

### 1. Introduction

Dyson Perrins Church of England Academy provides a welcoming and nurturing environment, promoting life in all its fullness, whereby each member of the school feels part of the greater school community and all that it has to offer.

We expect all students to attend every day, when the school is in session, unless they are too unwell or have been given prior authorisation. We do all we can to engage with students and their families and to put in place appropriate procedures and processes to facilitate good attendance.

### 2. Rationale

Dyson Perrins Church of England Academy will continue to encourage all students to strive for 100% attendance and **aim for a minimum attendance figure of no less than 96%**. Regular attendance is important at every stage of your child's school career. Evidence suggests that regular attendance supports greater opportunity and good attainment.

We understand that 100% attendance is not always possible and we commit to engage with families to address any barriers to learning. To support and facilitate this we are committed to:

- Encourage and promote consistent, two-way, communication between home and school
- Promote effective partnerships with other educational stakeholders
- Make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school including students, parents, guardians, carers, all staff and Governors

We know that low attendance has a negative impact on educational outcomes as students miss lessons and catching up missed learning is very challenging:

Attendance	No. of days lost in a year	No. of lessons lost in a year
95%	9.5	48
90%	19	95
80%	38	190
50%	95	475

### 3. Our Expectations

We expect all students to:

- Strive for 100% attendance and **aim for a minimum attendance figure of no less than 96%**
- Arrive on time and well prepared for the day ahead

- Speak to an adult if they are experiencing difficulties or challenges

We expect all parents/guardians to:

- Encourage their son/daughter to attend school every day and on time
- Contact the school on the first day of absence and every consecutive day of absence until the child returns to school
- Provide the school with up to date contact details
- Not arrange family holidays to take place during the school term
- Inform the school of any problem that may affect attendance immediately

Parents/guardians can expect that the school will:

- Have a whole school approach to attendance
- Implement a system of rewards and recognition
- Record students attendance at AM and PM registration and at lessons accurately using SIMs
- Monitor attendance and support students and parents in improving attendance where there is a concern
- Use appropriate sanctions when dealing with continual and unexplained absence
- Follow the school non-attendance process for continual absence. Please see Appendix 1

#### **4. Legal Framework**

Parents/guardians have a legal responsibility to ensure that their child receives efficient, full-time education by regular attendance at school or otherwise

This policy meets the requirements of DfE guidance [Working together to improve school attendance](#)

. Documents are drawn from legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance including:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Children Act 1989
- The Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- The Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Sentencing Act 2020
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders) (England) Regulations 2007
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007

#### **5. Encouraging and rewarding high attendance**

The school will use a range of positive rewards and recognitions to encourage high attendance and support families, including:

Positive praise and feedback from staff

Achievement points and options from the Epraise rewards menu

Attendance certificates or recognition cards

Reward raffles in end of term assemblies

Invitations to certain school trips or school events

Where attendance concerns are identified the school will use a range of strategies to support families on a case-by-case basis, including:

Individual discussions with students  
Meetings with parents  
Attendance action plans  
Positive report cards  
Pastoral interventions e.g. self-esteem, managing anxiety  
Restorative meetings with peers or staff  
External mentors  
Timetable adjustments  
External agency referrals e.g. early help agencies  
Phased returns

## 6. Reporting Absence

If a child is absent for any reason, the school must be informed by the parent/guardian **on the first day of absence and every consecutive day of absences (unless otherwise agreed with Attendance Officer), including** providing the school with an expected date of return and reason for absence. The school should be notified **no later than 09:00 each day** to ensure that they can account for the child's wellbeing. Any absences for which the school have not received sufficient explanation within the prescribed timescales will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. Wherever possible and practical, parents are expected to make routine appointments such as dental or medical, outside of school time and/or in school holidays. School will require a copy of the medical/dental appointment information for their records.

To report a student absence parents should email [attendance@dysonperrins.co.uk](mailto:attendance@dysonperrins.co.uk) or call the school absence line on 01684 564751.

## 7. Absence from school

There are two categories of absence:

- (i) Authorised (approved)
- (ii) Unauthorised (not approved)

Absences can only be authorised by the Headteacher (or designated member of staff).

A student is absent if they do not attend school for any reason. A student is also marked as having been absent if they arrive at school after the register has closed. (See Appendix C for information on the DfE attendance codes for school registers.)

