



# **ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre**

## **ATTENDANCE & REGISTRATION POLICY**

### **AIMS**

The aim of the Attendance and Registration Policy is to ensure the Learning Centre is following the required guidelines in its attendance and registration procedures and to ensure that all staff are aware of these procedures.

### **LEGISLATION & GUIDANCE**

This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance from the Department for Education (DfE), Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities July 2019 and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Education Act 2002
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

### **ATTENDANCE REGISTER**

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all students must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the school day for each student of each school day (between 9.00am – 10.00am) depending on start time for each student and then again in the afternoon (between 12.30pm - 1.00pm). It will mark whether every student is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre will follow up any absences to:

- Ascertain the reason;
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken;
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not; and,
- Identify the correct code to use before entering it on to the school's electronic

## **REGISTER & ATTENDANCE RECORDING SYSTEMS**

At ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre we record attendance in both electronic and paper form. Absence and Attendance Codes used are taken from Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities July 2019.

The electronic register program conforms with all GDBR requirements, produces data, analysis and charts for records and sharing information with parents, authorities and is whole school data analysis displayed on the ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre Website. Attendance data is also stored and analysis produced from the CPOM system ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre uses for safeguarding and behaviour purposes. The electronic register is backed up and securely stored on OneDrive and paper register is stored securely in the school office.

All Every entry in the attendance register, both electronic and paper form, will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

### **As a Learning Centre, we aim to:**

- Maintain parents' and students' awareness of the importance of regular attendance
- Perform our duties vigilantly and professionally whilst supporting our child protection and safeguarding responsibilities
- Raise attendance and engagement
- Improve punctuality
- Raise level of achievement
- Maximise opportunities, both within the Learning Centre; and for later life.

## **Good attendance is important because:**

- Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and poor attendance
- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically
- Regular attenders find school routines and school work easier to cope with
- Regular attenders find learning more satisfying
- Regular attenders have an easier transfer to Further Education/work

## **ROLE OF THE HEAD TEACHER**

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to students and their parents/carers
- Form positive relationships with students and parents/carers
- Ensure that there is a Learning Centre approach which reinforces good attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all students to attend and to achieve
- Monitor the implementation of the Attendance and Registration Policy and ensure that the policy is reviewed annually
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the Attendance and Registration Policy and are adequately trained to address attendance issues
- Ensure that the Registration Regulations, England, 2018 and other attendance related legislation is complied with
- Ensure that there is a named member of staff from SLT to lead on attendance and allocate sufficient time and resource
- Return school attendance data as required, and on time, to Children's Services
- Report on attendance and related issues through the Learning Centre's newsletter and website.
- Ensure that systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site are implemented
- Ensure that attendance data is collected and analysed frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence
- Interpret the data to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions
- Develop a multi-agency response to improve attendance and support students and their families
- Ensure that any interventions used are documented to a standard required by the Local Authority, should legal proceedings be instigated.

## **ROLE OF LEARNING CENTRE STAFF**

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to students and their parents/carers
- Form positive relationships with students and parents/carers
- Contribute to a Learning Centre approach which reinforces good attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all students to attend and to achieve
- Comply with the Registration Regulations, England, 2018 and other attendance related legislation
- Contribute to the evaluation of Learning Centre strategies and interventions

- Work with other agencies to improve attendance and support students and their families
- Ensure that any interventions used are documented to a standard required by the Local Authority, should legal proceedings be instigated
- Ensure that the Attendance Officer, who is the member of staff responsible for overseeing attendance, is alerted to all attendance concerns
- Ensure the attendance officer is aware of any conversations that have taken place with the parents about the student's attendance.

## **ROLE OF THE ATTENDANCE OFFICER**

- Keep track of attendance and, where there is cause for concern, work closely with parents and students to improve poor attendance.
- Monitor, create, share and file weekly attendance reports, half termly attendance reports, termly attendance reports and annual attendance reports for students as individuals and also whole school attendance data
- Make referrals to other agencies where appropriate.
- Liaise with Learning Centre staff to agree and implement strategies to re-engage students with emerging attendance problems.
- Support the reintegration programme for students who have been absent for a period.
- Keep staff informed of any actions taken regarding attendance issues.
- Deliver interventions to support the improvement of attendance.

