

INKBERROW PRIMARY SCHOOL

Attendance Policy 2026-2027

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1. Policy Statement

Inkberrow Primary School is committed to securing high levels of attendance and punctuality so that every pupil can access an efficient full-time education and thrive. We use a support-first, whole-school approach, intervening early, working in partnership with families and the local authority, and only escalating to legal measures where appropriate and proportionate.

2. Aims and Ethos

- Promote a calm, orderly, safe and supportive environment that pupils want to attend every day.
- Set clear expectations that excellent attendance and punctuality are everyone's responsibility.
- Identify emerging concerns quickly through regular analysis of data; act early to remove barriers to attendance.
- Provide additional, personalised support for pupils with SEND or medical/mental health needs.
- Work collaboratively with the Local Authority (LA) and partners to deliver holistic, whole-family support for persistent and severely absent pupils.

Our whole-school attendance target is 97%. We promote attendance through our HERO campaign, Inky and regular class celebrations, while recognising improvement sensitively. Recognition must not disadvantage pupils because of disability or unavoidable illness, or encourage attendance when public health advice requires them to stay home.

3. Legal and Policy Framework

- Working together to improve school attendance (DfE), July 2026 edition, published 9 July 2026. This statutory guidance has applied since 19 August 2024; the July 2026 edition clarifies practice, responsibilities and coding.
- Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024 – introducing the national framework for penalty notices and revised fine amounts/thresholds (effective 19 August 2024).
- School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, which replaced the 2006 regulations. Regulation 9 governs deletion from the admission register; regulations 10–11 address attendance recording and leave; regulation 13 addresses returns.
- Children Missing Education (CME) – statutory guidance for local authorities and schools (updated 2025).
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance – DfE guidance (2023).
- Education Act 1996; Equality Act 2010; Children and Families Act 2014; Children Act 1989; and current safeguarding, medical conditions, alternative provision and

health-needs education guidance. Worcestershire's current Penalty Notice Code of Conduct applies locally.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Trust Board and ASC

- Promote attendance through the school's ethos and policies. Review this policy annually and when guidance changes, taking account of pupil and parent views. The Trust Board retains accountability; local governors exercise oversight in line with the scheme of delegation.
- Review attendance information at least half-termly through agreed monitoring arrangements, with a full report each term. Challenge trends, differences between groups and the impact of support, including persistent and severe absence.
- Assure that staff receive appropriate attendance training and that statutory duties are met.

4.2 Headteacher and Senior Leaders

- Lead a proactive, support-first approach and ensure systems for daily registers, first-day response, coding and follow-up are robust.
- Analyse attendance and punctuality weekly, identify individual and cohort patterns, and evaluate targeted support. Review vulnerable pupils jointly with the DSL, SENCO and pastoral staff.
- Lead the annual LA monitoring visit and Targeting Support Meetings, agree joint action for severely absent pupils and obtain additional LA support when required.
- Ensure accurate use of DfE attendance codes and compliance with admissions/register regulations and CME requirements.

The Senior Attendance Champion is Mr Glenn Duggan-Seville, Headteacher. Day-to-day absence reporting is through the school office on 01386 792284 or office@inkberrow.avonreach.org.uk. Families can use these contacts to request a meeting with the Headteacher, SENCO (Inclusion Lead) or Mrs. Nicola Taylor, Pastoral Lead and Attendance Officer, for additional attendance support.

4.3 All Staff

- Promote good attendance and punctuality daily; challenge and report concerns quickly.
- Record registers accurately and on time every session; follow school procedures for late arrival and unexplained absence.
- Build relationships with pupils and parents; listen to barriers and signpost to support.

4.4 Parents and Carers

- Ensure children attend school every day and arrive on time; avoid term-time leave.
- Inform the school office by 8:30am on the first day of absence and each day thereafter unless agreed otherwise, explaining the reason and likely return date. Any request for evidence will be proportionate, as set out in section 7.
- Engage with support offered and attend agreed meetings to improve attendance.

4.5 SENCO and Pastoral Staff

The SENCO and pastoral staff work with class teachers, the Attendance Champion and DSL to understand barriers, plan and review adjustments, coordinate external support and ensure attendance plans connect with SEND provision, healthcare plans, PEPs and wider family support.

