



BLACON
HIGH SCHOOL

ASPIRE BELIEVE ACHIEVE

Attendance for Learning Policy

VISION STATEMENT

We want Blacon High School to be a safe and caring place at the heart of our community, where everyone is valued and supported to aspire, believe and achieve beyond their potential.

Ratified by Full Governing Body: 18th September 2024

Next due for review: Autumn 2025

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1. Introduction and Aim

Blacon High School recognises the importance of good attendance and the impact it has on children's progress, attainment, enjoyment of learning and relationships within school. Good attendance helps a child to realise their potential and ensure they are motivated, confident and enjoy a diverse range of curricular opportunities and experiences. Our school policy and prospectus promote good attendance, which is recognised and rewarded as an achievement. The school monitors attendance and ensures quick and early intervention if a problem is identified. We recognise that whole school preventative and proactive approaches are key to promoting children wellbeing and attendance. A child must attend school every day that they are required to do so unless an exceptional circumstance applies.

Our policy is accessible to leaders, staff, pupils, and parents, and is published on our school website. As the barriers to attendance evolve quickly, the policy should be reviewed and updated as necessary. In doing so, we will seek the views of pupils and parents. The Attendance for Learning & Punctuality Policy is based on the premise of equal opportunities for all.

2. Rationale

This Policy outlines the underlying philosophy, purpose, nature, organisation and management of student attendance at Blacon High School. It is a result of consultation with the wider school community and an analysis of existing attendance data to establish current absence trends. It aims to ensure the enjoyment and achievement for all students at Blacon High School.

The school will provide an effective system of incentives and rewards which acknowledges the efforts of students to improve their attendance and will challenge the behaviour of those students and parents who have a low priority for punctuality and attendance.

To maximise attendance the school will establish an effective and efficient system of communication with students, parents and appropriate external agencies to provide mutual information advice and support.

3. Principles

The Governors, Headteacher and staff wish to ensure every child has the opportunity to:

- Fully participate in school life
- Enjoy and achieve
- Feel a valued member of the school and wider communities

4. Aims

- To achieve 95% attendance by 2024-2025. National average is currently 92.8%.
- Local Authorities and schools should note they are no longer required to set targets for persistent absence and overall attendance respectively and the regulation will be amended

accordingly. The Department however remains firmly of the view that unnecessary absence is unacceptable and must be prevented and tackled by schools.

The Department therefore expects all school and local authorities to continue focusing on reducing overall absence, particularly unauthorised absence and persistent absence. Absence will continue to be monitored closely via the pupil level census and the Secretary of State's power to require an individual school to set absence targets where a school's absence record is of particular concern is being retained.

Further information can be obtained from: -

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/adminandfinance/schooladmin/target-setting/a0066387/2012-target-setting-guidance>

- To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school including students, parents, teachers, governors, and staff.
- To ensure there is a whole school, graduated response to improving punctuality and attendance.
- To define roles and responsibilities and promote consistency in carrying out designated tasks.
- To use data effectively in order to identify groups of students and individuals whose absence causes concern and implement appropriate interventions.
- To track students' attendance in order to monitor and evaluate progress.
- To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and students.
- To use appropriate assessments and develop strong multi-agency links in order to address higher levels of need.
- To promote and incentivize Attendance rewards: At Blacon High School, rewards, incentives and competitions play an important part when working to improve attendance; these rewards will be purposeful and meaningful, to ensure they become an integral part of the schools ethos and culture. We understand that some students find it harder than others to attend school. Therefore, it is important that attendance is recognised, celebrated and held in high regard, no matter how small the improvements might be. Improved attendance or improved punctuality should be recognised and praised, not just 'perfect' attendance. Every child has the right to feel they can achieve and be successful, so any reward/incentive system must be inclusive of those with children with additional needs. It is important that students see the attendance incentives and competitions as a team effort and not to blame individuals. At Blacon High School, students will be taught about the positive link between attendance and high achievement through assemblies and dedicated PSHE sessions.
- We are proud to be a Trauma Informed school, and as such, all students will be welcomed back to school by members of the Inclusion Team and reasons for their lateness or absence will be explored sensitively with barriers established and the necessary support provided.

5. Legislation

Regular and punctual attendance at school is a legal requirement. Regular attendance is essential to enable children to maximise their educational attainment, opportunities and further development.

- Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that “The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full-time education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise”.
- Section 444 (1) of the Education Act 1996 states that “if a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school his parent is guilty of an offence”.
- Section 576 Education Act 1996 - Meaning of “parent”.

