



# Attendance Policy





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## 1. Statement of intent (Aims)

Both Staff and Governors at Storybrook recognise that regular attendance and punctuality are both legal requirements and essential for pupils to achieve their full potential; missing school can have a significant impact on your child's learning now and in the future. Children need to attend regularly and punctually if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. Research states that pupils with attendance at 97% or above throughout their school career, will make the most progress, leading to the strongest possible outcomes for their future. Storybrook aims for 95%+ whole school attendance.

We understand that barriers to attendance are complex, and that some pupils with Social Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties (SEMH) may find it harder than others to attend school; therefore, we will continue to prioritise creating and maintaining a safe and supportive environment at school, as well as strong, positive and trusting relationships with pupils and parents.

We take a whole-school approach to securing good attendance and recognise the impact that our efforts in other areas - such as the curriculum, behaviour standards, bullying, SEND support, pastoral support, and the effective use of resources such as pupil premium - can have on improving pupil attendance.

### **We are committed to:**

- promoting and modelling high attendance and its benefits.
- ensuring equality and fairness for all.
- intervening early and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.
- building strong relationships with families to overcome barriers to attendance.
- working collaboratively with other agencies.
- ensuring parents follow the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any SEND they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- ensuring our attendance policy is clear and easily understood by all staff, parents and pupils.
- regularly monitoring and analysing attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require more support.

## 2. Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- Children and Families Act 2014





- School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Children and Young Persons Act 1963
- DfE, Working Together to Improve School Attendance, statutory guidance, updated July 2026
- DfE, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
- DfE, Children Missing Education: Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities and Schools, updated September 2025
- DfE, Providing Remote Education: Guidance for Schools.

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Complaints Policy and Procedure
- Behaviour and Relationships Policy
- SEND and Inclusion Policy
- Children Missing Education Policy

### 3. Absence

This school encourages and expects its pupils to attend school for the entire duration of the academic year, unless there are good reasons for the absence and the absence is authorised.

**There are two main categories of absence:**

- Authorised absence is when the school has accepted the explanation offered as satisfactory justification of the absence, or given approval in advance for the absence.
- Unauthorised absence is when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's absence after a parent's request.

Some examples of these absences can be found in appendix 2.

Where a parent or carer reports that their child is unable to attend school because of illness, the school will normally accept this notification as sufficient evidence and record the absence using the appropriate attendance code.

The school will not routinely request medical evidence to support illness absence. Where clarification is required to enable the school to accurately record the reason for absence, including where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness, the school may request reasonable supporting evidence.

Where evidence is considered necessary, the school will not be rigid about the form of evidence requested and will work with the family to identify what information is reasonably available. Parents and carers will not be expected to obtain evidence that incurs a charge.

Where illness absence is frequent, prolonged or forms part of a concerning pattern, the school





will work with the pupil and their family to understand any underlying barriers to attendance and identify appropriate support. Where relevant, this will include consideration of the pupil's SEND, SEMH needs, health needs and any reasonable adjustments that may be required.

Keeping a child off school for a minor ailment, such as a mild headache or cold, is not encouraged where the child is well enough to attend. Storyybrook staff will work with pupils and families to provide appropriate support to enable attendance wherever possible.

Where absence or patterns of illness raise concerns about a pupil's welfare or safety, these will be considered in accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

#### **4. Roles and Responsibilities**

The School's attendance officer is Mrs Rachel Tetchner and can be contacted via [deputy.storyybrook@storyy.group](mailto:deputy.storyybrook@storyy.group) or via the school office.

Staff, parents and pupils will be expected to contact the attendance officer for queries or concerns about attendance.

#### **The Governing Body will consistently:**

- monitor the implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school
- recognise and promote the importance of good attendance through the school's ethos and policies
- arrange attendance training for all relevant staff where appropriate to their role
- work with the senior leadership team to set goals for attendance and providing support and challenge around delivery against those goals
- regularly reviewing attendance data and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils needs
- ensure that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation
- make sure the attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- handle complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Policy.
- keep up to date with 'Keeping children safe in education' when reviewing this policy to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- ensure there is a Children Missing Education Policy in place and this is regularly reviewed and updated
- hold the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

#### **The headteacher is responsible for:**

- the overall strategic approach to attendance in school
- developing a clear vision for improving attendance
- monitoring attendance and the impact of interventions





- analysing attendance data and identifying areas of interventions and improvement
- Authorizing/ not authorising absence
- ensuring all parents are aware of the school's attendance expectations and procedures
- ensuring that every pupil has access to full-time education and will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence.