5. Registers and Daily Procedures

The register is taken at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session, at the same time for all pupils, including those on an agreed part-time timetable. Each pupil is recorded using the national code that accurately describes their circumstances for that session.

Our school day is 08:45–15:15. Pupils should arrive by 08:45. Registration times are the same for all pupils.

Session	Register taken	Register closes
Morning	08:50	09:00
Afternoon	13:05	13:15

Code L applies to arrival after registration starts but before it closes. Arrival after closure is code U unless the reason warrants an appropriate authorised absence code. Late arrivals and early departures must be signed in or out, through the Entry Sign screen, at the office for safeguarding purposes.

Registers are maintained electronically through Arbor. Entries are retained for six years from the date entered. Corrections retain the original entry, amendment, reason, date and identity of the person making the change. Staff receive annual training and updates; Appendix B summarises current codes.

6. First-day Response and Safeguarding

Office staff check unexplained absence promptly after registration and contact parents on the first day, using further emergency contacts where necessary. Follow-up continues for each unexplained session and on subsequent days; actions are recorded. Unresolved concerns are referred to the DSL the same day, with immediate action where there may be danger. The school uses proportionate home visits, agency contact or police assistance according to risk, without waiting for an attendance threshold. The pupil's social worker and, where applicable, youth justice worker are informed of unexplained absence. Code N is temporary: it is replaced with the correct code as soon as the reason is established and within five working days; if no reason is established, code O is used.

7. Authorised Absence

Illness and medical or dental appointments. Physical and mental illness preventing attendance is recorded using code I. A parent's explanation is normally sufficient; we do not impose blanket requirements for medical evidence or make evidence automatic below a particular attendance percentage. Reasonable evidence may be sought where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about illness, or to understand prolonged or recurring health needs and plan support. We begin with a conversation, explain why evidence is needed and accept appropriate alternatives such as appointment information, prescriptions or existing professional advice. We do not routinely require a GP letter. Appointments should be outside school hours where possible; where unavoidable, only the necessary absence is authorised using code M and the pupil should attend before or afterwards where practicable.

We follow current public health exclusion advice, including 48 hours after the last episode of vomiting or diarrhoea where applicable. Code I applies while illness prevents attendance; where a pupil is well enough to attend but applicable government public health guidance or law prevents attendance, code Y6 is used.

Religious observance. Code R applies on a day exclusively set apart for observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs. Additional days are considered individually under the exceptional leave provisions; there is no blanket annual one-day limit on genuine days of religious observance.

Parents travelling for occupational purposes. Code T applies only where the statutory conditions for a mobile child are met: a compulsory-school-age pupil with no fixed abode travelling with a parent whose trade or business requires travel. Ethnicity alone is not a basis for this code, and occasional work-related travel is not automatically sufficient. We seek continuity through attendance and dual

registration at another school where appropriate; proof is sought only where there is genuine and reasonable doubt.

8. Leave of Absence (Exceptional Circumstances)

There is no entitlement to term-time leave. Requests should be made in advance to the Headteacher through the school office using the leave request form, by a parent with whom the child normally lives. Each request is considered on its individual facts and family circumstances. Holidays, leisure and recreation are not normally exceptional circumstances; we do not operate blanket rules automatically granting leave for particular events. The Headteacher decides whether leave is exceptional, determines any authorised period and communicates the decision. Unauthorised holiday absence is recorded as G. Other specific forms of leave are recorded using the applicable code in Appendix B.

9. Unauthorised, Persistent and Severe Absence

Unauthorised absence includes holidays not agreed; arriving after registers close without valid reason; absence where explanations are not provided or are not accepted by the school; and other avoidable reasons (e.g., shopping, birthdays).

Persistent absence means missing 10% or more of possible sessions for any reason (attendance of 90% or below); severe absence means missing 50% or more (attendance of 50% or below). Both authorised and unauthorised absence count. These pupils receive prioritised support; the school and LA agree a joint approach for every severely absent pupil. We act before these thresholds are reached, particularly where attendance is falling or is between 90% and 95%. A safeguarding concern always prompts action regardless of the percentage.

10. Support and Escalation

Our graduated approach follows the DfE sequence: expect, monitor, listen and understand, facilitate support, formalise support and enforce where necessary. (see poster below). We meet families early, hear the child's views, identify barriers within and beyond school, and agree practical actions with a named lead and review dates. Support may include a trusted adult, adjustments to arrival routines, help with friendships or bullying, pastoral support, curriculum adaptations, practical family help and referrals to Early Help or health services.

