

ATTENDANCE and PUNCTUALITY POLICY

V1

December 2024

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1.0 Policy Statement

- 1.1 The aims of this policy and supplementary local protocols set out the expectations for all stakeholders in improving school attendance across our Trust to achieve our mission of 'Creating remarkable schools where no child left behind'. We understand that securing good attendance is everybody's business and in everyone's interest.
- 1.2 As a Trust, we understand that the barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates, and are often specific to individual pupils and families. This policy sets out how all pupils will be supported to attend school regularly.
- 1.3 Beckfoot Trust recognises that good attendance begins with school being a place where pupils want to be. The foundation of securing good attendance is that each school is a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environment where all pupils enjoy belonging, are ready to learn and are determined to succeed.
- 1.4 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 or carer to make sure their child receives that education and ensure their child attends regularly at their registered school.
- 1.5 This policy and each school's supplementary local attendance protocol will explain:
 - What Beckfoot Trust schools expect in terms of attendance and punctuality
 - Who does what in our schools and across Beckfoot Trust
 - Our daily procedures and routines for attendance and punctuality
 - How we recognise and celebrate good attendance and punctuality
 - How we use attendance and punctuality data in our schools
 - How we will reduce persistent and severe absence
 - How we will use legal interventions if support is not appropriate
 - How our policy supports all pupils including those with SEND, complex health needs and vulnerable groups of learners

2.0 Scope and Purpose

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to establish clear guidelines for improving attendance in our schools. It outlines our expectations for attendance and punctuality as well as clear procedures for all members of our school community: staff, pupils and parents or carers.

2.2 Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [Working Together to Improve School Attendance](#) and [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
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments)
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

It also refers to:

- School census guidance
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools
- Children Missing Education

As a nationally focussed yet Bradford serving trust, we work closely with the Local Authority and apply all their local protocols, for example:

- Managing part-time temporary timetables to support inclusion
- Reporting of children missing in education (CME) and the management of registers in relation to this
- Working with them on any local attendance initiatives

2.3 Links with other policies

- Child Protection and Safeguarding
- Trust Behaviour Policy
- Trust Anti Bullying Policy
- Trust Exclusions and Suspensions Policy
- Child Health Needs Cannot Attend School Policy
- Medical Needs Policy

3.0 Overarching Principles

3.1 Beckfoot Trust's commitment to good attendance

A summary of what Beckfoot Trust schools will do to ensure good attendance is summarised here:

1. Build strong relationships with families to ensure all pupils can and want to come to school
2. Develop, maintain and promote a culture of high attendance and punctuality
3. Work with families to identify and remove barriers to good attendance and punctuality
4. Have a clear policy and local protocol for attendance and punctuality which all staff, pupils and parents understand
5. Maintain accurate admissions and attendance records
6. Regularly monitor and analyse attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts requiring support with attendance and punctuality and put effective strategies in place
7. Share information and work collaboratively with other schools, the local authority and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe
8. Be mindful of pupils who are absent from school due to mental or physical ill health or their special educational needs and/or disabilities and provide them with additional support

3.2 The importance of good attendance

The research tells us that there are three main benefits to good attendance:

- Better learning: Pupils who attend well achieve well
- Improved safeguarding: Being in school regularly helps to protect children from risk of harm
- Secure friendships: Pupils who attend well, are more likely to establish and maintain good friendships leading to better wellbeing