**All Storybrook staff are responsible for:**

- ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently
- modelling good attendance behaviour
- using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated
- where designated, taking the attendance register at the relevant times during the school day.

**School admin/office staff are responsible for:**

- taking calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system and letting the Attendance Lead know
- transferring calls from parents to the Attendance Lead or a DSL where appropriate, to provide them with more detailed support on attendance
- sending a text to parents after 9:30am if a child is absent a reason has not been provided
- providing the attendance data to the headteacher when requested
- supporting the Attendance Officer to ensure that statutory notifications and returns to the local authority are completed within the required timescales.

**The attendance officer is responsible for:**

- the day-to-day implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school
- communicating with pupils and parents with regard to attendance
- following up on incidents of persistent poor attendance
- ensuring that statutory attendance, admission and deletion returns are made to the local authority in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

**We ask of parents/carers:**

- provide accurate and up-to-date contact details
- provide the school with more than one emergency contact number
- update the school if their details change
- make sure their child attends every day on time.
- call the school to report their child's absence before **09:00am** on the day of the absence and advise when they expect to return
- ensure that, where possible, appointments for their children are made outside of the school day





- seek support, where necessary, to maintain good attendance, by contacting the Attendance Officer

Please see Section 16 of this policy for further information about parent/ carer partnership work.

## **5. Attendance expectations**

Storybrook has high expectations for pupils' attendance and punctuality and ensures that these expectations are communicated regularly to parents and pupils.

Pupils will be expected to attend school punctually every day they are required to be at school, for the full day.

- The morning register will be marked by 09:00
- The morning register will close at 09:15
- The afternoon register will be marked by 12:45
- The afternoon register will close at 13:00

A child who arrives after the taking of the register is marked as late and the reason given and the number of minutes they are late are recorded. The number of minutes late each month is monitored and will be shared with parents/ carers if concerns or patterns arise.

**To ensure the school has effective procedures for managing absence, the attendance officer and Headteacher, will:**

- establish a range of evidence-based interventions to address barriers to attendance.
- monitor the implementation and quality of escalation procedures and seek robust evidence of the escalation procedures that work.
- attend or lead attendance reviews in line with escalation procedures.
- establish robust escalation procedures which will be initiated before absence becomes a problem by:
  - Sending letters to parents.
  - Informal meetings/phone calls with parents
  - Engaging with LA attendance teams.
  - Consider additional provision support
  - Using fixed penalty notices.

The school will use attendance data, in line with the 'Monitoring and analysing absence' section of this policy, to develop specific strategies to improve attendance where patterns of absence are emerging. These strategies will be developed on a case-by-case basis and will consider the particular needs of the pupils whom the intervention is designed to target.

**The school will acknowledge outstanding attendance and punctuality in the following way:**

- In-school rewards







- Off-site trips
- Texts/ calls home
- Celebration Assemblies
- Headteacher Postcards

## 6. Absence procedures

Parents/ carers will be required to contact the school office via telephone before 9:00am on the first day of their child's absence - they will be expected to provide an explanation for the absence and an estimation of how long the absence will last, e.g. one school day. We ask that parents/ carers do call each morning, despite predicted absence days, to confirm whether or not their child will be attending that school.

Where a pupil is absent, and their parents have not contacted the school by close of morning register to report the absence, the attendance officer will contact the parent by telephone call as soon as is practicable on the first day that they do not attend school.

### Attendance policy - welfare checks

If we have not received confirmation explaining a pupil's absence by **10:30am**, a welfare check will be undertaken.

#### This may involve:

- Telephone calls, text messages or emails to parents/carers
- Contact with other individuals listed as emergency contacts
- A home **visit** by school staff
- Contact with other education settings attended by siblings, where appropriate
- Contact with professionals already supporting the child or family, such as Children's Social Care, Early Help, Family Support Workers or health professionals
- Where there are immediate or significant concerns about a child's safety or welfare, contact with the police or other appropriate safeguarding services
- Further action in line with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection **Policy** where we are unable to establish that the child is safe.