Where informal support is unsuccessful or not engaged with, we work with the LA to consider an attendance contract, an education supervision order or other appropriate intervention. Contracts set out shared commitments and are not themselves legally binding. Enforcement is considered individually where support is inappropriate, unsuccessful or not engaged with, taking account of barriers, equality duties and the evidence. Safeguarding referrals run alongside attendance work when required.

10.1 Working with the Local Authority

Inkberrow works with Worcestershire County Council's Education Engagement team and its named attendance contact. Under the school's current Green School arrangements, we have one scheduled attendance monitoring visit each academic year. The Headteacher prepares attendance analysis, vulnerable-group information and evidence of support, and records agreed actions, responsibilities and review dates. Relevant findings are reported to governors.

The annual visit is part of ongoing partnership, not the only opportunity for support. July 2026 guidance permits an agreed reduction to one Targeting Support Meeting per school year where attendance is above both the national average for the phase and the median of similar schools. We keep the frequency under review with the LA. Where attendance falls below either benchmark, meetings are expected at least termly; a requested termly meeting should be provided. Green status does not delay referrals or joint action for individual pupils.

We contact the LA between visits for emerging concerns, persistent absence requiring multi-agency help, severe absence, attendance coding, access or transport barriers, CME and health-related education. Targeting Support Meetings focus on cases needing joint action and complement existing family meetings. The school and LA agree the most appropriate lead practitioner, support offered, family involvement and how progress will be reviewed.

The school contributes to local and Trust attendance networks and shares effective practice. Where needed, we coordinate with Early Help, children's social care, the Virtual School, health services, SEND and transport teams and other schools, including where siblings attend different settings. For pupils living outside Worcestershire, we liaise with the relevant authorities so cross-border responsibilities do not delay support.

10.2 Attendance of vulnerable pupils and groups

Attendance is a protective factor and an entitlement for every child. We maintain the same ambition for vulnerable pupils while responding to their circumstances. Group membership is a prompt for informed monitoring, not an assumption about a child or family. Support begins with the pupil's experience and the barriers affecting them.

We monitor pupils eligible for Free School Meals and Pupil Premium; pupils receiving SEN support and those with EHCPs; disabled pupils; looked-after and previously looked-after children; children with a social worker, including child-in-need or child-protection plans; young carers; and pupils with long-term physical or mental health needs. We also consider pupils experiencing housing insecurity, bereavement, family crisis, disrupted education or other identified risks, and relevant patterns by sex, ethnicity and other protected characteristics.

For disadvantaged pupils, we explore practical barriers such as uniform, transport and family circumstances, agree appropriate help and evaluate its impact. For

pupils with SEND or disabilities, we review access to required provision, including EHCP provision, and make reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act. These may address sensory needs, communication, arrival routines, learning, transitions, friendships or lunchtime. Support is agreed and regularly reviewed with the child and family.

For looked-after children, the Designated Teacher works with carers, the social worker and Virtual School so attendance support is reflected in the Personal Education Plan. For previously looked-after children, support is coordinated with parents and relevant advice services. For children with a social worker, the DSL ensures unexplained absence is shared promptly and attendance forms part of coordinated safeguarding and family planning.

Young carers are identified sensitively and recorded in the school census. We work with the child and family to reduce the effect of caring responsibilities on attendance, accessing Early Help and young-carer services. Where a young carer appears to need support, or the child or parent requests it, we seek an LA young carer's needs assessment.

Each pupil needing targeted support has a named school contact and a proportionate plan with agreed actions and review dates. Leaders examine both attendance outcomes and whether agreed support was delivered; stalled progress prompts a review of provision and timely partner involvement. Confidential case information is restricted to those who need it.

11. Reduced (Part-time) Timetables

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to suitable full-time education. A temporary part-time timetable is used only in exceptional circumstances in the pupil's best interests, for the shortest necessary period. It must not be used to manage behaviour or compensate for unavailable staffing. The Headteacher and parent with whom the child normally lives must agree a written support or reintegration plan, with the child involved appropriately, clear aims, regular review dates and a proposed end date for return to full-time education. Any extension requires a recorded review. The plan specifies supervision and safeguarding during time away from school. The social worker is involved where applicable; for a pupil with an EHCP, the school discusses the arrangement with the LA so provision can be reviewed promptly. We notify the LA in line with local arrangements. Sessions of authorised non-attendance are normally C2 for compulsory-school-age pupils, or X where a child is below compulsory school age and not required to attend. Registers remain at the usual times; C2 counts as authorised absence. Education at another setting is coded according to the actual provision, not automatically C2.