Absence is authorised for the following reasons:

- a genuine illness or sickness, that is not considered a minor illness or sickness
- a medical or dental appointment which unavoidably falls within school time and for which the school has granted leave
- a religious or cultural observance for which the school has granted leave
- an absence due to a family emergency

Absence is unauthorised for the following reasons:

- parents/carers keeping their child off school unnecessarily or without reason
- truancy before or during the school day
- absences which have never been properly explained

- arrival at school after the register has closed
- absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time (other than exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Headteacher)
- leaving school without permission during the day

It is usually appropriate for parents/carers to send their children to school with mild illnesses or general cold symptoms such as a minor cough, runny nose or sore throat (see NHS guidance <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/#:~:text=If%20your%20child%20has%20mild,have%20a%20high%20temperature>).

Some students may be anxious about attending school and worry or mild or moderate anxiety, whilst sometimes difficult emotions, can be a normal part of growing up for many children and young people and being in school can often help alleviate the underlying issues; absence from school is likely to heighten a child's anxiety about attending in the future, rather than reduce it.

Parents/carers should make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the student should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary. Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the student's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. Where a student's attendance is a concern, medical evidence may be required to support the absence.

## 8. Punctuality

Punctuality is vitally important and is a life skill that reaches into employment in later life. Students who are persistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of others. The school Behaviour Policy will be followed for students persistently late to school and/or lessons, including issuing appropriate sanctions.

## 9. Registration sessions

	Register opens	Register closes
Morning registration	8.40am	9.20am
Afternoon registration	1.45pm	2.40pm

Students arriving after 8.40am must register at school reception and provide the reason for their lateness.

## 10. Staged approach to managing low attendance

Where attendance falls below the expected levels the school will follow a staged approach in order to intervene. The staged approach includes following Worcestershire Council's procedure for irregular attendance.

Attendance Stage	School days missed	Action

<b>Stage One</b> <b>Perfect</b>	<b>0</b> 19 days (38 sessions) away from PA	<b>Recognition &amp; reward</b>
<b>Stage Two</b> <b>Good</b>	<b>5 days or 10 sessions</b> 14 days (28 sessions) away from PA	<b>Letter of concern</b> Penalty notice for 10 sessions unauthorised term time holiday
<b>Stage three</b> <b>At risk of being Persistently Absent</b>	<b>10 days or 20 sessions</b> 9 days (18 sessions) away from PA <b>or</b> <b>10 sessions of unauthorised absence</b> within rolling 10-week period	<b>First formal meeting with parents</b>  Medical evidence requested where relevant
<b>Stage Four</b> <b>Serious risk of being Persistently Absent</b>	<b>15 days or 30 sessions</b> 4 days (8 sessions) away from PA	<b>Second Formal meeting with parents</b>  <b>First Notice letter</b>
<b>Stage Five</b> <b>Persistently absent</b>	<b>19 days or 38 sessions</b>  Fixed at PA	<b>Notice to Improve Letter (20-day monitoring) for Penalty Fine</b>  <b>or</b> <b>Final notice for prosecution letter.</b>
<b>Stage Six</b> <b>Severely absent</b>	<b>50% attendance or less</b>	<b>Ongoing targeted case work</b>  <b>Explore multi-agency support</b>  <b>Consider referral to Worcestershire Council children who cannot attend school panel</b>

For in-year admissions, a pro-rata number of days/sessions absent will be used as the thresholds for the stages above.

The school will follow DfE guidance for any student likely to be absent for 15 or more days as a result of a medical condition, whether consecutively or cumulatively.

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5ce6a72e40f0b620a103bd53/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions.pdf>

The government uses the term '**persistent absence**' to refer to absence of 10% or more, whether authorised or unauthorised. Students with persistent absence are unlikely to attain their full potential at school, are at risk of failing to stay in education after leaving and are more at risk of other negative outcomes. Persistent absentees miss a *minimum* of 19 days of school which equates to 95 lessons per year.

The term '**severe absence**' is used to describe the most serious cases of non-attendance, where students have missed 50% or more of school time. There will be focus and support provided to these students and families as they may find it more difficult to be in school or face bigger barriers to attendance, and as such are likely to need more intensive support across a range of external agency partners. This may include the involvement of children's social care.