3.3 What do we expect from pupils?

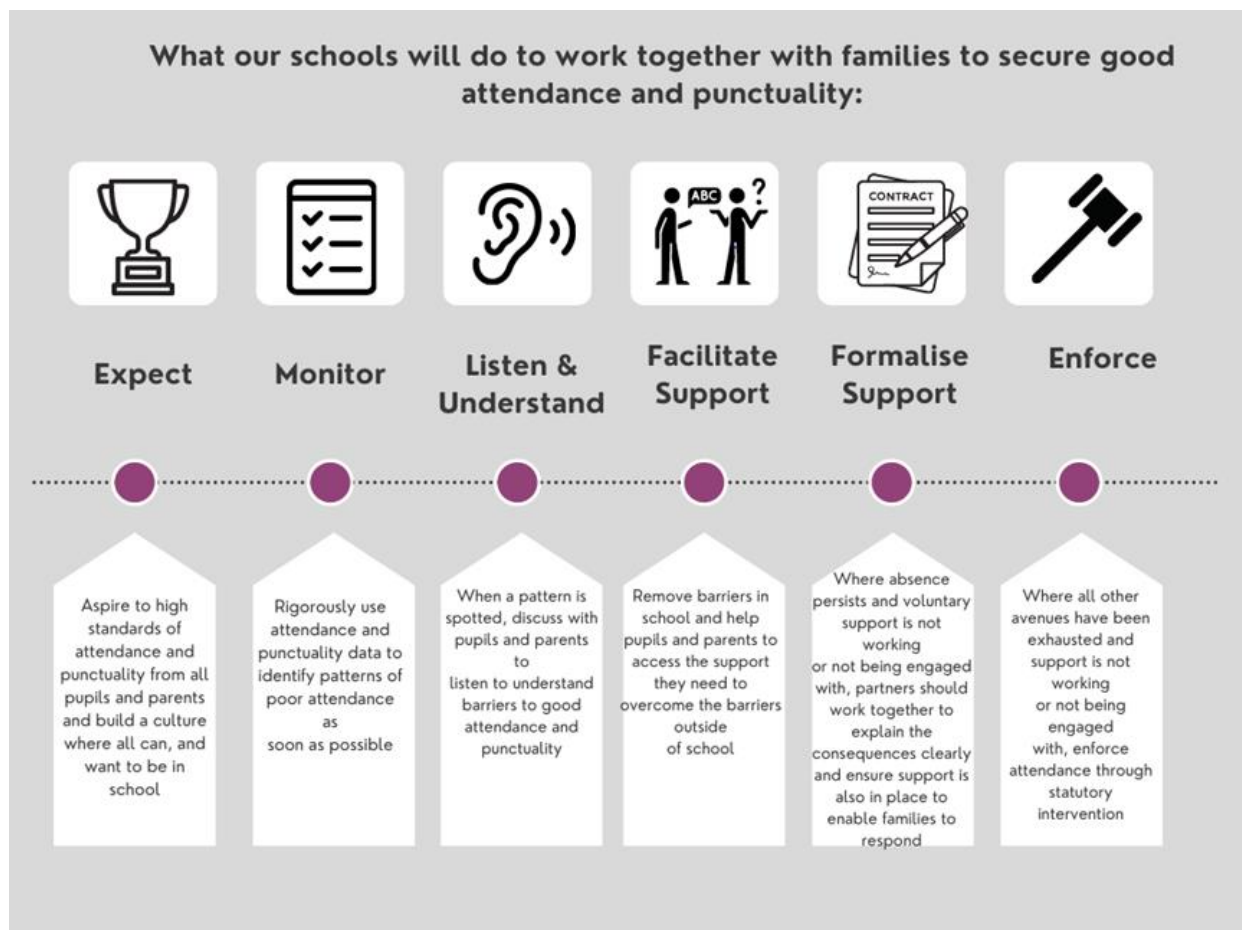
Beckfoot Trust schools expect pupils to:

- Attend school every day
- Be on time
- Be prepared for school by having enough sleep, wearing the correct uniform and having the right equipment

4.0 Responsibilities and Arrangements

4.1 Attendance and punctuality support overview

This diagram explains what Beckfoot Trust schools will do to support good attendance and punctuality.