12. Penalty Notices and Prosecution

The national threshold is 10 sessions (usually five days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school-week period. Sessions need not be consecutive and may span terms or school years; codes G, N, O and U count. Reaching the threshold

requires consideration of a penalty notice, not automatic issue. The school works with Worcestershire County Council under its current Penalty Notice Code of Conduct, considering whether support is appropriate, has been offered and engaged with, and whether a notice is likely to improve attendance.

Where support is appropriate but has not worked or been engaged with, a Notice to Improve will normally give a final opportunity to engage and improve over three to six weeks, with clear expectations and support. It is not normally appropriate for a term-time holiday where support is not appropriate. The LA considers individual circumstances and the local code; a threshold does not itself determine the outcome.

Penalty notices apply per parent, per child. The amounts and repeat-notice rules are set out below. Non-payment may lead to prosecution for the underlying attendance offence.

Notice for the same parent and child	Amount and payment period
First notice	£80 within 21 days, rising to £160 within 28 days.
Second notice within three years of the first	£160 within 28 days; no discount.
Further offence within that three-year period	No third penalty notice. Prosecution or another legal intervention is considered.

13. Children Missing Education (CME)

The school follows Children Missing Education statutory guidance and the 2024 registration regulations. Pupils are entered on the admission register from their agreed first day; failure to arrive triggers enquiries. We work with the LA to establish location, safety and education, recording reasonable enquiries and sharing information with receiving schools and relevant agencies. We notify the LA of new admissions within five days where required, and deletions at the time of removal; standard transition returns are made where the LA requests them. Deletion must satisfy a ground in regulation 9 in full and must never be used to off-roll a pupil or improve attendance figures. There is no retrospective deletion of a genuine registration. An administrative error is distinguished from a lawfully registered pupil, with an auditable correction rather than misuse of deletion grounds. For Ground G, reasonable distance is assessed on individual family circumstances, geography and access, not a fixed mileage rule; temporary absence does not by itself mean that the pupil no longer normally lives within reasonable

distance. We consult the LA where the ground or continuing education is uncertain and follow the required joint enquiry process where applicable.

14. Mental Health and Attendance

We respond sensitively to anxiety, emotional distress and emotionally based school avoidance (EBSA), maintaining high aspirations alongside individual support. The child and family help identify difficulties and agree adjustments, a trusted adult and a manageable route back to attendance. We address in-school barriers, coordinate with health and SEND services, and review provision rather than waiting for a diagnosis before helping. Remote education is a last resort, used only where appropriate within a plan to reintegrate the pupil; it does not replace suitable full-time education or permit the pupil to be marked present. The attendance code reflects the actual reason for absence. Where health needs prevent attendance, we liaise promptly with the LA about its duty to arrange suitable education and make the sickness return described in section 15.

15. Data, Monitoring and Reporting

Leaders review attendance and punctuality weekly, with daily safeguarding oversight. Analysis includes individual pupils, classes, year groups, reasons for absence, late arrival, days or sessions missed, repeated patterns, persistent and severe absence and the cohorts in section 10.2. Half-termly evaluation checks whether support is improving access, wellbeing and attendance. We use DfE attendance tools and local information to compare with national primary figures and similar schools, using matching periods and definitions wherever possible.

Governors receive a full termly report alongside half-termly monitoring information. This includes whole-school and vulnerable-group attendance; persistent and severe absence numbers and rates; comparisons with other pupils in school, all pupils nationally and equivalent national groups where available; changes over time; and the impact of actions. Reports show cohort sizes and explain small-number effects and overlapping groups. Pupils are not identifiable in published reporting. Lower national attendance for a group is not accepted as a ceiling for our ambition.

We meet the requirement to share daily attendance data with DfE through the school management information system and make statutory LA returns. Attendance returns identify compulsory-school-age pupils who do not attend regularly or have 10 consecutive school days of unauthorised absence, at the locally agreed frequency and at least monthly. Sickness returns are made when we reasonably expect a compulsory-school-age pupil recorded with I to miss 15 school days consecutively or cumulatively through illness in the school year; we do not wait until day 15 to seek support. Only one return is needed for a continuous period of sickness. Admissions and deletion returns follow section 13. Information is shared lawfully, securely and proportionately under data protection and safeguarding requirements.