## 11. Penalty Notices

The school can apply to the local authority for a fine to be issued to parents/carers for the unauthorised absence of their child from school.

A penalty notice is an out of court settlement which is intended to change behaviour without the need for criminal prosecution. If repeated penalty notices are being issued and they are not working to change behaviour they are unlikely to be the most appropriate tool. Therefore only 2 penalty notices can be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within a 3 year rolling period and any second notice within that period is charged at a higher rate:

- 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. Penalty notices can only be requested by a Headteacher, local authority officer or the police and issued by the local authority.

All schools must consider whether a penalty notice is appropriate in each individual case where one of their students reaches the national threshold for considering a penalty notice.

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).

In Education Law (Section 576 of the Education Act 1996) 'parent' means:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not

- Any person who has parental responsibility for a child or pupil
- Any person who has care of a child or pupil i.e. lives with and looks after the child

## **12. Following up unexplained absence and safe & well checks during sustained absence**

The Attendance Team at Dyson Perrins Church of England Academy follows up each absence on a daily basis. In the unlikely event that we are unable to contact a family after 3 attempts at contact, to ascertain where the absent student is, we will take the following steps:

- Attendance Officer will carry out a home visit and other diligent enquiries, in order to make contact with the family
- If the home visit is unsuccessful the school's attendance and safeguarding teams will consider any appropriate referrals to external agencies, including the Local Authority Children Missing in Education Team, Worcestershire Council Children's Services, the police or early help agencies.
- The Attendance Officer will also notify the Local Authority and/or any other agencies, including the police, as appropriate in order for more extensive enquiries to be made.
- All normal absence monitoring procedures will continue during the unexplained absence, including calling/emailing the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues. This may also involve contacting the school of any siblings, home visits and reference to Children's Services.
- Safe and well checks will be completed for students not in school for a prolonged period, including when parents have informed the school. These may be via home visit or online. Checks will be made at least weekly and more frequently for vulnerable students.

## **13. Requests for term times absence**

There is no automatic right for a parent to take their child out of school during term time and we require parents to observe the term times set. Parents and guardians are strongly advised that leave of absence is not to be taken during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**. Exceptional circumstances do not include family holidays and can only be authorised by the Headteacher or designated member of staff.

Parents must inform the school in advance if an absence is required for religious observance. Please note that religious observance will only be for major events and festivals.

To request authorised absence parents/carers must complete a 'Request for Leave of Absence' form available from school office or email [attendance@dysonperrins.co.uk](mailto:attendance@dysonperrins.co.uk) in advance of the absence. Parents must give sufficient warning for the school to consider the request (minimum 2 weeks). Any applications made will be discussed by the Headteacher and Attendance Officer and parents will be advised on the outcome of the application and the possible action that may be taken. Please be aware any holiday taken without prior consultation with the school will automatically result in the period of absence being marked as unauthorised and a Penalty Notice being issued.