## **ROLE OF STUDENTS**

- Arrive promptly to breaks and all their lessons
- Ensure that, if they are late for registration, they report their arrival at reception
- Sign out at Reception if they need to leave the Learning Centre site during the day
- Sign in at the Reception on re-entry to the Learning Centre
- Bring in a note from parents to their tutor on their return after any absence, unless the absence has been covered by a telephone call

## **ROLE OF PARENTS/CARERS**

Throughout this policy the term 'parent' represents one parent, both parents, or carer with whom the child resides.

Parents are informed of their responsibility to ensure that students attend regularly, in the Learning Centre Parent Pack. Attendance is discussed with each parent at consultation evenings, with the current percentage attendance being reported. Parents have a legal obligation to ensure that students receive a full time education. This is achieved by regular attendance at school.

- Ringing on the first morning of all absences (before 9.00am), with the reason for absence; and saying when the young person is expected to return.
- Arranging dental and doctor's appointments out of hours, during holidays or on Friday afternoons, wherever possible.

- Bringing the young person to the Learning Centre before and returning them after a hospital or other medical appointment, where appropriate.
- Keeping the Learning Centre staff updated by telephone or letter if the young person has an extended period of absence due to illness.

**ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre shall take various measures in order to safeguard young people by:**

- Following up unexplained absences after registration with a phone call on the first morning
- Reminding parents of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality - in newsletters, and the Home-School agreement
- Acknowledging and rewarding good attendance
- Letting parents know if there are concerns regarding their young person's attendance
- Contacting the Local Authority if there is continued cause for concern over a student's absence levels.

**MONITORING ATTENDANCE & LATENESS**

ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre will comply with the legal requirement to complete attendance registers twice a day, using the laid down school procedures (includes totals and percentages). Staff responsible for student registration are required to follow up reasons for lateness, persistent poor punctuality and absence.

If a parent has not contacted the school by one hour after the pupil's start time to give a reason for absence the school will contact the parent or carer.

**The Learning Centre will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.**

Due to unpredictability of transport arrangements and traffic, a student is deemed late if 15 minutes passes after expected time of arrival. A student who arrives late but before the register has closed (a further 15 minutes after expected time of arrival) will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

A student who arrives after the register has closed (30 minutes after expected time of arrival) will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.

Independent schools have a legal duty to report the following to their Local Authority: 10 days of unauthorised absence other than for reasons of sickness or leave of absence, failure to attend regularly, and deletion from the school register when the next school is unknown.

## **UNPLANNED ABSENCE**

Parents must notify the Learning Centre on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 9.00am or as soon as practically possible.

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the Learning Centre has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the Learning Centre may ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the Learning Centre is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

## **AUTHORISED ABSENCE**

Some absences are allowed by law and are known as "authorised absences". For example: if a young person is ill, family bereavement, or religious observance.

We realise that there are rare occasions when there might be a particular problem that causes the young person to be absent. Staff at the Learning Centre should be informed of this, and it will be dealt with sympathetically.

## **ATTENDANCE & MENTAL HEALTH**

At ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre we recognise the significant impact that mental health can have on school attendance. Young people with autism are often prone to periods of erratic attendance and possible prolonged periods of absence from school as a result of poor mental health. It can be extremely challenging for some students to maintain the expected 95% attendance rate.

Any mental health issue that has a drastic effect on a young person's ability to engage in day-to-day activities is defined as a disability and is therefore protected under the Equality Act (2010). Attendance at school is highly likely to be affected by an individual's mental health and is therefore an area that we at ASPIRE highlight as requiring reasonable adjustment in order to avoid disadvantage. This means that we don't judge or punish but rather support our young people and their family to get the early help - medical care and attention - they need in order to return to good mental health as soon as possible. Our attendance data demonstrates that once a student has achieved stability in their mental health their school attendance also improves.

For the purpose of recording absence with reason relating directly to mental health, code I: Illness (not medical or dental appointments) will be used for one off absence and code C: Leave of absence authorised by the school will be used for prolonged absence that is directly related to mental health.

## **UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE**

There are times when young people are absent for reasons which are not permitted by law. These are known as “unauthorised absences”. Examples of unauthorised absence are:

- Waiting on a delivery
- Going shopping or for a hair cut
- Going for a family day out
- Someone’s birthday
- Sleeping in after a late night
- Unapproved Holidays
- Where there is no explanation for the absence or where the explanation or reason for the absence is considered unsatisfactory
- Parents are unwell (In this instance, call the Learning Centre and a member of staff will assist in ensuring the young person can get to the Learning Centre)

Supporting such absences is against our Learning Centre’s ethos. Unauthorised absences have to be reported to the Local Authority. ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre may contact you and consider taking legal action against you if a student has repeated unauthorised absences.