16. Communication

This policy is published on the school website, shared when children join and brought to families' attention at the start of each year and when updated. Newsletters, assemblies, displays and meetings promote positive routines and belonging. Individual communication explains sessions or days missed and their effect on learning, alongside percentages. Families receive regular attendance information, with half-termly contact where there are concerns and earlier contact when needed. Information is made accessible, with language or communication support where appropriate. The school seeks feedback from pupils and parents and keeps its attendance leaflet and website information consistent with this policy.

17. Linked Policies

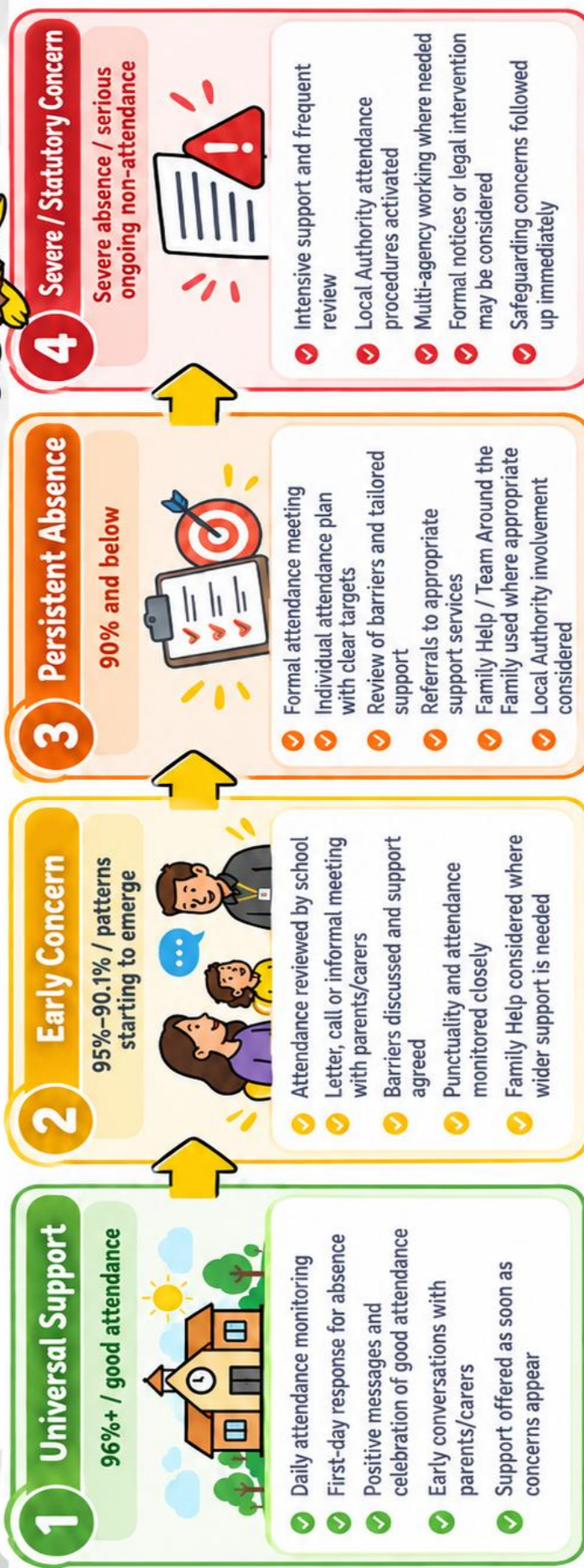
- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Behaviour
- SEND
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions
- Online Safety/Acceptable Use
- Complaints

Working Together to Improve School Attendance



Every day counts!
Be an Attendance Hero!

Attendance Escalation Procedures & Family Help



Family Help – Support for Different Barriers



Family Help brings school, parents/carers and other professionals together to identify barriers, agree support and improve attendance.