These actions are taken to help the school establish the child's whereabouts and ensure their safety and welfare.

### Day 2 and subsequent days - continued unexplained absence

Where a pupil remains absent and the school has been unable to establish the reason for absence or confirm the pupil's whereabouts and welfare, safeguarding and welfare enquiries will be escalated.







The school will continue to make reasonable enquiries until the pupil's whereabouts and circumstances have been established. Actions will be proportionate to the individual circumstances and level of risk and may include:

- further contact with parents/carers and emergency contacts
- a home visit
- consultation with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- contact with professionals or agencies known to be involved with the child or family
- contact with the Local Authority's Attendance or Children Missing Education service
- referral to Children's Social Care
- contact with the police where there are concerns that the child may be at immediate risk of harm.

Where safeguarding concerns exist, action will be taken immediately and will not be delayed until a particular day of absence.

**The school will always follow up any absences to:**

- ascertain the reason for the absence
- ensure the proper safeguarding action is being taken
- identify whether the absence is authorised or not
- identify and record the appropriate national attendance or absence code in the school's electronic attendance register.

Where a pupil has failed to return to school within 10 school days following the expiry of a leave of absence, or has been continuously absent without authorisation for at least 20 school days, the school will not automatically remove the pupil from the admission register.

The school will work jointly with the local authority to make reasonable enquiries to establish the pupil's location and circumstances, in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and statutory Children Missing Education guidance.

A pupil's name will only be deleted from the admission register where one of the statutory grounds for deletion in regulation 9 is met and all requirements attached to that ground have been satisfied. Where the pupil is located, the school and local authority must have no reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will attend the school again before deletion under the relevant 10-day or 20-day absence grounds.

Where there are concerns about the pupil's welfare or safety, the school will take immediate safeguarding action in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Children Missing Education procedures.

## **7. Attendance Escalation**

Regular analysis of absenteeism will be carried out and letters may be sent to parents if attendance falls below expected levels. If attendance does not improve, parents may be called in to discuss the matter with the Attendance Officer or Headteacher.

Further absence may result in referral to the Education Welfare Service and may result in a Fixed Penalty Notice or prosecution.

Please see the flowchart below to explain the procedure:





|                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                        |
|------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Stage 1</b>                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>93% - 96% attendance</li> <li>Three or more late arrivals over a half-term period</li> <li>An unexplained or unauthorised absence</li> </ul>                                                                 | Letter 1               |
| <b>Stage 2</b>                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>90% - 93% attendance</li> <li>Five or more late arrivals over a half term period</li> <li>Subsequent unexplained or unauthorised absences</li> </ul>                                                         | Letter 2               |
| <b>Stage 3</b>                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendance below 90%</li> <li>Continued late arrivals despite support offered at previous tiers</li> <li>Continued unexplained or unauthorised absences despite support offered at previous tiers</li> </ul> | Attendance Action Plan |
| Stage 1 will receive a first letter            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                        |
| Stage 2 will receive a second letter           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                        |
| Stage 3 will require an attendance action plan |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                        |

At Storybrook, we aim to support our families and would only refer to wider services or for fines, if we are unable to successfully engage pupils and/ or parents/ carers. We aim to work with families to identify whether the pupil needs further support from us or wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals.

Only when support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with, will we issue a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention; this would always be a last resort.

## 8. Attendance Register

The school will maintain its admission and attendance registers electronically in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

The attendance register will be taken at the start of each morning session and once during each afternoon session. For every registered pupil, the school will record whether the pupil is present or absent and, where absent, the appropriate national attendance or absence code will be used to record the reason.

The school will use the national attendance and absence codes prescribed by the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. Attendance information will be recorded accurately and updated where appropriate in accordance with the Regulations and statutory guidance.

Where the reason for absence is not established before the register closes, Code N will be





recorded. The school will follow up the absence and, where the reason is subsequently established, amend the register to use the appropriate code. Where a reason has not been established within five school days, the school will amend the entry to Code O.

Every entry in the admission and attendance registers will be preserved for at least six years from the date on which the entry was made.

The registers will be made available for inspection and extracts provided to authorised persons where required by law.