Education Act 1996 *section 444*

Children Act 1989 *ESO (paragraph 18(1), Schedule 3, Children Act 1989*

Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003

School Attendance Prosecutions

If a parent fails to get their child to regularly attend school, the School and the Local Authority (LA) should make reasonable efforts to resolve the problem before resorting to legal action. If, however, it becomes apparent that all other avenues have been explored, the information below gives information regarding the legal landscape the offences fall within.

The offences

LAs have the power to prosecute parents who:

- Fail to ensure their child’s regular attendance at school (*section 444, Education Act (EA) 1996*)
- Knowingly allow their child to be absent from school without authorisation (*section 444(1A), EA 1996*)
- Persistently fail to comply with directions given under an Education Supervision Order (ESO) (*(paragraph 18(1), Schedule 3, Children Act 1989)*)

Only the LA can prosecute parents for the offences found in section 444 of the Education Act 1996 (*section 446, EA 1996*) and they must fund all associated costs.

Failure to ensure a child’s regular attendance at school (sec 444(1))

Parents are guilty of an offence for failing to ensure that their child regularly attends school (*section 444(1) and (1A), EA 1996*).

With regards to the section 444(1) offence, the LA will need to prove to the criminal standard that the child is a registered pupil at a relevant school and that he is of compulsory school age and has failed to regularly attend school without authorisation. The only evidence that the LA will need to provide the court with, is the certificate of attendance and why an Education Supervision Order (ESO) is not appropriate.

Knowingly allowing a child to be absent from school without authorisation (sec 444(1A))

It is regarded as a more serious offence when a parent **knowingly** allows a child to be absent from school without authorisation (*section 444(1A), EA 1996*). In such circumstances, the LA will need to show that the child failed to regularly attend school without authorisation, and that the parents **knew and failed, without reasonable justification**, to ensure that their child regularly attended school.

The EA 1996 does not define “reasonable justification” but case law tells us that it is to be approached as a perfectly understandable English expression and that it was unnecessary for every single avenue to be explored to ensure that a child received “schooling”, as that was immaterial to attendance at school. ‘Reasonable justification’ seems to be a question of fact relating to the child’s attendance at school and is, therefore, to be looked at in that context.

Regular attendance

The essential element in both the offences under sections 444(1) and 444(1A) of Education Act 1996 is whether the child has regularly attended school. While the term “regular attendance” has been in use since the Education Act 1944, there is no statutory definition of it.

The Supreme Court in the ‘Isle of Wight Case’ interpreted the word “regularly” in section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996, after having considered Parliament’s intention and the history of the requirement for parents to ensure their child’s attendance at school. The justices determined that “regularly” means at all times required by the rules prescribed by the school. “Full-time” education means all of the time when education is being offered to the child.

For the purposes of Education Law, the definition of a ‘parent’ and who is responsible for ensuring regular attendance to school is:

- All biological parents, whether they are married or not
- Any person who, although not a biological parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person - this could be an adoptive parent, a step-parent, guardian or other relative
- Any person who, although not a biological parent and does not have parental responsibility, has care of a child or young person. This could be one parent, both parents and/or carer/s.

6. Parental Responsibilities Relating to School Attendance

Parents must:

- Ensure the school has up to date contact details.
- Contact school on first day of absence and every consecutive day to provide a reason for non-attendance via school phone or the study bugs app.
- Request leave in advance for holidays/extended absences in term time by following the School Holiday in Term Time policy procedures.
- Work with the school and any other agency to resolve any difficulties which may affect regular school attendance.

- Ensure that their child/ren of compulsory school age attends regularly at the school where the child/ren is a registered pupil.

7. School Responsibilities Relating to School Attendance

Susannah Wright is the school Attendance Lead. As the Attendance Lead of the school she will ensure:

- Registers are accurately marked and maintained in accordance with the Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended.
- A whole school approach to reinforce good attendance, teaching and learning to encourage all students to attend and achieve.
- Individuals or group attendance targets are set and understood by staff, parents and students.

8. Registers

Registers provide the daily record of attendance of all pupils. They are legal documents and the register may be required in a court of law, for example as evidence in prosecutions for non-attendance in school.

‘Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006’ (section 6)

Schools must take the attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day, morning (a.m.) and once during the second session, afternoon (p.m.).

On each occasion they must record whether every pupil is:

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

The school should 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, or management information system as a priority and returned to the school office in a timely manner. This is used to download data to the School Census.
- Consider early identification, assessment, intervention and support processes that may need to be implemented.