## **HOLIDAYS AND TERM TIME LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre supports the view that every lesson counts and discourages parents from taking holidays in term time. We are always concerned about the amount of learning time students miss as a result of family holidays. There is no entitlement to time off in term time. Leave of absence is only allowed at the discretion of ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre, taking into consideration the amount of previous absence.

It is our policy that:

- Only in exceptional circumstances will holidays be allowed in term time, and then only up to a maximum of two weeks
- Parents wishing to apply for leave of absence for term-time holidays need to fill in an application form well in advance and before booking their vacation. Please ask the Learning Centre for a form - ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre will consider your request and advise you of the decision.
- Parents should try to minimise term-time absences by timing holidays at either the beginning or end of a holiday period. The exception to this should be at the start of September as it is very unsettling for a young person to miss the start of the academic year.
- No holiday requests will be granted during exam weeks, for students taking GCSEs or other examination board exams. Notification of the dates of these will be given to parents as early as possible in the academic year.
- If a student is absent from the Learning Centre for a term-time holiday without the authorisation of ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised

## **ASPIRE: LIFESKILLS LEARNING CENTRE'S OUTINGS / VISITS**

Opportunities for students to attend these activities are regularly provided. If they do not go, the students are expected to attend the Learning Centre, where alternative arrangements will be made for them.

ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre's Head Teacher will not authorise absence if the young person does not attend during this time, unless there is a valid medical reason or medical certificate provided; or there are exceptional family circumstances.

We value your support in helping us to maintain high standards.

## **STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVEMENT & TO PROMOTE GOOD ATTENDANCE**

The roles and responsibility of staff as outlined in the policy and the Learning Centre approach to attendance is the first steps in ensuring good attendance. However, where students are in danger of dropping below the Learning Centre's attendance target, the following escalated steps will be followed (Appendix 1):

- Students whose attendance drops below 95% for the first time will be identified.
- Where appropriate, parents will be contacted by letter to explain the impact on learning and offer support (Letter 1)
- If attendance continues to dip, a letter to parents will be sent in order to set an attendance target (Letter 2)
- Parents and students will meet with Learning Centre staff and a contract will be agreed (Letter 3)
- If parents do not attend the meeting, Letter 4 will be sent to establish a further target
- Attendance Challenge Report will be implemented for students with low attendance, promoting a positive attitude to attending school every day.
- Attendance % will be documented on the Learning Centre website each term.
- An agreed incentive for 100% attendance will be identified each term, meaningful to the students.

N.B. A copy of all letters can be found in Appendix 2.

## **RAISING AWARENESS OF THIS POLICY**

ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre will raise awareness of this policy via:

- The Parent Pack
- The Learning Centre website
- The Staff Handbook
- Meetings with parents such as introductory, transition, parent-teacher consultations.
- Learning Centre events
- Meetings with Learning Centre personnel
- Communications with home such as newsletters
- Reports such annual report to parents

- Information displays in the Learning Centre
- Staff 'Attendance' training (refer to the "Training Policy' for specific timescales)

### **Links with other policies**

This policy is linked to our child protection and safeguarding policy

### **POLICY REVIEW STATEMENT**

This policy will be reviewed every year or earlier should legislative change or other event require it.

SIGNED:.... 

POSITION:.....DIRECTOR

DATE:.....1<sup>st</sup> August 2021

REVIEW DATE:....1<sup>st</sup> August 2022

FOR & ON BEHALF OF

ASPIRE: Lifeskills

## APPENDIX 1 - ESCALATION OF ATTENDANCE INTERVENTIONS

The SLT will analysis data to show use of intervention and outcomes - this information will be shared with staff.

The SLT will monitor the effectiveness of interventions. This will be used to review and inform Learning Centre strategies and will also have links to performance management.

### **GREEN - students with attendance between 100% and 95%**

- Parent/carers will receive a letter home congratulating them on their child's good/excellent attendance.
- Students will be rewarded using a reward system identified as being meaningful to each individual.
- Good attendance will be acknowledged and celebrated on the Learning Centre website and on displays within the Learning Centre.