## **9. Authorising parental absence requests**

Parents will be required to request certain types of absence in advance. All requests for absence will be handled by the Headteacher or Attendance Officer for consideration - the decision to grant or refuse the request will be at the sole discretion of the Headteacher, taking the best interests of the pupil and the impact on the pupil's SEMH and learning into account. The Headteacher's decision is not subject to appeal; however, the school will be sympathetic to requests for absence by parents/ carers and will discuss with you transparently and with fairness.

### **Leave of absence**

Parents and carers are expected to arrange holidays and other planned absences outside of school term time wherever possible.

Requests for leave of absence must be made in advance to the Headteacher. Each request will be considered individually, taking account of the specific circumstances and relevant background context. Leave of absence will only be granted where the Headteacher considers that there are exceptional circumstances or where another permitted reason for leave applies.

Where leave is granted, the Headteacher will determine the number of school days for which the pupil may be absent.

Family holidays during term time will not normally be considered exceptional circumstances.

When considering a request for leave of absence, the Headteacher will consider all relevant circumstances. This may include the nature and circumstances of the request, the amount of school time that would be missed, the pupil's individual needs and circumstances, their attendance record, the potential impact of the absence on their education and any significant family, health or safeguarding circumstances.

These factors will inform the Headteacher's decision but will not operate as automatic grounds for refusal. Each request will be considered on its individual circumstances.

Where leave has not been granted, or where a pupil remains absent beyond the period of leave that has been authorised, the absence will be recorded using the appropriate national attendance or absence code.

Leave of absence cannot be granted retrospectively.

## **10. Illness and healthcare appointments**





Parents/ carers will be expected to make medical or dental appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, parents will be expected to obtain approval for their child's absence to attend such appointments as far in advance as is practicable. Parents/ carers will be responsible for ensuring their child misses only the amount of time necessary to attend the appointment.

## **11. Religious observance**

Parents/carers are asked to notify the school in advance, wherever possible, where their child will be absent for religious observance.

The school will record an absence as authorised using Code R where the absence falls on a day that is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs.

Where there is uncertainty about whether a day has been exclusively set apart for religious observance, the school may seek advice from the relevant religious body.

Where a religious body has set apart a single day for religious observance and a parent/carer requests additional days of absence, only the day exclusively set apart for religious observance will be recorded using Code R. Any additional absence will be considered separately in accordance with the leave of absence provisions within this policy.

## **12. SEND and health-related absences**

Storybrook recognises that pupils with SEND and/or health conditions, including SEMH, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers, and will provide additional provision to support pupils who find attending school difficult.

In line with the SEND and Inclusion Policy and Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy, the school will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for disabled pupils to reduce barriers to attendance, in line with any Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), Individual Education Plans (IEPs) or Medical Plans that have been implemented. The school will secure additional support from external partners to help bolster attendance where appropriate.

Where the school/parent has concerns that a pupil's non-attendance may be related to mental health issues, a meeting will be arranged to discuss the issue and whether there are any contributory factors to their child's lack of attendance. Where staff have a mental health concern about a pupil that is also a safeguarding concern, they will inform the DSL and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will be followed. All pupils will be supported with their mental health in accordance with the school's Behaviour and Relationships policy.

**If a pupil is unable to attend school for long periods of time due to their health, the school will:**

- make a sickness return to the local authority where a pupil of compulsory school age has been recorded as absent using Code I and the school has reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will be unable to attend because of sickness for at least 15 consecutive school days, or will reach a total of at least 15 school days of absence because of sickness during the current school year
- make the return as soon as the school has reasonable grounds to believe that the relevant threshold will be met and provide the information required by the School Attendance (Pupil





Registration) (England) Regulations 2024

- provide the local authority with relevant information about the pupil's needs, capabilities and programme of work where appropriate
- help the pupil reintegrate at school when they return
- make sure the pupil is kept informed about school events and clubs
- encourage the pupil to stay in contact with other pupils during their absence, where appropriate.

