period, the local authority must decide either to prosecute for the original offence to which the notice applies, or withdraw the notice. Parent(s) can only be prosecuted if 28 days have expired, and full payment has not been made. There is no right of appeal by parents against a penalty notice

Legal sanctions

Local authorities have the power to prosecute:

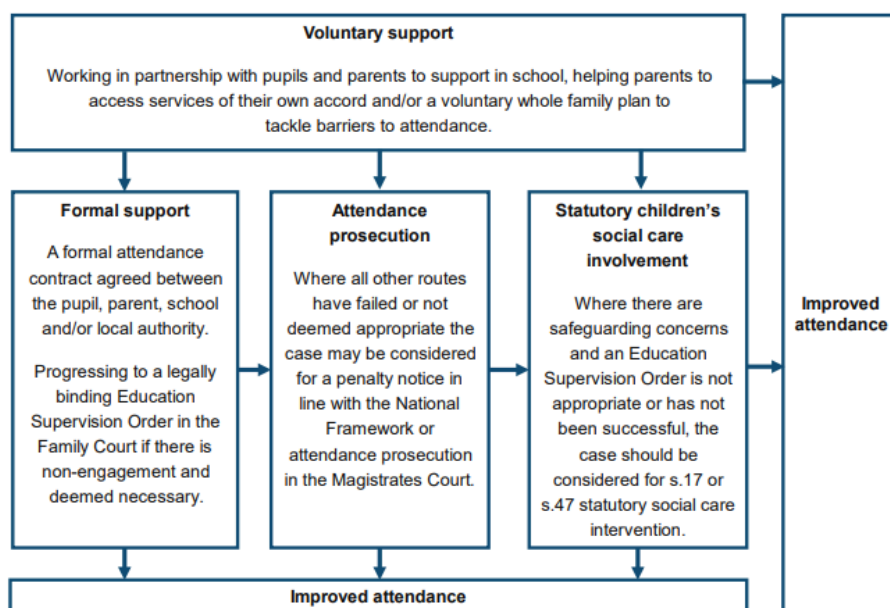
- Parents who fail to comply with a school attendance order issued by the local authority to require a parent

to get their child registered at a named school (under section 443 of the Education Act 1996). This may result in a fine of up to level 3 (£1,000).

- Parents who fail to secure their child's regular attendance at a school, for which there are 2 separate offences: section 444(1) where a parent fails to secure the child's regular attendance; and section 444(1A) where a parent knows that the child is failing to attend school regularly and fails to ensure the child does so. The section 53 444(1) offence may result in a fine of up to level 3 (£1,000) and the section 444(1A) offence may result in a fine of up to level 4 (£2,500), and/or a community order or imprisonment of up to 3 months.
- Parents who fail to secure the regular attendance of their child at a place where the local authority or governing body has arranged alternative provision (under sections 444 and 444ZA). This may result in a fine of up to level 3 (£1,000), or if the parent is found to have known the child was not attending regularly and failed to ensure that they did so, a fine of up to level 4 (£2,500), and/or a community order or imprisonment of up to 3 months.
- Parents who persistently fail to comply with directions under an Education Supervision Order (under Schedule 3 to the Children Act 1989) or breach a Parenting Order or directions under the order (under section 375 of the Sentencing Act 2020). These may result in a fine of up to level 3 (£1,000).

Parenting orders are an ancillary order that can be imposed by the Court following conviction for non-attendance alongside a fine and/or community order. Parents' agreement is not required before an order is made. They may be appropriate where the parent has not engaged in support to improve their child's attendance and where compulsion to do so would help change parental behaviour.

Providing support first before attendance legal intervention



Attendance monitoring and analysis

The Attendance Welfare Advisor (AWA) will be responsible for identification of any emerging concerns, and putting in place actions for each pupil of concern. Regular trawls of the registers are made to identify pupils with a pattern of absences that may lead to Persistent Absence (PA). Initially, the school will try to resolve the problem with parents/carers. This may be Parent meetings at school or Home Visits. The attendance officer will monitor attendance on a weekly basis. Any concerns are then followed up by the Attendance Welfare Advisor when appropriate. In addition, the attendance officer and AWA monitor punctuality every two weeks. If attendance falls below 90% and the AWA will meet with parents and carers to discuss how best to support them with their child's

attendance. They will record any information from these meetings in the 'Attendances Parents Meeting and Calls with School and AWA spreadsheet which is kept in the admin folder on the shared drive.