### **AMBER –students with attendance between 94.9% and 85.1% SECTION ONE**

Learning Centre staff will speak to the parents/carers to:

- Inform them that their child/ren have fallen into the amber group
- Offer support to parents/carers to improve attendance
- Discuss with the parents/carers the consequences of becoming a persistently absent student
- In cases of persistent lateness, advise parents/carers of possible consequences if there is no improvement
- Agree a review date

In addition, where further unauthorised absence has occurred or attendance has not improved following the review with parent/carer, a letter will be sent to parents/carers reminding them of their responsibility to ensure their child receives an appropriate education.

### **AMBER –students with attendance between 94.9% and 85.1% SECTION TWO**

Where improvement has not occurred following this intervention, the following interventions will be used:

- Identify underlying home/school issues that may be causing the student's absence
- Put in place specific intervention to support
- Review the student's academic progress and make links to the student's attendance transparent e.g. If you attended all your classes you could achieve...
- Set an individual attendance target for the student using sessions rather than percentages that will see the student move to the band above
- Agree a review date

Where this intervention has been implemented with no satisfactory impact, the parents/carers will be invited into school where the possible outcomes will be:

- To agree a parents/carers contract

- To discuss the consequences of being on track to becoming a persistently absent pupil
- Agree a review date

The SLT will be responsible for all action at this level and will record all intervention and outcomes. Records will be kept on the student's file by the SLT.

### **RED - students with attendance below 85%**

Students who have attendance below 85% are considered to be persistently absent from school. To ensure that intervention is focused it will be important to consider student's individual situations and needs. For example:

- Pupil Premium Students
- Looked After Children and Children on the Child Protection Register
- Parental support/needs e.g. parental drug use, young carers, domestic violence
- School issues e.g. bullying, poor teacher/student relationship, curriculum issues
- English as an Additional Language
- Ethnic minority
- Mid Year Admissions

Students who fall into this category will be overseen by the Attendance Officer (the member of Learning Centre staff with responsibility for attendance) and the Head Teacher. They will:

- Ensure that the parent/carers have already spoken to a member of staff at the stages preceding RED intervention.
- Obtain records of previous contact and interventions.
- Ensure weekly contact with the parent/carer to discuss any arising issues and to provide feedback on their child's attendance, behaviour and academic progress.
- Set an individual attendance target for the student that will see them move to the band above.
- Review existing plans and co-ordinate school resources to support the student's attendance and any additional needs
- Be the key contact person for any external agency working with the student
- Input into Learning Centre strategies to address the needs of each student.

The Attendance Officer will record all intervention and outcomes. Records will be kept by the SLT.



## APPENDIX 2 LETTER 1

Ref Stage 1/U95%

Dear

ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre is committed to improving achievement through attendance and monitors the attendance of all its students. Any student whose attendance falls below 95% will be monitored, and as a parent I am sure you will agree that your child must attend the Learning Centre regularly to ensure that they can achieve the best possible outcome from their time with us.

I enclose a copy of **Name's** attendance record. You will see that their attendance is now **#%** which we feel is a cause for concern.

We will be in contact over the next 7 days to offer some support.

I will continue to monitor **Name's** attendance and, with your co-operation, I anticipate an improvement. Should **Name** have any further absences they will remain unauthorised unless the Learning Centre receives supporting evidence.

Yours sincerely

Vivienne Boulton  
Head Teacher



## LETTER 2

Ref – Stage 2/U90%

Dear

RE: «**Student's Name**»

ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre is committed to improving achievement through attendance and monitors the attendance of its students. Any student whose attendance falls below 90% will be monitored, and as a parent I am sure you will agree that your child must attend the Learning Centre regularly to ensure that they can achieve the best possible outcome from their time with us.

I enclose a copy of **Name's** attendance record. You will see that the attendance is now #%, which I am sure you will agree, is a cause for concern.

A member of our SLT will be contacting you to discuss any problems affecting **Name's** attendance and to set an achievable target.

I will continue to monitor **Name's** attendance and, with your co-operation, I anticipate an improvement. Should **Name** have any further absences they will remain unauthorised unless the Learning Centre receives supporting evidence.

Yours sincerely

Vivienne Boulton  
Head Teacher



## LETTER 3

Ref - Stage 3/U90%

Dear

RE: «**Student's Name**»

I wrote to you on (**DATE**) expressing my concerns about **Name's** level of attendance.

Due to the lack of significant improvement in **Name's** attendance, I would like to invite you to a meeting at ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre on (**DATE**) at (**TIME**), to discuss how working together could enable **Name's** attendance to improve which in turn would have an impact on his/her attainment.