The register should be marked using the codes as advised by the Department for Education (DfE) ‘Working together to improve School Attendance Guidance’ (for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities)

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

9. Procedure

Children are expected to attend school regularly, unless there is good reason for absence. There are two types of absence:

- Authorised (where the school approves a pupil absence)
- Unauthorised (where school will not approve the absence)

The school has a duty to safeguard all its pupils. If a child is absent, the parents/carers should inform the school on the **first day of absence** and each following day of absence, stating the reason.

Parents/carers must contact the attendance officer on first day of absence and every consecutive day to provide a reason for non-attendance via school phone or the study bugs app.

Request leave in advance for holidays/extended absences in term time by following the School Holiday in Term Time policy procedures.

The school attendance officer will make contact with home when a child is absent, and the parent/carer has not notified the school of the absence. If no contact can be achieved or the reason for absence is not accepted the absence will be unauthorised.

10. What can parents/carers do to help and working in partnership with parents/carers

Let the school know straight away why your child is absent. Home/school communication is extremely important in supporting your child to achieve and feel settled in school. Try to make any dental/GP appointments outside of school time.

It is pertinent that school and parents / carers work together with a shared plan and outcomes when supporting a child / young person's attendance and wellbeing. If despite persistent attempts to work with parents, there continues to be a lack of engagement, then legal procedures may be followed to secure engagement and school attendance.

As a school we recognise that building respectful relationships with families and working in collaboration is essential to ensuring the best outcomes for children / young people. We require all parents to actively support the work of the school, including promoting attendance and engagement. We are committed to ensuring that systems and processes are in place with regards to promoting attendance and would encourage parents to make contact if they have concerns about their child.

We will provide parents/carers with information about Emotionally Based School Non-attendance to discuss needs and strategies to support their child, as appropriate (see EBSN Parent Leaflet).

11. Absence Monitoring

School robustly monitor and analyse attendance data to promptly identify and address possible concerns and allow for early interventions to support the child/family's underlying needs. This will include:

- Weekly attendance code analysis.
- Specific cohort and group monitoring – particularly for vulnerable groups i.e. children with a social worker.
- Monitoring of lesson attendance across all subjects.
- 'Welcome back' meeting for all pupils that have been absent for 5 days – to check wellbeing and ensure there are no ongoing needs that will impact on attendance.
- The school's strategy for using data to target attendance improvement efforts to the pupils or pupil cohorts who need it most.
- The school's strategy for reducing persistent and severe absence, including how access to wider support services will be provided to remove the barriers to attendance and when support will be formalised in conjunction with the local authority.
- The school will send all letters via email to ensure parents are fully informed of their child's attendance, parents will be informed of all meetings and minutes from meetings via email.

12. Early Identification and Intervention: assess, plan, do and review

Every pupil has a right to a full-time education and *Blacon High School* sets high attendance expectations for all pupils. *Blacon High School* will consider the individual needs of pupils and their families who have specific barriers to attendance and will consider our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

For any child/young person who is absent from school it is essential to fully understand the reasons for this so that targeted, evidence-based interventions and support can be put into place. All staff have a part to play in promoting attendance. We recognise the importance of ensuring that key members of staff from across the school, including Form Tutors, attendance, pastoral and SEND staff work in collaboration to consider and identify the holistic needs of the child/young person and to overcome barriers to attendance. In accordance with the principles of early intervention, a graduated approach of assess, plan, do and review will be followed utilising arrange of school-based resources, evidence-based interventions and seeking advice and support from external services at an appropriate stage, when needed.

Appropriate assessments will be important to help understand the underlying reasons that may be contributing to attendance difficulties. This may be an assessment that focuses on the individual child's needs such as an SDQ, SEND assessments and wellbeing assessments or may include the holistic needs of the family, such as a TAF assessment. Assessments will include the views of the child/young person as well as parents/carers, and identify strengths (what is working well) and needs (what is working less well).

Assessments undertaken may identify that a child/young person is experiencing underlying emotional based needs that are contributing to non-attendance. Cheshire West and Chester Council has developed guidance for schools - Emotionally Based School Non-attendance: Good practice guidance for schools (revised November 2021). This is a whole school framework with a graduated approach to support the early identification and intervention of children/young people who may struggle to cope in school/attend school.

Information from assessments will inform a SMART action plan with focussed targets developed in partnership with families, and other services as appropriate. For example, Early Help and Prevention and Social Care may have a part to play in the delivery of support and intervention to promote engagement and attendance. SMART plans should be personalised to effectively meet a child / young person's needs and improve attendance and wellbeing outcomes.

Regular reviews of support and attendance plans are essential to monitor the impact of interventions and to adjust these accordingly. If, despite targeted support and intervention, attendance and wellbeing concerns persist, we may seek further advice and support from external services including mental health services, specialist teaching and education services.