After each Strategy Meeting (three times a year), the Head of Phase (HoP) will contact parents/carers of children whose attendance is below 95%. They will record any information from these meetings in the 'Attendances Parents Meeting and Calls with School and AWA spreadsheet which is kept in the admin folder on the shared drive.

Attendance figures are reported to the Governing Body termly in the Head teachers Report and submitted to the DfE termly and annually. The school has also signed up to the DfE 'Pupil Attendance in My School'. Attendance data is collected twice daily so that any trends and patterns can be picked up quickly and addressed. This can be accessed through the DfE portal and the 'View your education data' for members of staff who have permission (Headteacher, the designated senior leader responsible for attendance.)

Persistent Absence data is submitted to the London Borough of Tower Hamlets each half term.

The Department for Education has issued guidance to schools and Local Authorities in relation to holidays and leave in term time and this policy reflects the requirements of this guidance.

The School Governing Body has authorised the Headteacher to act on its behalf in ensuring that the school fully complies with the requirements.

Reducing persistent and severe absences

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school (their attendance would be 90% or below), and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

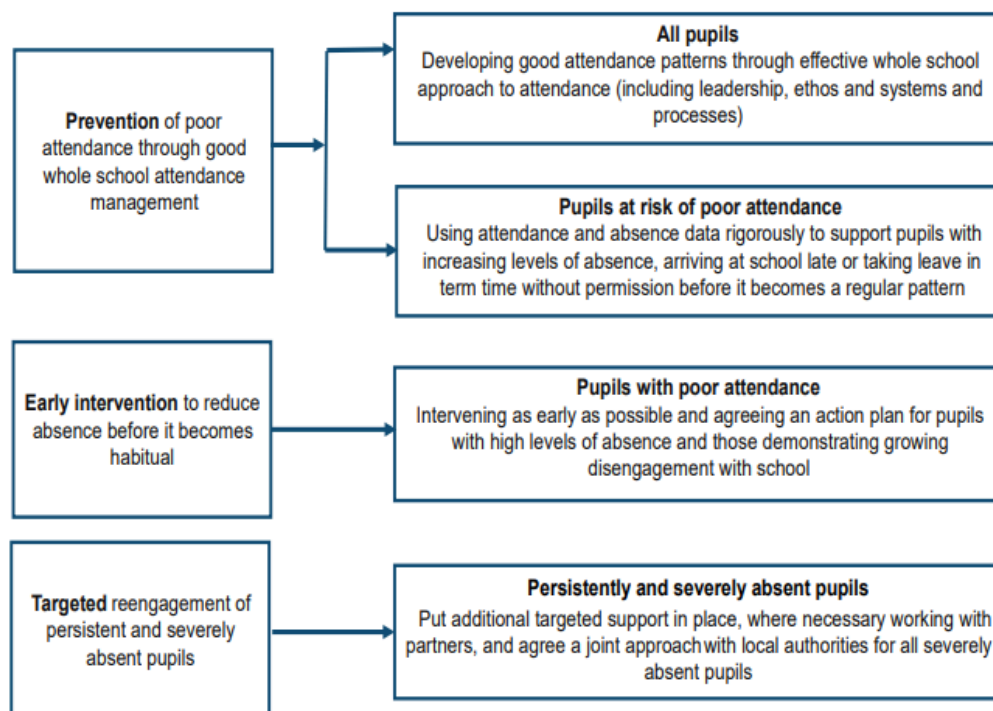
Schools and local authorities should work together to put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. The school sensitively considers some of the reasons for this absence and understands that school is a place of safety and support for children who may be facing difficulties.

A focus is placed on supporting children with severe absence as they face bigger barriers to school attendance and are more likely to require intensive support. There is a need to consider where to suggest a whole family plan or potentially an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

Persistent and severe absences are a focus of attendance monitoring by the designated senior leader responsible for attendance, the attendance officer and the attendance and welfare advisor. Individual pupils and cohorts are targeted as quickly as possible.

When all avenues of support have been facilitated, and there is continued absence for unauthorised reasons, it is likely to constitute neglect. It is essential to consider any potential Safeguarding issues. Further guidance is available in the statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education.'