4.2 The Trust Board / Local School Committees

The Trust Board is responsible for:

- Recognising the importance of school attendance and promote it across each school's ethos and policies
- Ensuring school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties

- Regularly reviewing attendance data, discussing, and challenging trends, and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Ensuring school staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Sharing effective practice on attendance management and improvement across Trust schools
- Endorsing the operation of the Local Authority Penalty Notice scheme in Beckfoot Trust Schools

LSCs are responsible for:

- Being informed of school strategies to improve attendance and punctuality
- Providing support and challenge around attendance data

4.3 Who does what in the Central Team?

Each school has their own attendance and punctuality local protocol with photographs of key staff in school to contact. In our Trust we have:

4.3.1 Central Team Attendance Lead

The lead for attendance across Beckfoot Trust will lead the strategic direction of attendance and punctuality across the Trust. They will quality assure the implementation of the attendance and punctuality policy and protocols in each school to ensure strategies are showing impact. They will provide guidance and support, signposting to external agencies where required.

4.3.2 Head of Data and Systems

The Head of Data and Systems will ensure that all schools have the systems and processes they require to be able to analyse their own school's attendance and punctuality data in an efficient manner. They will endeavour that Beckfoot Trust schools are at the forefront in using technology such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) to support their individual attendance and punctuality improvement journey.

4.4 Who does what in our schools?

Attendance is everyone's business. All members of school have a role to play in securing good attendance. Please see local attendance protocols for more detail for each individual school.

4.4.1 Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy and local protocol for attendance at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data; acting upon the data and reporting to LSC and the Trust Board as required
- Supporting staff with monitoring and supporting the attendance of individual pupils
- Quality assuring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising the attendance officer to be able to do so
- Working with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health, and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs

- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels

4.4.2 **A Senior Attendance Champion**

Each school has appointed a Senior Attendance Champion who is a member of the school's senior leadership team. The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Quality assuring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Liaising with colleagues, pupils, parents/carers and external agencies (including Local Authority), where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Directing pastoral staff based on the needs of the school, pupils and families
- Planning targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

4.4.3 **SENCo and Designated Safeguarding Lead**

The SENCo and DSLs are responsible for:

- Working with pupils and their families to identify and remove barriers to attendance
- Coordinating support in and beyond the school for pupils struggling to attend school
- Liaising with external agencies where required

4.4.4 **Attendance Officer and/or Administrators**

The school attendance officer or school administrator are responsible for:

- Collating and managing data using the Management Information System (MIS)
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and report concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance, and the headteacher
- Working with the local authority (Attendance Support Officers and Education Safeguarding Team) to tackle persistent and severe absence
- Advising the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

4.4.5 **Class Teachers and/or Form Tutors and/or other Pastoral Staff**

Class teachers/form tutors and other pastoral staff (see local protocols) are responsible for:

- Recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1)
- Encouraging good attendance by making classrooms/school a place where all children can and want to be
- Supporting colleagues in removing barriers for pupils in their class/form
- Taking direction from the Senior Attendance Champion

4.5 Daily procedures and routines

The attendance register is taken twice each day: one for the morning session and one for the afternoon session. Registers will close 30 minutes after they open. Any arrivals into a morning or afternoon session more than 30 minutes late will be marked as an unauthorised absence unless a suitable reason is provided (e.g. medical appointment). Please see each individual school's protocol for what to do if a child is late to school.

All pupils are expected to attend school each day it is open unless the pupil is too ill to attend school, there is an unavoidable cause, it is a religious holiday for the pupil, or absences authorised in advance by the school.

Please refer to each school's local protocol and/or school website for:

- times of the school day;
- register opening and closing times;
- late procedures;
- how to report absences
- requesting leave of absence;
- first day absence calls and home visits.

Registers will then be checked and cross referenced with any messages from parents or carers about absence. See Appendix 1 for a list of codes used for the registers and Appendix 2 for a list of Alternative Provision Codes for Bradford LA.

When a child is absent and no reason has been provided by the parent or carer, contact will be made by the attendance team to establish the whereabouts of the pupil. All available emergency contacts may be called. This is to ensure that the child is safe and to offer or signpost support if required.