It is important that you attend this meeting. However, if this date and time is not convenient, please contact me on the above number to rearrange.

Please be aware that future absences will not be authorised unless the Learning Centre receives supporting evidence.

Yours sincerely

Vivienne Boulton  
Head Teacher



## LETTER 4

Ref - Stage 4/U90%

Dear

Learning Centre Attendance Enforcement Procedure

RE - «**Student's name**»

I am writing in regard to my letter dated (**DATE**), requesting you to attend a meeting held at ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre on (**DATE**), to discuss **Name's** poor attendance.

As you did not attend, or respond to the letter issued, an attendance target for **Name** was set in your absence.

This target is for **Name** to achieve an overall target of #% by the end of this four week period (**DATE FROM and TO**) and will be reviewed on (**DATE**).

At the review, if **Name** has met the targets set, these will be reviewed and extended and you will be informed of the new target. However, if **Name** has not met the targets, this case will be referred to the Local Authority.

Please be aware that future absences will not be authorised unless the Learning Centre receives supporting evidence.

I must remind you that you have a legal responsibility, as a parent, to ensure your child attends the Learning Centre regularly. Please make every effort to ensure that **Name** does so in the future, otherwise we will have no other choice than to refer this case to the Local Authority.

Yours sincerely

Vivienne Boulton  
Head Teacher

## **Absence and Attendance Codes Taken from Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities July 2019 and used at ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre**

The national codes enable schools to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with the regulations. They are also used for collecting statistics through the School Census System. The data helps schools, local authorities and the Government to gain a greater understanding of the level of, and the reasons for, absence. The codes are:

### **Present at School**

Pupils must not be marked present if they were not in school during registration. If a pupil were to leave the school premises after registration they would still be counted as present for statistical purposes.

### **Registration Code / \ : Present in school / = am \ = pm**

Present in school during registration.

### **Code L: Late arrival before the register has closed**

Schools should have a policy on how long registers should be kept open; this should be for a reasonable length of time but not that registers are to be kept open for the whole session. A pupil arriving after the register has closed should be marked absent with code U, or with another absence code if that is more appropriate.

### **Present at an Approved Off-Site Educational Activity**

An approved educational activity is where a pupil is taking part in supervised educational activity such as field trips, educational visits, work experience or alternative provision. Pupils can only be recorded as receiving off-site educational activity if the activity meets the requirements prescribed in regulation 6(4) of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. The activity must be of an educational nature approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school. The activity must take place during the session for which the mark is recorded.

### **Attendance codes for when pupils are present at approved off-site educational activity are as follows:**

#### **Code B: Off-site educational activity**

This code should be used when pupils are present at an off-site educational activity that has been approved by the school. Ultimately schools are responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils educated off-site. Therefore by using code B, schools are certifying that the education is supervised and measures have been taken to safeguard pupils. This code should not be used for any unsupervised educational activity or where a pupil is at home doing school work. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the alternative activity notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils. The school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

## **Code D: Dual Registered - at another educational establishment**

This code is not counted as a possible attendance in the School Census. The law allows for dual registration of pupils at more than one school. This code is used to indicate that the pupil was not expected to attend the session in question because they were scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered.

The main examples of dual registration are pupils who are attending a pupil referral unit, a hospital school or a special school on a temporary basis. It can also be used when the pupil is known to be registered at another school during the session in question.

Each school should only record the pupil's attendance and absence for those sessions that the pupil is scheduled to attend their school. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby all unexplained and unexpected absence is followed up in a timely manner.

## **Code J: At an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment**

This code should be used to record time spent in interviews with prospective employers or another educational establishment. Schools should be satisfied that the interview is linked to employment prospects, further education or transfer to another educational establishment.

## **Code P: Participating in a supervised sporting activity**

This code should be used to record the sessions when a pupil is taking part in a sporting activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school.

## **Code V: Educational visit or trip**

This code should be used for attendance at an organised trip or visit, including residential trips organised by the school, or attendance at a supervised trip of a strictly educational nature arranged by an organisation approved by the school.

## **Code W: Work experience**

Work experience is for pupils in the final two years of compulsory education. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the work experience placement provider notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils. Any absence should be recorded using the relevant code.

## **Authorised Absence from School**

Authorised absence' means that the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence.