Effective school attendance improvement and management



Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA)

Parents should do everything possible to encourage their child to attend school. However, some children may have severe difficulty in attending school. This is referred to as Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA). It is important that school and parents work together in partnership to resolve any underlying issues. It is often difficult to distinguish EBSA from other reasons for poor attendance. The following factors should be considered when identifying this:

Risk Factors of EBSA (Kearney and Silberman (1990))

- Avoid uncomfortable feelings when attending school such as anxiety and low self-esteem.
- Avoid situations that might be stressful such as academic or social demands.
- Reduce separation anxiety or gain attention from significant others.
- Pursue more pleasurable activities outside of school such as shopping, and playing computer games instead of attending school.

School factors

- Bullying
- Inappropriate provision
- Structure of the school day
- Exams
- Transitions - moving to EY to Yr1 where the layout is different/Yr2 to Yr3 the new playground/Yr6 transition to secondary school

Family factors

- Loss
- Separation of parents
- Traumatic events - illness, bereavement

- Overprotective parenting style
- High levels of family stress
- Young carer
- Difficulties with routine
- Children in care

Child factors

- Reluctance to interact with unfamiliar settings or to unfamiliar people and objects.
- Fear of failure or poor confidence
- Physical illness
- Learning difficulties, developmental problems or Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC)
- Separation anxiety
- Traumatic events
- Mental health difficulties

The diagram below taken from 'Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) Good practice recommendations for schools and support agencies' published by Tower Hamlets details the cycle of EBSA:

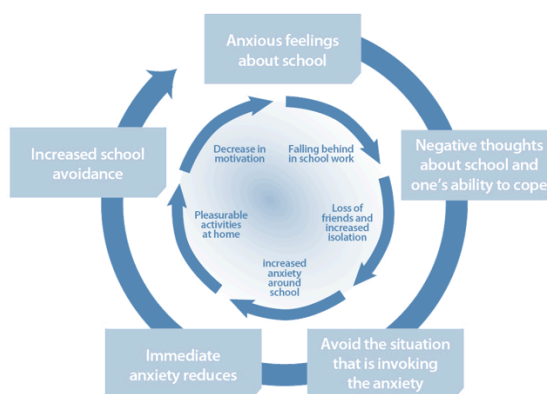


Figure 2. Diagram showing the initial anxiety causing the non-attendance and the secondary maintenance factors. West Sussex EPS.

Other external agencies may need to be involved if the issues persist.

Whole school approaches to promote emotional well-being and positive mental health



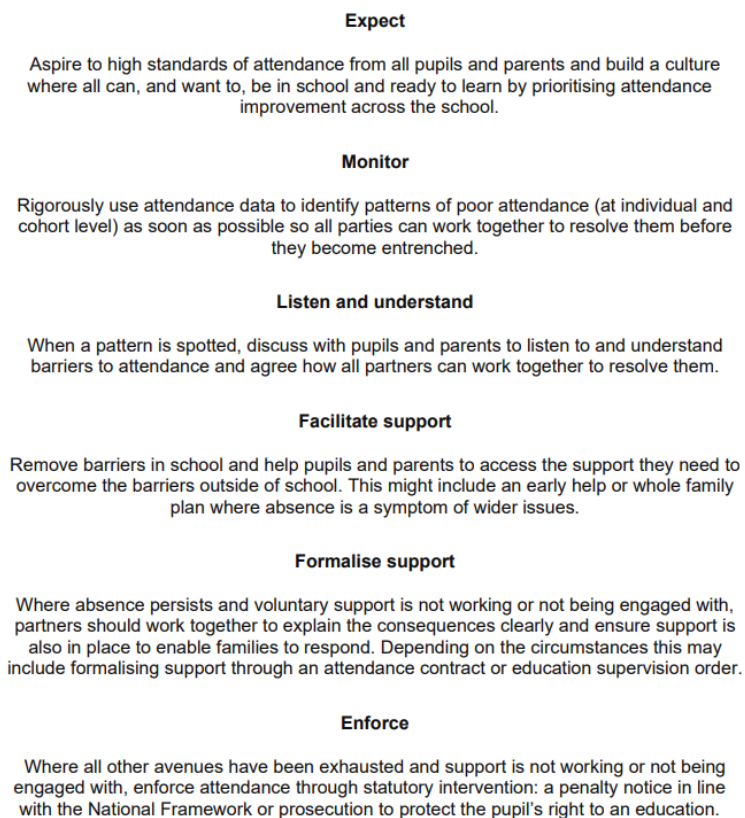
Figure 4. Mentally healthy schools whole school approach, Kent Resilience Toolkit 2019, adapted from Public Health England.

It is essential that the child's voice is heard and that they have the opportunity to share their anxieties. This may include working with the school's Learning Mentor or Up Foundation therapists.