Home visits may be carried out for safeguarding checks and/ or to offer support. Please see each school's local protocol for individual school procedures.

External agencies such as Children's Social Care, School Nurse Team, West Yorkshire Police and local schools where siblings or relatives are known to attend may be contacted if a child is absent and the reason for absence is unknown.

4.6 Medical and dental appointments

We encourage medical and dental appointments to be made outside of school hours wherever possible. If an appointment is required in school time, contact should be made to the school in advance and evidence of the appointment (e.g. letter or text) provided in order for the absence to be authorised.

4.7 Holidays

Holidays in term time will not be authorised by headteachers in our schools and could lead to penalty notices being issued. Please see information below about penalty notices.

4.8 Recognising and celebrating good attendance

Our schools will recognise good attendance and celebrate with pupils and their families. Please see each school's individual protocol for what this looks like in each school.

4.9 Using attendance data

All our schools will use daily, weekly, half termly and annual attendance and punctuality data to analyse what is working well and what needs to improve. The data will be compared to local schools as well as the national attendance data held by the Department for Education (DfE). This data will drive initiatives to improve attendance and punctuality in each school.

Data collected for individual pupils will enable schools to target support to help improve attendance and/or punctuality for individuals and groups.

Data will also be used to quality assure the work being done in schools to improve attendance to ensure they are focussing our attention on the right things. Attendance figures will be used, as well as feedback from families and children to inform school strategy.

Attendance and punctuality data will be shared with families through achievement reports. Families can also check their child's current attendance via the apps that each school uses. If you believe there to be an error on your child's record, please contact the school. (Please check each school's local protocol for how to do this)

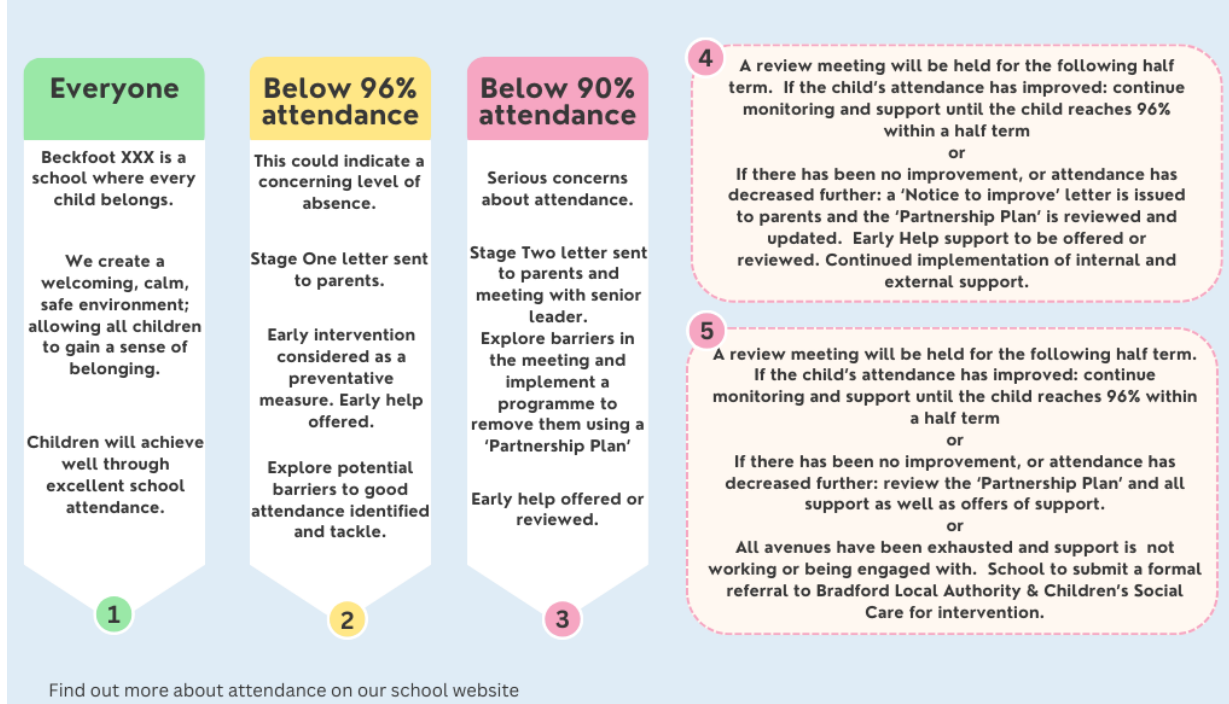
4.10 Reducing persistent and severe absence