13. Medical Absence

Absence due to sickness should be reported to the school by phone or using the *Studybugs* app, on the first day of absence. The school should be kept informed during longer periods of absence. School will contact parents during the first day if no satisfactory reason for absence has been received. The school will ask about the child's symptoms in order to record their absence accurately.

Questions should/could include:

- Tell me what symptoms your child has?
- When did they start to feel unwell?
- Have you/will you be made/making a doctor's appointment?
- Are they able to attend school with calpol/painkillers/anti biotics etc?
- When do you expect them to return?
- Do you need support with anything else?
- Are there any other issues/barriers preventing your child from attending?
- The parent should be reminded to contact the school the following day with an update.

In the majority of cases, a parent's notification that their child is ill can be accepted without question or concern. Schools should not routinely request that parents provide medical evidence to support illness. Schools are advised not to request medical evidence unnecessarily as it places additional pressure on health professionals.

Only where the school has a **genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity** of the illness should medical evidence be requested to support the absence. In instances of **long-term or repeated absences for the same reason**, however, seeking medical evidence may be appropriate to assist in assessing whether the child requires additional support to help them to attend more regularly, and

whether the illness is likely to prevent the child from attending for extended periods. If a parent proactively seeks out a note from a GP, it does not imply a need for absence unless this is explicit in their letter.

If a medical absence is likely to be ongoing or long term, then we will offer support in accordance with the school's policies and statutory guidance relating to Children with health needs.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions-3>.

As a school we need to plan how children can access Education and how and when the child will return to school. In accordance with the Equality Act 2010 the school must also demonstrate that reasonable adjustments are made to meet child's Educational Needs.

For children who have a medical condition and cannot attend school, the school will refer to the Cheshire West and Chester Council's Medical Needs Team.

<https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/documents/education-and-learning/medical-needs-service/medical-needs-policy-latest.pdf>

Their policy states that referrals must come directly from the child's school and must be supported by medical evidence from one of the following health professionals:

- consultant paediatrician or adolescent psychiatrist
- consultant child psychiatrist
- hospital consultant

Supporting evidence from a General Practitioner alone cannot be accepted.

As from 19th August 2024, schools must make a sickness return to the Local Authority and provide the full name and address of all pupils who have been recorded with the code I (Illness) and who the school has reasonable grounds to believe they will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness. This is to help the school and Local Authority to agree any provisions needed to ensure continuity of education of pupils who cannot attend because of health needs, in line with the statutory guidance on Education for Children with health needs:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-for-children-with-health-needs-who-cannot-attend-school>

14. Lateness and Punctuality

School begins at 8.40am and all pupils are expected to be in school for registration at that time.

- Register taken at 8.40am
- Registers close at 9.10am

Any child who arrives after the gates are closed must enter the school by the main entrance and report to the school office to sign in. If pupils are not in class when the register is taken, they will be coded as 'L'. Any late arrivals after 9.10am will be coded as 'U' which is an unauthorised absence for that session.

In accordance with the 'Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006', if your child arrives after the registers close, they will receive a mark, code U, that shows them to be on site, but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. This may mean that you could face the possibility of a Fixed Penalty Notice or other legal action if the problem persists.

Children who are consistently late for school are disrupting not only their own education, but also that of other children. Where persistent lateness gives cause for concern, you will be invited to a meeting to resolve the issues. If there is no improvement following this meeting, further action will be taken which may include referral to external agencies.

You may approach the school at any time for support and advice if you are having difficulty getting your child to school on time or maintaining regular attendance.

15. Unauthorised Absence and Fixed Penalty Notice

An absence may be coded as 'unauthorised' if:

- no reason for absence has been given
- medical evidence is not received when requested
- a request for a leave of absence has been unauthorised
- a pupil arrives at school after registration has closed at 9.10am

Parents/carers should be aware that Blacon High School may contact the Local Authority if a pupil has 10 or more unauthorised absences in the current term with a view to issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice or other legal action. The first penalty notice issued to the parent for that pupil will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days reducing to £80 if paid within 21 days. Where it is deemed appropriate to issue a second penalty notice to the same parent for the same pupil within 3 years of the first notice, the second notice is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days. A third penalty notice must not be issued within a 3 year period. Therefore, in cases where the threshold is met for a third (or subsequent) times within those 3 years, a penalty notice cannot be issued and alternative action should be taken instead. This will often include considering prosecution, but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions.

16. Cheshire West & Chester: Code of Conduct for Education Fixed Penalty Notice (Unauthorised Leave of Absence & Irregular Attendance)

1. A Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) can only be issued in cases of unauthorised absence.
2. The first penalty notice issued to the parent for that pupil will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days reducing to £80 if paid within 21 days.
3. Where it is deemed appropriate to issue a second penalty notice to the same parent for the same pupil within 3 years of the first notice, the second notice is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.