**To support the attendance of pupils with SEND and/or health issues, the school will consider:**

- holding termly meetings to evaluate any implemented reasonable adjustments
- incorporating a pastoral support plan
- carrying out strengths and difficulties questionnaires/ boxall profiles/ well-being assessments
- identifying pupils' unmet needs through early intervention
- using an internal or external specialist to gather support
- ensuring a pupil can have somewhere quiet to spend lunch and breaktimes
- implementing a system whereby pupils can request to leave a classroom if they feel they need time out
- considering a temporary part-time timetable or phased return, where appropriate, in accordance with the requirements set out in Section 13 of this policy
- small group work or one-to-one help in lessons, where possible and necessary
- tailored support to meet their individual needs

When supporting any pupil struggling with attendance, Storyybrook will always use trauma-informed strategies, in line with our Behaviour and Relationships policy. We have a solid understanding of Emotionally Based School Avoidance and will work with families to ensure the right provision is in place to enable their child to attend school regularly. This may include, but is not limited to:

- agreed soft starts
- individualised reintegration plans which may involve the backward-chaining model
- adapting the content or structure of individual timetables to support the pupil, without reducing their entitlement to full-time education unless a temporary part-time timetable has been agreed in accordance with Section 13.
- allowing for more one to one adult support, where necessary and possible

### **13. Alternative Provision and Part-time timetables**

#### **Alternative provision**

Where a pupil attends alternative provision while remaining on roll at Storyybrook, the school will maintain appropriate oversight of the placement, including the pupil's attendance, safeguarding and welfare.

The school will:





- establish clear arrangements with the provider for confirming the pupil's attendance at each session
- ensure that any unexplained or unexpected absence is communicated to Storyybrook promptly and followed up in accordance with the school's safeguarding and attendance procedures
- record attendance using the appropriate national attendance or absence code, according to the nature of the provision and the pupil's registration status
- maintain regular communication with the provider and relevant professionals regarding the pupil's attendance, engagement and welfare
- review the placement regularly to ensure that it remains appropriate and continues to meet the pupil's needs.

Where Code B is used for an approved educational activity, the school will ensure that the activity is supervised and that appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place. Code B will not be used for unsupervised activity or where a pupil is completing schoolwork at home.

Where a pupil is registered at another school and is expected to attend that school for a particular session, Code D will be used where the statutory requirements for dual registration are met.

Where education has been arranged by the local authority, the school will use the appropriate attendance code in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and current DfE guidance.

### **Part-time timetables**

In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, the school may agree a temporary part-time timetable as part of a wider support, health care or reintegration plan

A part-time timetable will:

- be agreed with the parent or carer
- have a clear purpose and be in the pupil's best interests
- be used for the shortest period necessary
- have a proposed end date and a clear plan from the outset for increasing attendance towards full-time education
- be subject to regular review with the pupil and their parent or carer
- take account of the pupil's SEND, SEMH, health and safeguarding needs and any reasonable adjustments required
- be accurately recorded in the attendance register using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes.

A part-time timetable will never be used to manage a pupil's behaviour or as an alternative to formal suspension. It will not be regarded as a long-term solution.

Where a pupil has an EHC plan, the school will discuss the part-time timetable with the local authority so that the pupil's support can be reviewed where necessary. Where a pupil has a social worker, the school will keep the social worker informed and involved. The school will also inform the local authority where required, including where a pupil on a part-time timetable is looked after and/or has an EHC plan.







Any part-time timetable will be implemented in accordance with the requirements set out above and will not be used as a behaviour-management strategy or informal suspension.

#### 14. Leave during lunch times

Parents/ carers may be permitted to take their child away from the school premises during lunch times with permission from the Headteacher - it is at the Headteacher's discretion as to whether a pupil will be allowed to leave the premises.

Parents/ carers will be required to submit a written request, outlining the reasons for their child to leave the premises during lunch time - this request will be submitted to the Headteacher. The Headteacher will consider the request and will invite the parents/ carers into the school for a discussion regarding any concerns, as well as the timely return of their child at the end of lunch time and their child's behaviour when not on the school premises. The Headteacher reserves the right to grant or refuse a request and will inform the parent in writing of their decision within one week of the request.

Should this be agreed, pupils will leave the school premises within 10 minutes of the start of lunch and will return no later than 5 minutes before the end of lunch.

Parents/ carers will be required to meet their child at the school office when taking them off the premises - the pupil will be signed out and back in. No pupil will leave the premises before the member of staff in the office has ensured that they have signed out.