Removing barriers • Building confidence • Supporting families • Improving attendance

Appendix A Attendance support and escalation

1. Universal provision: positive relationships, clear routines, daily registers, first-day response and accessible attendance information for all families.
2. Early support: identify emerging patterns, listen to the child and parents, address barriers, agree adjustments and review progress promptly.
3. Targeted support: a written attendance plan with a named lead, family and pupil input, measurable actions and review dates; LA and multi-agency involvement where needed, including a joint approach for every severely absent pupil.
4. Formal support and enforcement: consider an attendance contract, Notice to Improve, education supervision order, penalty notice or prosecution as appropriate, with the LA and in accordance with law. Safeguarding action is taken at any stage; the sequence must not delay protection or necessary support.

See school IAAP form

Appendix B Attendance codes and recording guidance

Staff must apply the statutory conditions in Chapter 8 of the July 2026 DfE guidance. This summary does not create discretion to use a code simply to improve attendance figures. Obsolete codes J and Y must not be used.

Present and educational activity

/ and \: present for morning and afternoon registration. L: late before register closure. B: approved, appropriately supervised off-site education arranged by the school; record the nature of the activity. K: education provision arranged by the LA; record its nature. V: school educational visit or trip. P: approved sporting activity. W: work experience.

Dual registration

D: used only for a session scheduled at another school on whose admission register the pupil also appears. That school records actual attendance or absence; this school records D even if the pupil is ill on that day. Both schools agree arrangements to follow up unexpected absence. D is not a possible attendance for statistical purposes.

Authorised leave

C: exceptional leave; also authorised home-education sessions under an agreed flexi-schooling arrangement. C1: regulated performance or employment abroad where the required licence or approval applies. C2: authorised non-attendance for a compulsory-school-age pupil on an agreed temporary part-time timetable; it counts as authorised absence. J1: interview for admission to another educational institution or employment. S: study leave for a public examination. C, C1, C2, J1 and S are authorised absence, not presence.

Other authorised absence

I: physical or mental illness preventing attendance, excluding medical appointments. M: medical or dental appointment. R: religious observance on a day set apart by the religious body. T: qualifying occupational travel by a mobile child's parent. E: suspension or permanent exclusion while still on roll and no alternative provision is being attended; once provision is attended, use the relevant education code or D.

Unauthorised absence

G: unauthorised holiday, including holiday beyond the agreed period. N: reason not yet established; resolve within five working days and replace with O if no reason is established. O: other absence without authorisation. U: arrival after register closure where no reason warrants an authorised absence code.

Access and unavoidable cause

Q: inability to attend because statutory access arrangements have not been made, including an unfulfilled LA duty to arrange home-to-school travel. It is not a general code for transport difficulties. Y1: normally provided school or LA transport unavailable where the school is beyond statutory walking distance. Y2: widespread travel disruption caused by an emergency. Y3: part of premises unavoidably closed and pupil cannot be accommodated. Y4: whole school unexpectedly closed. Y5: criminal justice detention. Y6: well enough to attend but attendance prevented by applicable government public health guidance or law. Y7: another unavoidable emergency preventing the pupil from attending; the school records the reason. Q and Y1–Y7 are not possible attendances for statistical purposes.

Administrative codes

X: non-compulsory-school-age pupil not required to attend the session. Z: prospective pupil not yet on the admission register; never used for a pupil whose registration has begun. #: planned whole-school closure. These are not possible attendances.

Off-site and home learning checks

The school obtains confirmation of attendance from off-site providers for each expected session and follows up absence promptly. Codes B and P require approved educational activity and appropriate supervision by a person considered suitable by the school; unsupervised home work and remote education must not be recorded as B. Flexi-schooling, which combines elective home education with school attendance, is distinct from a temporary part-time timetable; authorised home-education sessions use C, not C2. Register codes reflect the real circumstances, with advice sought where necessary.

Appendix C Guidance and review record

This September 2026 update incorporates the July 2026 clarifications on common registration times, cohort monitoring and benchmarking, young carers, illness evidence, remote education, individual leave decisions, partnership working, attendance codes and admission-register decisions. It also records Inkberrow's Green School annual monitoring arrangements and strengthens vulnerable-group oversight. The next scheduled review remains Summer 2027; earlier changes will be made if guidance or local arrangements change.

Department for Education. Working together to improve school attendance, July 2026.

Worcestershire County Council. Attendance information for schools and the Penalty Notice Code of Conduct.

School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

Department for Education — Children missing education; Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance; Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs; and Providing remote education. Read alongside current safeguarding and SEND guidance.