If a pupil's attendance drops to 90% or below, they are persistently absent. This is the equivalent to missing one day of school or more each fortnight over a school year.

If a pupil is absent more than they are present, they are severely absent. This is the equivalent to missing 50% or more of their school year. Beckfoot Trust schools will work with the local authority and other partners such as children's social care to support the pupil to attend.

At Beckfoot Trust, we want to support pupils and their families in removing barriers to attendance. Each school's local protocol for attendance and punctuality will outline their specific support available. However, you can see this intensification of support in the 'staged approach' diagram below:

A Staged Approach: Excellent Attendance for All



4.11 Attendance contracts

The school attendance team will meet with parents or carers of children where attendance falls below 90%. We believe that school and home should work together to improve a pupil's attendance and punctuality. Therefore, Beckfoot Trust have 'Partnership Plans' where both school, home and the pupil will set out how they will jointly tackle barriers to attendance. An open and honest discussion will take place, barriers to attendance will be discussed and plan will be put in place with clear actions for everyone. The Partnership Plan will be checked regularly and then reviewed. Families will be given clear direction on who to contact if there is a problem.

4.12 Penalty Notices

Penalty notices may be sought if:

- The support outlined above is not appropriate. For example, if an unauthorised holiday is taken in term time
- A pupil misses 10 unauthorised sessions (the equivalent of 5 days) in a 10 week period
- Support offered is not successful
- Parents or carers do not engage in the support provided or offered

The local authority have advised that penalty notices can be issued to each parent liable for the attendance offence or offences. Penalty notices can be used where the pupil's absence has not been authorised by the school. Penalty Notices are issued to an individual parent of an individual child. If the same individual parent receives a second penalty notice in relation to the same individual child

within a 3-year period, they lose the ability to pay a discounted rate, and must pay £160 within 28 days to avoid being prosecuted for the offence. Local Authorities can no longer issue a third penalty notice to the same individual parent for the same individual child within a 3-year period, parents will usually be prosecuted for the offence via the magistrates court.

4.13 Other legal interventions

Where all voluntary support has been exhausted, the Local Authority will work with the school and other agencies such as Children's Social Care to enforce school attendance. This includes parenting orders, education supervision orders and prosecution through the courts.

4.14 Referral to Children's Social Care

When all avenues of support have been facilitated by schools, the local authority and other partners, but severe unauthorised absence continues, it is likely to constitute neglect. Schools will be conscious of safeguarding issues and where these remain, a full children's social care assessment is recommended in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education.

4.15 Application of this policy for Vulnerable Groups

At Beckfoot Trust we identify the needs of students by considering the needs of the whole child, not just the special educational needs or disability of the child. Consideration will be made for any young person who has or may have a disability or specific circumstances (see 3.3). Reasonable adjustments can be considered and implemented. The SEND Code of Practice outlines the "reasonable adjustment" duty for all settings and schools provided under current Disability Equality legislation. The following categories alone do not constitute SEND, but are tracked closely, and may trigger a monitoring period, if progress gaps are highlighted:

- Attendance and Punctuality
- Health and Welfare
- Being subject to a Child Protection or Child in need Plan
- EAL
- Being in receipt of Pupil Premium Grant
- Being a Child Looked After
- Being a child of serviceman/woman

For pupils with complex health needs Beckfoot Trust has a Medical Needs policy which will be used to identify and remove any barriers to attendance.