Strategies for promoting attendance

It is important that all stakeholders work together to improve school attendance.

The diagram below demonstrates how barriers to school attendance can be addressed if all stakeholders work together:



High expectations of attendance are communicated through:

Last Review Date: Autumn 2024

Next Review Date: Autumn 2026

- Weekly attendance assemblies which are led by members of SLT.
- Children in Years 4 and 5 are elected to be Attendance Ambassadors. They must create a manifesto which they share with their peers during Democracy Week at the beginning of each academic year. This is followed by an election day where the children vote for two boys and two girls from each class to become Attendance Ambassadors.
- Attendance Ambassadors must have exemplary attendance and punctuality so that they are good role models to the other children.
- Attendance Ambassadors are allocated to each class from Nursery to Year 6. Once a week, they meet with their class to discuss children's attendance which is below 97%. They will give advice and support for improving attendance and punctuality which they record in books.
- Attendance is monitored at each of the three annual Assessment Points to see what impact poor attendance is having on the attainment and progress of children. This is discussed at moderation, pupil progress and strategy meetings and actions to improve attendance are agreed.
- A half termly newsletter about attendance is sent to parents which outlines the expectations.
- Weekly attendance figures are updated on the school website.
- Parents sign the home school agreement when their child starts school and agree that their child will attend school every day and on time.

Good attendance is rewarded through:

- Weekly certificates for classes with attendance above 97%.
- An attendance trophy is given to the class with the highest attendance above 97% for Key Stage One and Key Stage Two.
- Children with 100% Attendance and Punctuality, for the academic year, are rewarded with a special trip.
- Children with 100% Attendance **only**, for the academic year, have either a Popcorn and DVD afternoon or an afternoon on the Bouncy Castle (depending on the weather).

If a child is unable to attend school for medical reasons but is well enough to complete work, it is the parents/carers responsibility to ensure the child/ren has access to online home learning via Google Classroom and/or the school website. The work will be monitored by the class teacher and feedback will be provided. The class teacher will make contact with the family if work is not being completed. If there is still no engagement, then the HOP will call the family.

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by Helen Vail, Assistant Headteacher and the designated senior leader responsible for attendance . At every review, the policy will be approved by the governors.

Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

Appendix A

DfE attendance codes updated August 2024.

Code	Description
Attending the school	
/	Present for the morning session
\	Present for the afternoon session
L	Late arrival before the register is closed
Attending a place other than school	
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip
P	Participating in a sporting activity
W	Attending work experience
B	Attending any other approved educational activity
Absent - leave of absence	
C1	: Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.
M	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
D	Dual registered at another school
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance
Absent - other authorised reasons	
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)

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E	Suspended or permanently excluded
Absent - unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause	
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
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
Absent - unauthorised absence	
G	Holiday not granted by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances
U	Arrived in school after registration closed
Administrative codes	
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register
#	Planned whole school closure

Appendix B

I have read and understood the governors' policy above.

Name of pupil:	Date of birth:
Signature of parent/carer:	Date:

APPLICATION FOR LEAVE IN TERM TIME FOR EXCEPTIONAL REASONS

Part 1 - to be completed by the parent/carer

Pupil's name:	Year/Class:
Address:	Date of birth:
	Telephone:
	Mobile:
Email:	
Last day of attendance in school:	
Date of return to school:	
Please give details of the purpose and exceptional reason(s) for this application for leave in term time and why the leave cannot be taken in school holiday time. Attach any supporting evidence:	
Please provide the address of where you and your child/children will be staying:	
Email for contact:	

Part 2 - to be completed by the school

Tick	Supporting evidence for purpose and exceptional reasons for the leave in term time provided, including Tickets / Itinerary if applicable (please attach a copy to the form)
	This application has not been approved because there is insufficient evidence that the leave must be taken in term time.
	Please change your arrangements. If your child's school place is lost, you will have to re-apply for a place and your child may not be able to return to this school.
OR	
	This application been agreed for ____ school days. Your child must return to the school on: _____ No reminders will be sent. It is the parent's responsibility to notify the school of any future changes in circumstances.

Parent/carer signature:		Date:	
Headteacher's signature:		Date:	

Appendix C

Letter from school to parents about punctuality:

Dear Parent/Carer,

Punctuality

It has been brought to my attention that your child has been late for school on many occasions, this is unacceptable.

Remember lessons start at 8:55am promptly; children must be in the playground at 8:45am.

It is extremely important that your child is at school on time every day.