The Headteacher reserves the right to withdraw their permission at any time - this may occur, for example, where there are attendance concerns. Any decision to withdraw permission will be in writing, explaining the reasons for the Headteacher's decision. If permission is withdrawn, parents/ carers will not be entitled to appeal the decision. Parents/ carers will be able to withdraw their request at any time - the request will be submitted in writing to the Headteacher.

Permission will be updated on a termly basis - letters will be sent to parents/ carers at the beginning of term to confirm whether they would like their request to continue.

*Please note: Storyybrook encourage all children to remain in school during lunchtimes, wherever possible, to support their social development.*

#### 15. Absconding

Pupils will not be permitted to leave the school premises during the school day unless they have permission from the school.

**The following procedures will be taken in the event of a pupil going missing whilst at school:**

- The member of staff who has noticed the missing pupil will inform the headteacher immediately.
- The office staff will also be informed as they will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search.
- A member of staff will stay with the rest of the class, and all other available members of staff will conduct a thorough search of the school premises as directed by the headteacher.
- The following areas will be systematically searched:







- All classrooms
- All toilets
- Any outbuildings
- The school grounds
- If a pupil leaves the site without permission, they will subsequently be supervised at all times. The supervising member of staff should make all practical efforts to take school identification and a mobile phone to call for support if required. If a member of staff is supervising a pupil without the phone, they should inform a colleague as they leave the building, they will receive support as soon as possible.
- If contact is lost with the pupil, then parents/ carers and police should be informed immediately.
- If a pupil does not respond, or is unlikely to respond, to staff instructions to bring them back to school the member of staff should request the school contact the police, staff should continue to monitor the pupil until the police arrive. All incidents of unauthorised offsite activity should be recorded as a serious incident.
- If a pupil is threatening to abscond or is in the process of absconding, staff should, if possible, use appropriate reasonable force (See Restrictive Physical Intervention Policy) to keep the pupils safe to prevent the pupil leaving the premises. If a pupil leaves the premises without permission then off-site experiences may be limited for health and safety reasons, as a protective measure, for a specified time; this will be discussed and agreed with parents/ carers and any other relevant stakeholders.
- All such incidents will be recorded formally, in accordance with the school Behaviour and Relationships Policy.

The Headteacher, alongside all Storyybrook staff, will take the appropriate action to ensure that pupils understand they must not leave the premises, and next steps will be issued if deemed necessary. Appropriate procedures will be followed in accordance with the Behaviour and Relationships Policy.

The Headteacher will carry out a full investigation and will draw a conclusion as to how the incident occurred. A written report will be produced, and policies and procedures will be reviewed in accordance with the outcome where necessary.

## 16. Working with parents to improve and promote attendance

Storyybrook recognises the importance of building and maintaining strong, respectful relationships with parents/ carers and families to ensure their trust and engagement. Open and honest communication will be maintained with pupils and their families about the expectations of school life, attendance and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them. The school will liaise with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, e.g. social services.

Storyybrook will ensure that there are two sets of emergency contact details for each pupil wherever possible to ensure the school has additional options for getting in touch with adults responsible for a pupil where the pupil is absent without notification or authorisation.

Storyybrook will ensure that parents/ carers are aware of their legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and to facilitate their child's legal right to a full-time education - parents/ carers will be made aware that this means their child must attend school every day





that it is open, except for in certain circumstances, e.g. sickness or absences that have been authorised by the Headteacher in advance. The school will regularly inform parents/ carers about their child's levels of attendance, absence and punctuality, and will ensure that parents/ carers are aware of the benefits that regular attendance at school can have for their child educationally, socially and developmentally.

If a pattern of absence becomes problematic, the Attendance Officer will work collaboratively with the pupil and their parents/ carers to improve attendance by addressing the specific barriers that prevent the pupil from being able to attend school regularly. The school will always take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for pupil absence and will approach families to offer support rather than immediately reach for punitive approaches; these will always be a last resort.

Where these barriers are related to the pupil's experience in school, e.g. bullying, the Attendance Officer will work with the Headteacher and any relevant school staff, e.g. pastoral staff, to address this. Where the barriers are outside of the school's control, e.g. they are related to issues within the pupil's family, the attendance officer will liaise with any relevant external agencies or authorities, e.g. children's social care or the LA, and will encourage parents/ carers to access support that they may need.