4. A third penalty notice must not be issued within a 3 year period. Therefore, in cases where the threshold is met for a third (or subsequent) times within those 3 years, a penalty notice cannot be issued and alternative action should be taken instead. This will often include considering prosecution, but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions.

5. A FPN may be issued per parent per child.

6. Penalty Notices may be considered appropriate if:

- Unauthorised absences of at least 10 consecutive school sessions (five school days).
- Sessions either side of a weekend or school holiday will be counted as consecutive school days.
- For poorly attending learners, at least 10 sessions (five school days) lost due to unauthorised absence during a school term. These do not need to be consecutive.
- For poorly attending learners, persistent late arrive at school in a term. Persistent means at least 10 sessions of late arrival.
- The presence of an excluded child in a public place in the child's first five days of exclusion (*N.B. points 2 to 4 do not apply where a FPN is issued for an excluded pupil in a public place.*)

7. The school must notify parents of the Attendance Policy and clearly state that parents may receive an FPN for an unauthorised leave of absence relating to holiday in term time.

8. Schools and the Education Welfare Services will take into account any exceptional circumstances when determining whether to issue a FPN.

17. Application for Exceptional Circumstances

As of 19th August 2024, the law ceases to include a leave of absence for a family holiday. A leave of absence should not be granted unless there are exceptional circumstances. Generally, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance. Head Teachers are only empowered to approve a leave of absence when it is requested in advance by the parent or carer with whom the child resides and when circumstances of the requested leave are 'exceptional'.

The Head Teacher and the Governing Body will determine what constitutes an exceptional circumstance on an individual basis. If parents/carers need to request Exceptional Leave of Absence, they must complete an 'Exceptional Leave of Absence' form available from the school office. It should be noted that if any application is declined and absence occurs of a consecutive 5 or more unauthorised days, then school may apply to the Local Authority for a Fixed Penalty Notice to be issued to each parent/carers.

The following will not be deemed to be exceptional circumstances:

- Family holiday
- Availability of less expensive holiday
- Availability of holiday accommodation
- Parent/carers' working commitments

- Holiday pre-booked by another family member

A child's absence during term time seriously disrupts their continuity of learning. Not only do they miss the teaching on the days they are away but are less prepared for the lessons building on that teaching when they return to school. There is a consequent risk of under achievement, which we must seek to avoid.

The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring any attendance issues are dealt with in line with school policy.

18. Religious Observance

We recognise that some pupils may need to participate in days of religious observance. Where a day of religious observance:

- falls during school time and
- has been exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil belongs

We ask that parents/carers notify Blacon High School in writing in advance where absence is required due to a religious observance.

19. Enforced School Closure

If Blacon High School was forced to close for a period of time, we have the facility to operate an online virtual school. The expectation is children will still engage with ALL activities when work is set. Procedures for online learning will be sent to parents as and when required.

20. Impact

All pupils will achieve well by developing knowledge and skills on their journey through school. Due to robust monitoring of attendance, all pupils, including vulnerable children and children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), will have fair and equitable access to school in order to achieve the best possible outcomes. Pupils will leave Blacon High School ready for a successful transition to *further education or employment*.

21. Truancy

Any member of staff who identifies a student as truanting should trigger the following procedure:

- The staff member should inform reception, behavior manager, and Attendance officer
- Staff to alert behaviour manager who sends a whole school e-mail alerting the student absence from lesson
- Behaviour manager will endeavor to locate the student and return them to their lesson

- Register should be marked with 'N' code
- If the student is not located the Attendance officer should telephone the parent/carer to inform
- Where a student's truancy is regular, the Progress Leader will follow up in the form of a parental meeting and an appropriate sanction will be given.

22. Provision for supervised learning at home

Where a student is not able to attend school when they would be usually timetabled for onsite provision, in special circumstances, work can be provided for the student.

23. Attendance Targets

The table below sets out the attendance targets and at what stage parents/carers will be contacted about their child's attendance.



100%	Outstanding achievement is recognised once a term through a system of rewards
96%	Over 96% is recognised as good attendance and rewarded
Less than 96%	Less than 96% requires improvement and the school will seek to provide support through a stage one letter
Less than 94%	Less than 94% attendance will be monitored more closely and a stage two letter will invite parents to attend a meeting where designated staff will help form an action plan
Less than 92%	Less than 92% is seen as a more serious cause for concern and a stage three letter will initiate a further meeting
Less than 90%	At less than 90% a stage four letter would include referral to Education Welfare Service for more intense support

24. What does 'percentage attendance' mean?

Parents/carers should be advised that from September 2015 the Government have categorised those pupils who have attendance of 90% and below as 'Persistent Absence' pupils (P.A.). RSA will be specifically targeting this cohort of pupils, in an effort to improve their attendance in the future. The table below shows the learning time lost against percentage attendance figures.