**Absence codes when pupils are not present in school are as follows:**

**Code C: Leave of absence authorised by the school**

Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. Schools should consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

**Code E: Excluded but no alternative provision made**

If no alternative provision is made for a pupil to continue their education whilst they are excluded but still on the admission register, they should be marked absent in the attendance register using Code E. Alternative provision must be arranged for each excluded pupil from the sixth consecutive day of any fixed period or permanent exclusion. Where alternative provision is made they should be marked using the appropriate attendance code.

**Code H: Holiday authorised by the school**

Head teachers should not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. The application must be made in advance and the head teacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case which warrant the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the head teacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the head teacher's discretion.

**Code I: Illness (not medical or dental appointments)**

Schools should advise parents to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness. Schools should authorise absences due to illness unless they have genuine cause for concern about the veracity of an illness. If the authenticity of illness is in doubt, schools can request parents to provide medical evidence to support illness. Schools can record the absence as unauthorised if not satisfied of the authenticity of the illness but should advise parents of their intention. Schools are advised not to request medical evidence unnecessarily. Medical evidence can take the form of prescriptions, appointment cards, etc. rather than doctors' notes.

**Code M: Medical or dental appointments**

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence. Schools should, however, encourage parents to make appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.

**Code R: Religious observance**

Schools must treat absence as authorised when it is due to religious observance. The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong. Where necessary, schools should seek advice from the parents' religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance.

## **Code S: Study leave**

Schools must record study leave as authorised absence. Study leave should be used sparingly and only granted to Year 11 pupils during public examinations. Provision should still be made available for those pupils who want to continue to come into school to revise.

## **Code T: Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence**

A number of different groups are covered by the generic term Traveller – Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers.

This code should be used when Traveller families are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision. It should not be used for any other types of absence by these groups.

To help ensure continuity of education for Traveller children it is expected that the child should attend school elsewhere when their family is travelling and be dual registered at that school and the main school. Children from these groups whose families do not travel are expected to register at a school and attend as normal. They are subject to the same rules as other children in terms of the requirement to attend school regularly once registered at a school.

## **Unauthorised Absence from School**

Unauthorised absence is where a school is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence. Absence codes are as follows:

### **Code G: Holiday not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the head teacher.**

If a school does not authorise a leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday but the parents still take the child out of school, or the child is kept away for longer than was agreed, the absence is unauthorised. The regulations do not allow schools to give retrospective approval. If the parents did not apply for leave of absence in advance, the absence must be recorded as unauthorised.

### **Code N: Reason for absence not yet provided**

Schools should follow up all unexplained and unexpected absences in a timely manner. Every effort should be made to establish the reason for a pupil's absence. When the reason for the pupil's absence has been established the register should be amended. This code should not be left on a pupil's attendance record indefinitely; if no reason for absence is provided after a reasonable amount of time it should be replaced with code O (absent from school without authorisation).

### **Code O: Absent from school without authorisation**

If the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence they should record it as unauthorised.

### **Code U: Arrived in school after registration closed**

Schools should actively discourage late arrival, be alert to patterns of late arrival and seek an explanation from the parent.

### **Administrative Codes**

The following codes are not counted as a possible attendance in the School Census:

#### **Code X: Not required to be in school**

This code is used to record sessions that non-compulsory school age children are not expected to attend.

#### **Code Y: Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances**

This code can be used where a pupil is unable to attend because:

- The school site, or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause; or
- The transport provided by the school or a local authority is not available and where

the pupil's home is not within walking distance; or

- A local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel

which has prevented the pupil from attending school.

This code can also be used where a pupil is unable to attend because:

- The pupil is in custody; detained for a period of less than four months. If the school has evidence from the place of custody that the pupil is attending educational activities then they can record those sessions as code B (present at approved educational activity).

This code is collected in the School Census for statistical purposes.

#### **Code Z: Pupil not on admission register**

This code is available to enable schools to set up registers in advance of pupils joining the school to ease administration burdens. Schools must put pupils on the admission register from the first day that the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school.

### **Code #: Planned whole or partial school closure**

This code should be used for whole or partial school closures that are known or planned in advance such as: between terms; half terms; occasional days (for example, bank holidays); weekends (where it is required by the management information system); up to five non-educational days to be used for curriculum planning/training; and use of schools as polling stations.

### **Different Term Dates for Different Pupils**

Schools and local authorities can agree to set different term dates for different year groups – e.g. for ‘staggered starts’ or ‘induction days’. Code # can be used to record the year group(s) that is not due to attend. This is only acceptable where the school ensures that those pupils not attending on that day are still offered a full education over the school year.