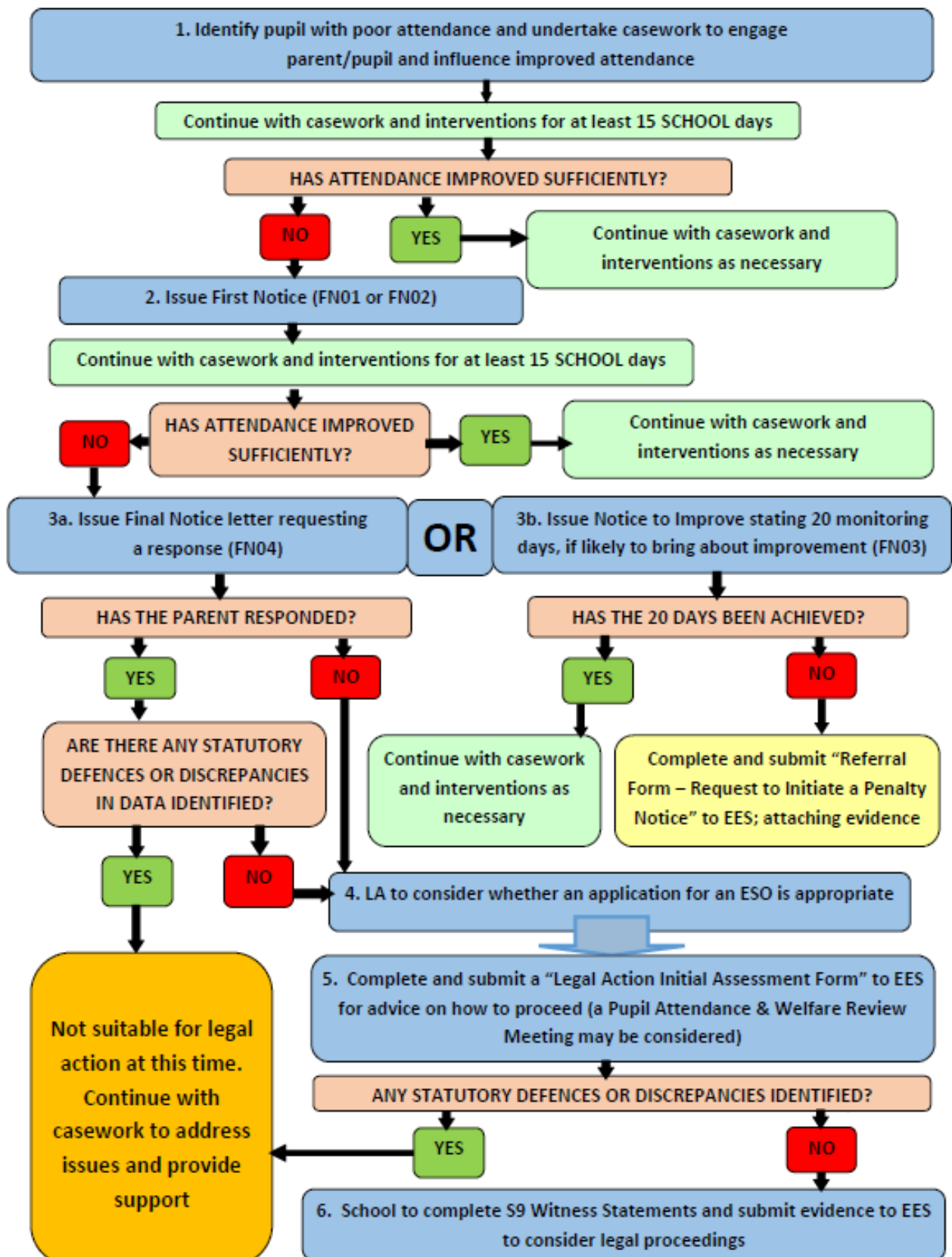
## **14. Supporting students to return to school following an extended period of absence**

The school will regularly contact and communicate with parents where attendance is below expectations. The school will discuss any barriers to attendance and consider strategies to support the student to return to school, which may include short-term adaptations in school and/or referrals to external agencies if appropriate. Any such support from the school does not negate the parents' legal responsibility to ensure their child is in school.

Appendix 1



### Case Work for Irregular Attendance



## Penalty Notice Fines for School Attendance are Changing!

With the introduction of the new National Framework for Penalty notices, the following changes will come into force on 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024.

[Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\) \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

### Per Parent, Per Child

Penalty Notice Fines can be issued to each parent, for each child that was absent from school if the headteacher has not authorised the absence.

For example: 3 siblings absent for term time leave, would result in each parent receiving 3 separate fines.

### 5 consecutive days of term time leave / 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10 week period

Penalty Notices Fines can be issued for unauthorised term time leave (code G) of 5 days (10 sessions) or more.

### First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for term time leave or irregular attendance the amount will be:

**£160 per parent, per child  
if paid within 28 days.**

**Reduced to £80 per parent, per child  
if paid within 21 days.**

### Second Offence (Within 3 years)

The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for term time leave or irregular attendance the amount will be:

**£160 per parent, per child,  
to be paid within 28 days.**

### Third Offence and any further offences (within 3 years)

The third time an offence is committed for term time leave or irregular attendance a Penalty Notice will not be issued, and the case may be presented to the Magistrates' Court under S4441 Education Act 1996. Cases found guilty in the Magistrates' Court could result in a fine up to £2500 per parent per child, and will also hold a criminal record, for failing to secure regular attendance.

### Mixed unauthorised codes that meet 10 sessions

For 5 days (10 sessions) of other unauthorised absences recorded in a rolling 10 week period, a 20 day Notice to Improve can be issued by the school.