For pupils with a social worker, schools will prioritise these students for first day calls and home visits alongside any pupils who are looked after or formally looked after. Children's social care will be contacted by the Designated Safeguarding Lead on the first day of absence for any child on a child protection plan whose absence is unexplained.

5.0 Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually and, as guidance from the Local Authority or DfE is updated. The policy will be approved by the Trust Board.

Appendix 1: Attendance codes from the DfE

Code	Meaning	Type
/ \	Present at the school / morning \ afternoon	Present Mark
B	Attending any other approved educational activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour Placement / time in another school's seclusion area • Alternative Provision not arranged by the Local Authority 	Present Mark
C	Authorised Circumstance (see next page for breakdown)	Authorised Absence
D	Dual registered at another school <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attending Alternative Provision at another school site • MNHES (formerly Trax) • Hospital education • Education at a secure / residential site • Off-site direction / Managed Move 	Present Mark
E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made	Authorised Absence
G	Holiday NOT granted by the school or Term Time Leave NOT granted by the school	Unauthorised Absence
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Authorised Absence
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution	Authorised Absence
K	Attending education provision arranged by the Local Authority <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home Tutoring • Approved Framework for Alternative Provision • Blended Learning 	Present Mark
L	Late arrival before the registers have closed	Present Mark
M	Attended a medical appointment	Authorised Absence
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Unauthorised Mark
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	Unauthorised Absence
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Present Mark
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements	Not expected to attend
R	Religious Observance	Authorised Absence
S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination. Must be used sparingly with revision opportunities in school.	Authorised Absence
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes, and the pupil has attended for at least 200 sessions in preceding 12 months.	Authorised Absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Unauthorised Absence

V	Attending an Educational Trip or Visit	Present Mark
W	Attending Work Experience	Present Mark
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school	Not expected to attend
Y	Unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause (see next page for breakdown)	Not expected to attend
Z	Prospective or previous pupil not on admission register	Not expected to attend
#	Planned school closure	Not expected to attend

Code	Meaning	Type
The Y code: Unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause, is broken down into the following sub codes to provide better differentiation of the reason:		
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available	Not expected to attend
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel	Not expected to attend
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed. For example, this may be due to damage or teacher strikes.	Not expected to attend
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed. For example, extreme weather, damage, no hot water, or heating.	Not expected to attend
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention. For example, in police detention, remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or detained under a sentence of detention.	Not expected to attend
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law. contrary to or prohibited by any guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of infection or disease.	Not expected to attend
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause. For example, an emergency has prevented the pupil from attending. The unavoidable cause must be something that affects the pupil, not just the parent.	Not expected to attend
The C code: Authorised Absence is broken down into the following sub codes to provide better differentiation of the reason:		
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances. Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days a pupil can be absent from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the school's discretion.	Authorised Absence
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.	Authorised Absence

C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable.	Authorised Absence
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Appendix 2: Alternative Provision Codes

MNHES: K code

- This is because it is a Local Authority provision
- Schools must do an MT1 for all students at MNHES, unless additional top up is being provided in school as the maximum provision is 25 hours.
- The child's timetable is essential, as any attendance periods where it has been agreed the child is not at MNHES or accessing MNHES' online provision, a C2 code should be used.

Bradford College or any other AP provider (registered or unregistered): B code

or

Behaviour placement for the day at another school: B code

- This is because the student is attending a place for an approved educational activity and being supervised by a professional the school considers to have appropriate skills and experience.
- The child's timetable is essential, as any attendance periods where it has been agreed the child is not at the provision, a C2 code should be used.
- A MT1 form must be completed if the placement is anything less than 32.5 hours and additional top-up is not being provided.

PRU such as Park Aspire or an Off-Site Direction: D code

- This is because the provider has an admissions code for 0-16, whereas somewhere like Bradford College has an admissions code for 16-19.