Attendance during one school year	Equivalent Days	Equivalent Sessions	Equivalent Weeks	Equivalent Lessons Missed
95%	9 Days	18 Sessions	1.4 Weeks	45 Lessons
90%	19 Days	38 Sessions	3.4 Weeks	95 Lessons
85%	29 Days	58 Sessions	5.4 Weeks	145 Lessons
80%	36 Days	72 Sessions	7.1 Weeks	180 Lessons
75%	48 Days	96 Sessions	9.3 Weeks	240 Lessons

25. Absence Codes:

According to the DfE guidance, the following codes are used on the register. New Attendance Codes from 19th August 2024.

Attending a place other than the school

These codes are classified for statistical purposes as attending an approved educational activity.

Code K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
Code V	Attending an educational visit or trip
Code P	Participating in a sporting activity
Code W	Attending work experience
Code B	Attending any other approved educational activity
Code D	Dual registered at another school

Absent leave of absence

These codes are classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Code C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.
Code M	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment
Code J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
Code S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination
Code X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
Code C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
Code C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance

Absent – other authorised reasons

These codes are classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Code T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes
Code R	Religious observance
Code I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)
Code E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made

Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause

These codes are classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance.

Code Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements
Code Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
Code Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
Code Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Code Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
Code Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Code Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Code Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause

Absent - unauthorised absence

These codes are classified for statistical purposes as unauthorised absence.

Code G	Leave of absence not granted by the school
Code N	Reason for absence not yet established
Code O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances
Code U	Arrived in school after registration closed

26. Guidance for schools – Attendance case working

These stages should be followed once a pupil has reached 10 sessions of unauthorised absence and the school is considering the Education Welfare Service's involvement as current strategies are not improving attendance.

26.1 Stage 1

- Ensure usual attendance policy procedures are being followed
- Continue normal first day contact etc.
- Conduct investigative safeguarding home visits
- Gather information from teaching and support staff regarding the pupil's strengths and needs – this may include a round robin
- Meet with pupil to elicit their views about school (e.g. what is working well / working less well)
- Develop a shared action plan in collaboration with parents / carers, pupils and key staff (informed by assessments and to address specific factors underlying non-attendance)
- Continue to follow assess, plan, do and review cycles focused on targeted intervention and support – e.g. Support and Attendance Plan
- Make an initial single assessment (simplified TAF assessment)
- Refer to other agencies as appropriate (e.g. iART)
- **If parent/carer does not engage with support offered:**
 - Arrange an Attendance Panel Meeting to discuss barriers to attendance, record the voice of the child and complete and ESO checklist
 - Consider a Notice to Improve monitoring period (10-20 sessions unauthorised)
 - Consider a first warning letter for prosecution for more entrenched cases (20+ sessions)