#### **17. Persistent and Severe Absences**

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. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's strategy for improving attendance.

**There are various groups of pupils who may be vulnerable to high, persistent and severe absences, such as:**

- Children with a social worker
- Children Looked After (CLA)
- Young Carers
- Pupils who are eligible for FSM
- Pupils with EAL
- Pupils with SEND
- Pupils who have faced bullying and/or discrimination

**Storybrook will use a number of methods to help support pupils at risk of persistent or severe absence to attend school. These include:**

- Offering additional support/provision to build confidence and bridge gaps.
- Meeting with pupils and families to discuss patterns of absence, barriers to attendance, and any other problems they may be having.
- Leading weekly check-ins to review progress and the impact of support.
- Making regular contact with families to discuss progress.





- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant

Where a pupil at risk of persistent or severe absence, is also at increased risk of harm, the school will work in conjunction with all relevant authorities, e.g. social services, to support the pupil in line with the school's duty of care. The school will also bear in mind that the continuation of severe or persistent absences following intervention may constitute neglect, and will escalate any concerns in this regard in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

### **Penalty notice and legal intervention**

Storybrook will take a support-first approach to attendance. Legal intervention will be considered where support is not appropriate, has not been successful or has not been engaged with.

The national threshold for considering a penalty notice is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling period of 10 school weeks. The sessions do not need to be consecutive and may span different terms or school years. Unauthorised absence may include absence recorded using different unauthorised absence codes, including arrival after the register has closed.

Where the national threshold is met, the school will consider each case individually and determine whether a penalty notice is appropriate, whether further support should be provided, or whether another legal intervention is more appropriate.

Where support is appropriate but has not been successful or engaged with, a Notice to Improve may be issued as a final opportunity for parents or carers to engage with support and improve attendance before a penalty notice is considered.

Where a penalty notice is appropriate, it will be issued in accordance with the National Framework for Penalty Notices and the local authority's Code of Conduct.

The first penalty notice issued to a parent in respect of a particular child within a three-year period is £80 if paid within 21 days, rising to £160 if paid within 28 days.

A second penalty notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within three years of the first is £160, payable within 28 days, with no reduced rate.

A maximum of two attendance-related penalty notices may be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within a three-year period. Where the national threshold is met for a third or subsequent time within that period, other legal interventions, including prosecution, may be considered.

The school will work with the local authority where legal intervention is being considered and will continue to consider the pupil's individual circumstances, SEND, SEMH needs and any barriers to attendance.

A separate penalty notice may be issued where a parent allows their child to be present in a





public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first five school days of a suspension or permanent exclusion, where the relevant legal requirements are met. This type of penalty notice is separate from the National Framework for attendance-related penalty notices and does not count towards the two-notice limit for attendance-related offences. The penalty is £120, reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days.

Where attendance does not improve following intervention, the school will continue to work with the local authority to determine whether further legal intervention is appropriate. Prosecution will only be considered where appropriate and in accordance with the relevant legal framework.

### **18. Pupil Voice**

Storybrook is committed to working closely with our pupils in a child-centred manner, to ensure their thoughts and experiences are captured. Therefore, throughout any attendance procedures, pupils will be asked to share their feedback.

This may be done in one of the following ways:

- Joining attendance action plan meetings
- Pupil voice questionnaire (general or individual)
- RAG rating their timetables to highlight any areas of concerns or patterns
- Regular check-ins with a key adult

### **19. Monitoring and analysing absence**

The Attendance Officer will monitor and analyse attendance data regularly to ensure that intervention is delivered quickly to address habitual absence at the first signs.

**The school will collect data regarding punctuality and authorised and unauthorised absence, for:**

- the school cohort as a whole
- individual year groups/classes
- individual pupils
- demographic groups, e.g. pupils from different ethnic groups or economic backgrounds
- other groups of pupils, e.g. pupils with SEND, LAC and pupils eligible for FSM.
- pupils who are persistently or severely absent, or at risk of becoming so
- pupils known or previously known to children's social care
- pupils attending alternative provision or following a part-time timetable, where applicable.

The Attendance Officer and Headteacher will conduct a thorough analysis of the above data on a half-termly and full-yearly basis to identify patterns and trends. This will include identifying, for each group:

- Patterns in use of certain codes.