Your child will be picked up from the playground at 8:50am so he/she must be there before that. The children start work at 8:55am. Children who are continually late miss the lesson instruction and disrupt the whole class.

I trust that you will do all that you can to make sure that your child is on time every day.

Any child that is continuously late without good reason will be referred to the Attendance and Welfare Advisor.

Yours faithfully,

Remi Atoyebi

Headteacher

Appendix D

First letter to parents from school which is generated in Scholar Pack:

Dear Parents of ----- ,

As part of our commitment to improving the attainment of our pupils, we monitor pupil attendance on a regular basis. Where concerns are identified, we issue a first letter to inform parents.

We have identified ____'s attendance is now below the school target of 97%.

Attendance	
Authorised Absence	
Unauthorised Absence	

For each day that your child misses school, it will take 5 days to catch up.

Number of days and weeks absence	Number of days and weeks it will take to catch up
95% 10 days absence a year – 50 Hours of Learning Lost. This is 2 school weeks missed.	It will take 50 days to catch up if 10 days have been missed. This is 10 weeks.
90% 19 days absence a year – 95 Hours of Learning Lost. This is almost 4 school weeks missed.	It will take 95 days to catch up if 19 days have been missed. This is 19 weeks
85% 29 days absence a year - 114 Hours of Learning Lost. This is almost 6 school weeks missed.	It will take 145 days to catch up if 29 days have been missed. This is 29 weeks.
80% 38 days absence a year - 190 hours of learning lost. This is almost 8 school weeks missed.	It will take 190 days to catch up if 38 days have been missed. This is 38 weeks.

Please ensure that your child is in school everyday so that they do not continue to lose more valuable learning time. If your child's attendance continues to fall and reaches below 90%, we will refer the case to the Local Authority Attendance and Welfare Advisor. **Please note that parents have a legal responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly and punctually and failure to do so may result in parents being prosecuted by the Local Authority.**

If you have any queries or would like to talk to anyone about attendance, please do not hesitate to contact Helen Vail or Thofur Ali.

Yours sincerely,
Remi Atoyebi
Headteacher

Appendix E

AWA Referral letter:

Dear Parents of -----

Attendance	
Authorised Absence	
Unauthorised Absence	

,

We have previously written to inform you that your child's attendance is below 90% and that we would be referring the case to the Local Authority Attendance and Welfare Advisor.

After reviewing their attendance again, we have noticed that it has not improved so the case will now be referred to the Attendance and Welfare Advisor.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, meetings are now taking place as a telephone call and our Attendance and Welfare Advisor, Lina Rahman, will be in contact with you soon.

The purpose of the meeting is to offer support and suggestions so that your child's attendance improves.
Please note that parents have a legal responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly and punctually and failure to do so may result in parents being prosecuted by the Local Authority.

Yours sincerely,

Remi Atoyebi
Headteacher

Appendix F

Letter from the AWA to parents:

Dear Parents and Carers of _____,

Re: School Attendance and punctuality

Name of child:

Class:

I am the Attendance and Welfare Advisor for Osmani School and my role is to work with schools, parents and pupils to identify and overcome difficulties which may affect pupils and prevent them from attending school regularly and punctually.

I am writing to inform you that during a register inspection I have carried out it came to my attention that your child's attendance at school is.....and has arrived late at school onoccasions, as can be seen on the attendance printout enclosed. Regular and punctual attendance at school helps pupils settle well in class, enjoy and achieve their full potential in learning.

Please ensure that your child arrives to school every day and on time from now on, otherwise you will be at risk of being issued with a Penalty Notice.

Should you have any worries which impact on your child's attendance, punctuality and welfare at school and wish to speak to me, you can find me at Osmani School on Friday mornings.

Yours faithfully,

Boddrull Islam

Attendance and Welfare Advisor for London Borough of Tower Hamlets

Appendix G

Children Leaving Form

Name of Child:	-
DOB:	-
Class:	-
UPN:	-

New School Details

Name of School:	-
Address:	-
Tel:	-
Establishment:	-
Start Date:	-

Does this child have a SEN statement? Yes ☐ No ☐

Is this child on the CP register or is a child in Need? Yes ☐ No ☐

Does this child have any medical needs? Yes ☐ No ☐

Have you kept copies of SEN/Medical/CP Records? Yes ☐ No ☐

Does the child have outstanding dinner money? Yes ☐ No ☐

Signed off by:

Name: _____ Position: _____ Signed: _____