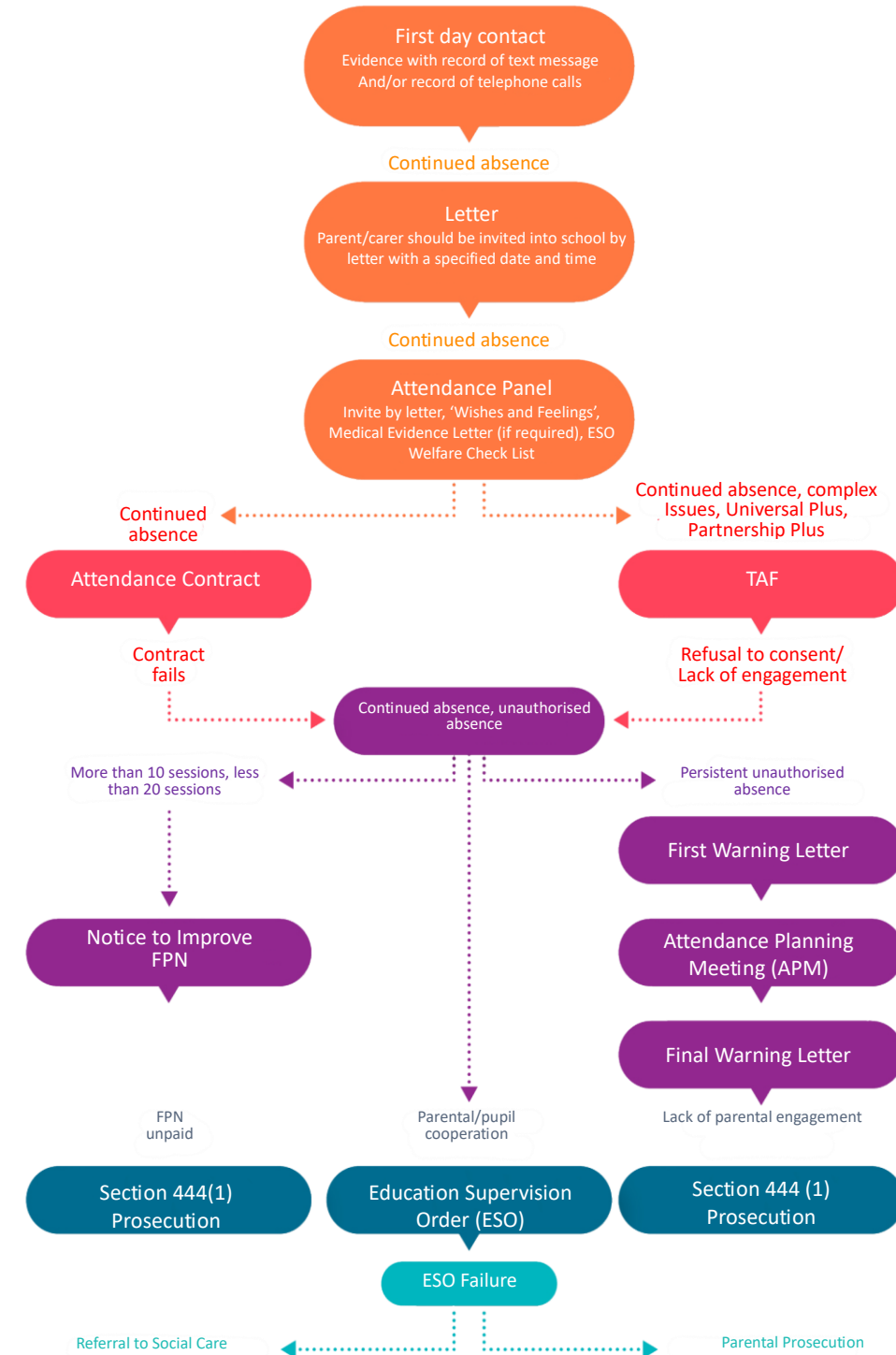
26.2 Stage 2 (within 60 days)

- Continue with usual contact in line with attendance policy
- Conduct further home visits
- Discuss case with attendance lead in school
- Consider Attendance Planning Meeting if there is no improvement following the prosecution first warning letter
- Issue a final warning letter if no improvement following the Attendance Planning Meeting
- Consult with Education Welfare Officer to support in preparing witness statement and exhibits of evidence

26.3 Stage 3 (within 90 days)

- EWO will support in setting up Court File as follows:
- Statement of evidence S9
- Exhibits (labelled and numbered)
- Head teacher certificate
- Recent registration certificate

Attendance Pathway



Second Offences and severe offences can go to Section 444 (1a) prosecution and will be PACE interviewed.

27. Emotionally Based School Non-attendance (EBSN)

Emotionally Based School Non-attendance (EBSN) is a term used to describe the needs of CYP who struggle to attend school due to underlying emotional based needs, such as anxiety, unhappiness and despair. These CYP may be reluctant to leave home and can present high levels of distress in response to parents' attempts to get them to school. This can result in prolonged absences from school.

EBSN is complex and multifaceted, requiring a holistic approach to assessment and intervention. Good practice guidance emphasises the importance of early identification and intervention to support the needs of CYP who may struggle to attend school, developing a SMART support plan, with timely review processes (CW&C, 2018).

The EBSN framework is embedded within the school's Attendance Policy and we use many of the tools and resources to underpin our early identification of need and targeted support and intervention approach.