- Particular days of poor attendance.
- Historic trends of attendance and absence.
- Barriers to attendance.

The school will also monitor pupils joining and leaving the school roll, including the reasons for removal, to identify any unusual patterns and ensure that all removals are lawful and in the pupil's best interests.

The Attendance Officer will provide reports to staff across the school to enable them to track the attendance of pupils and to implement attendance procedures. The attendance officer will also be responsible for monitoring how attendance data changes in response to any interventions implemented to increase attendance in future.

The governing board will regularly review attendance data, including examinations of recent and historic trends, and will support the SLT in setting goals and prioritising areas of focus for attendance support based on this data.

The school will also benchmark its attendance data against local-, regional- and national-level data to identify areas of success and areas for improvement, and will share practice which has been shown to be effective with other schools. The school will also set an annual attendance target, shared with Governors.

## **20. Training of staff**

Storybrook recognise that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, staff will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk pupils as part of their induction and refresher training.

The governing board will ensure that teachers and support staff receive training in line with this policy as part of their induction. Following this initial training, staff will receive regular and ongoing training as part of their development.

### **Training will cover at least the following:**

- The importance of good attendance
- That absence is almost invariably a result of wider circumstances
- The legal requirements on schools, e.g. the keeping of registers
- The school's strategies and procedures for monitoring and improving attendance
- The school's procedures for multi-agency working to provide intensive support for pupils who need it.

The governing board will provide dedicated and enhanced attendance training to the attendance officer and other staff with specific attendance functions in their role - this will include training regarding interpreting and analysing attendance data and supporting pupils to overcome barriers to attendance.





Staff will receive training to ensure they understand that increased absence from school could indicate a safeguarding concern and know how such concerns should be managed.

## 21. Admission register and statutory returns

Storybrook will maintain an accurate admission register in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

A pupil's name will only be deleted from the admission register where a statutory ground for deletion under regulation 9 is met and all requirements attached to that ground have been satisfied. A pupil's name will never be removed for any other reason. The school recognises that removing a pupil from the admission register other than in accordance with the Regulations may constitute off-rolling.

Where a pupil's name is added to the admission register outside a standard transition point, the school will make a new pupil return to the local authority by the end of the fifth day after the pupil's name is entered on the register. The return will contain the information required by the Regulations. The school will also make a new pupil return at a standard transition point where requested to do so by the local authority.

Where a pupil's name is deleted from the admission register, the school will make a deletion return to the local authority where required by the Regulations. This requirement does not normally apply where the pupil is removed at or after the end of the final term of the school year when they are in the school's most senior year group, unless the local authority has requested the information.

A deletion return will include the information required by the Regulations, including:

- the pupil's full name
- the pupil's address
- the full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil normally lives
- at least one telephone number by which each such parent can be contacted in an emergency
- where applicable, the pupil's future address, the full name and address of the parent with whom the pupil will live and the date they will begin living there
- where applicable, the name of the pupil's new school and the date they began or will begin attending
- the statutory ground under regulation 9 on which the pupil's name has been deleted.

The school will also make attendance returns and sickness returns to the local authority in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and the procedures set out elsewhere in this policy.

Names will never be retrospectively deleted from the admission or attendance register. The registers will remain an accurate record of who was a registered pupil and their attendance at any given time. A pupil's attendance will continue to be recorded until





the date on which their name is lawfully deleted from the admission register.

## 22. Monitoring and review

Attendance and punctuality will be monitored throughout the year. The school's attendance target is reviewed annually.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher. The next scheduled review date for this policy is 29 August 2027.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.







## Appendix 1 - National Attendance Codes

The school will use the national attendance and absence codes prescribed by the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and will update this appendix where national coding requirements change.

| 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                                                         |
| Absence - 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                  | Pupil is unable to attend as they are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In police detention</li> <li>• Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or</li> <li>• Detained under a sentence of detention</li> </ul> |





|                               |                                             |                                                                                                                                                                 |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 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 - Absences: Definitions and examples

### **Absence:**

- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Not attending school for any reason

### **Authorised absence:**

- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave
- An absence due to a family emergency

### **Unauthorised absence:**

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Arrival at school after the register has closed at 9:15am
- Absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time (unless authorised by the Headteacher in *exceptional* circumstances)