Schools can access EBSN training and Guidance (EBSN: Good Practice Guidance for Schools) via: [eCWIP for Education - Cheshire West Industry Professionals](#)

28. School Systems for Promoting Regular Attendance

School will:

- Ensure the safety of the student
- Analyse individual attendance student data to identify patterns of absence causing concern
- Contact parents by letter/telephone to highlight concerns
- Invite parents in to school for a Progress leader meeting
- Progress Leaders will use Individual Attendance Action Plans for students with attendance difficulties.
- Consider the use of Parenting Contracts, particularly where exclusion or behavioural issues are affecting attendance
- In partnership with LA use a full range of strategies, including legal interventions, to support improvement to attendance
- Provide appropriate support to students to ensure successful reintegration following long term absence
- Complete a Team around the Family (TAF) assessment where complex and significant factors requiring a multi-agency response is identified
- Implement a range of rewards for students with high levels of attendance and those improving attendance
- Work proactively to engage with parents and carers to resolve any difficulties which may be affecting school attendance, through Parents Evenings, student reviews and home-school agreements
- Provide a full and diverse curriculum to engage and motivate students
- Make parents aware of the impact of poor attendance on attainment

29. Persons with specific responsibilities for attendance in Blacon High School

- Head teacher Rachel Hudson - whole School strategic overview
- Attendance Lead Susannah Wright / Ilya Haycock, Assistant Head Teacher
- Attendance Officer Joanne Rathbone / Lucy Hargreaves

30. Review of Policy

- This policy will be formally reviewed every 2 years
- This policy will be less formally reviewed on an annual basis
- A copy of this policy will be available on the school website
- A basic version of this policy will be included in Student Planners for 2024-2025
- A paper copy of this policy is in the staff handbook and the handbook for governors
- Any complaints arising from the implementation of this policy should be addressed to the Headteacher in the first instance

31. School Specific Aims

Aim No.1

To achieve 95% attendance 2024-2025. National average is currently 92.8%.

- Apply Whole School Attendance Policy consistently.
- Establish and maintain a high profile for attendance and punctuality.
- Relate attendance issues directly to student attainment and the School's values, ethos and curriculum.
- Monitor progress in attendance via measureable outcomes.
- Effective partnership working with the Education Welfare Service.
- Fixed penalty notices are in place for lateness and unauthorised absence including term time holidays U/G Codes.

Aim No. 2

To ensure that persistent absence is consistently reduced year on year basis. (See Page 3 - Aims)

- Early identification of at risk students through effective analysis of data.
- Effective communication with parents of at risk students to ensure they understand the impact and level of absence.
- Thorough assessment of need, and where appropriate, the use of multi-agency approaches to support families and students to improve attendance.
- Action planning and robust reviewing procedure for all students at risk.

Aim No. 3

To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school including students, parents, teachers, governors and staff.

- Regular reporting of attendance levels to parents / teachers / governors.
- Students to record individual attendance in planners for parents to see.
- Overt promotion of attendance in tutor groups, assemblies and staff meetings.
- Introduce tailored rewards schemes within year groups.

Aim No. 4

To ensure there is a whole school, graduated response to improving punctuality and attendance.

- Attendance Lead to meet regularly with Attendance Officer, Progress Leaders
- Develop Whole School attendance strategies and embed.
- Hold regular Attendance Panel Meetings.

Aim No. 5

To define roles and responsibilities and promote consistency in carrying out designated tasks.

- Maintain unambiguous procedures for statutory registration.
- Make clear each member of staff's responsibilities in relation to attendance (Refer to Appendix 1: Roles and responsibilities).
- Publicise the framework of roles and responsibilities through INSET and use of the staff handbook.
- Attendance Lead to meet regularly with Attendance Officer and Progress Leaders to ensure consistent approach to addressing attendance concerns through all year groups.

Aim No. 6

To use data effectively in order to identify groups of students and individuals whose absence causes concern and implement appropriate interventions.

- Maintain an effective system of electronic registration.
- Ensure electronic registration is accurate and timely.
- Identify patterns and trends for various cohorts.
- Make full use of attendance software.

Aim No. 7

To track students' attendance and monitor and evaluate progress.

- Initiate first day absence contact.
- Follow up unexplained absence in writing.
- Promote expectation of absence letters / phone calls.

- Maintain computerised records of attendance.
- Attendance Lead to meet regularly with Attendance Officer, Progress Leaders.
- Attendance target setting and review process implemented for all students falling below 90% attendance.

Aim No. 8

To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and students.

- Promote attendance in tutor time, and assemblies.
- Ensure timely communication to parents if attendance is a concern.
- Continue to develop strong positive relationships with parents, as members of the extended school community.
- Meet with parents and students to discuss barriers to attendance and assess need.
- Make referrals to the School's Family Support Team.

Aim No. 9

To use appropriate assessment and develop strong multi-agency links in order to address higher levels of need.

- Advocate use of Team around the Family (TAF) for those students higher levels/complex needs.
- Liaise closely with the School's SEN department for students with identified SEN.
- Continue to develop strong working partnerships with relevant agencies.
- Use School procedures to raise concerns about students in need (Inclusion panel meetings half termly, Emotional Health and Mental Wellbeing consultations).