



Attendance Policy

Our school is part of the Embark Federation.

The shared vision for our trust is to “create schools that ‘stand out’ at the heart of their communities.” Our trust has four core beliefs; Family, Integrity, Teamwork and Success that are integral to everything we do. The purpose is to enable everyone to be able to ‘Love Learning, Love Life.’

Our policies are underpinned by our vision, beliefs and purpose.



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Introduction

Embark Federation schools offer all students a high standard of education through a varied curriculum delivered by a caring, talented team of staff. Students cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school. School attendance is expected to be 100% for all students. We work to ensure that all parents are encouraged and supported to develop good attendance habits for their students.

We understand that barriers to attendance are complex, therefore, we will continue to prioritise cultivating a safe and supportive environment at school, as well as strong and trusting relationships with students and families.

Regular and punctual school attendance is essential. Parents/carers have the legal responsibility for ensuring their child's regular attendance and failure to do so is a criminal offence under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. This is the duty of any person with day-to-day responsibility for the student. Students need to attend school regularly, in accordance with the rules of the school, if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them.

Anthony Gell School fully recognises its responsibilities to ensure students are in school and on time, therefore having access to learning for the maximum number of days and hours. We take a whole-school approach to achieve excellent attendance for all students.

Our policy applies to all students registered at this school and this policy is made available to all parents/carers of students who attend our school on our website.

Data will be processed in line with the new GDPR Regulations UK, May 2018.

We are committed to:

- Promoting and modelling high attendance and its benefits.
- Ensuring equality and fairness for all.
- Ensuring this attendance policy is clear and easily understood by staff, students, and families.
- Intervening early and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our students.
- Building strong relationships with families to overcome barriers to attendance.
- Working collaboratively with other schools in the trust and area, as well as other agencies.
- Ensuring families follow the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that the parent/carer of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any SEND they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- Regularly monitoring and analysing attendance and absence data to identify students or cohorts that require more support.

The trust ensures each school has staff members responsible for attendance in each school. Anthony Gell School's Attendance Officer is Miss E Wood and the Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral Care) is Mrs H Dafforne. Staff, families, and students will be expected to contact the attendance officer for queries or concerns about attendance or absence.

Legal framework

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

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended)
- DfE (2024) 'Working together to improve school attendance'
- DfE (2016) 'Children missing education'
- DfE (2025) 'Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE) 2025'
- DfE (2023) 'Providing remote education'
- DfE (2024) 'Sharing daily student attendance data'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Children Missing from Education Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy
- Attendance Officer Home Visit Policy
- Students with Additional Health Needs Attendance Policy

Roles and responsibilities

The board of trustees has overall responsibility for:

- Monitoring the implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Promoting the importance of good attendance through the school's ethos and policies.
- Arranging attendance training for all relevant staff that is appropriate to their role.
- Working with the SLT to set goals for attendance and providing support and challenge around delivery against those goals.
- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.
- Having regard to KCSIE when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Ensuring there is a Children Missing Education Policy in place and that this is regularly reviewed and updated.

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Appointing a member of the SLT to the attendance officer role.

- Ensuring all parents are aware of the school's attendance expectations and procedures.
- Ensuring that every student has access to full-time education and will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence.

Staff are responsible for:

- Following this policy and ensuring students do so too.
- Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual students to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.
- Where designated, taking the attendance register at the relevant times during the school day.

The attendance champion is responsible for:

- The overall strategic approach to attendance in school.
- Developing a clear vision for improving attendance.
- Monitoring attendance and the impact of interventions.
- Analysing attendance data and identifying areas of intervention and improvement.
- Communicating with students and parents with regard to attendance.
- Following up on incidents of persistent poor attendance.
- Informing the LA of any student's name being deleted from the admission register unless exceptions apply.

Parents are responsible for:

- Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.
- Providing the school with more than one emergency contact number.
- Updating the school if their details change.
- The attendance of their children at school.
- Promoting good attendance with their children.

Students are responsible for:

- Attending their lessons and any agreed activities when at school.
- Arriving punctually to lessons when at school.

Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

Absence:

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

Authorised absence:

- An absence is classified as authorised when a student has been away from school for a legitimate unavoidable reason and the school has received notification from a parent

or carer. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent contacts the school to explain the absence.

- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave

Only the Headteacher can decide on whether an absence is authorised or not. Even if absence is supported by parent/carer, an absence will be unauthorised if not agreed with the headteacher.

Unauthorised absence:

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a student is away from school without a legitimate reason.
- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a student is away from school without the knowledge or authorisation of the school even if the absence is supported by the parent/carer.

Persistent absence (PA):

- Missing 10 percent or more of schooling across the year for any reason authorised or unauthorised bringing their attendance to 90% or below.

Attendance expectations

The trust and each individual school have high expectations for students' attendance and punctuality and ensures that these expectations are communicated to families and students.

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

The school day starts at **8:55am** when students will attend tutor time with their tutors, therefore, students will be expected to be on site by **8:45am**; Students will have their breaktime at **11:10-11:30am**, and a further tutor time at **12:30-12:45pm**. Lunch break is **12:45-13:30pm** – students will be expected to have returned and be ready to recommence learning at the stated time.

Registers will be taken as follows throughout the school day:

- The morning register will be marked by **9:00am**. Students will receive a late mark (L) if they are not at registered by this time.
- The morning register will close at **9:25am**. Students will receive a mark of absence (U) if they do not attend school before this time
- The afternoon register will be marked by **13:40pm**. Students will receive a late mark (L) if they are not in their classroom by this time.
- The afternoon register will close at 14:00. Pupils will receive a mark of absence (U) if they are not present.

Class teachers will also take informal registers at the start of each lesson period to ensure that students are attending all timetables lessons. These registers will be analysed alongside formal registers in line with the section of this policy.

Students should communicate any concerns related to attendance and absence as soon as possible to the relevant member of staff.

Lateness

Children who are persistently late after close of register will quickly fall behind with their learning and will have an unsettled start to the day as they will miss key information about the day and future events and the opportunity to speak to friends before school starts.

Any student who comes into school after **9:00am** will be marked as late. Records are kept of those students who are late; this is documented on the electronic register for each student (Attendance code L).

Any child who arrives for school later than **9:25am** will be marked as late after close of register (Attendance code U). This is an unauthorised absence for the whole session and will affect your child's overall attendance percentage and can be used to calculate absence thresholds for legal decision making.

Children who have attended a dentist or doctor's appointment will have the absence recorded as a **medical absence** (Attendance code M).

Persistent Lateness

The attendance team oversees the morning late gate. The attendance or pastoral managers engage students and families who are persistently late by using the following strategies:

- Providing support and challenge for the reasons for lateness
- Formal and informal discussions with students and parents/carers
- Monitoring data for late students
- Engaging Family Support Worker where necessary
- Using reasonable adjustments to allow students to be able to access school
- Use of appropriate sanctions where lateness is without good reason in the view of the school

Absence procedures

Families must contact the school office before **8:30** am on the first day and every subsequent day of their child's absence – It is a legal requirement that they will be expected to provide an explanation for the reason for absence and an estimation of how long the absence will last, e.g., one school day.

Where a student is absent, and their family has not contacted the school by the time the registers have been checked, to report the absence, staff will contact the family as soon as is practical on the first day and every subsequent day that they do not attend school without contact.

The school will follow up any absences to:

- Ascertain the reason for the absence.
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is being taken.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
- Identify the correct code to use to enter the data onto the school system.
- Support in a return to school where it is reasonable to do so

The school will not request medical evidence in most circumstances where a student is absent due to illness; however, the school reserves the right to request supporting evidence where there is genuine and reasonable concern about the authenticity or impact of the illness.

Where a child has been absent without explanation, we will contact the family requesting the reason for absence. If we are unable to get the reason, we will send an email or message through the school messaging service requesting the reason for absence to parents/carers to complete. If a response is not received by the specified date, then the absence will be recorded as an unauthorised absence (Attendance Code O)

In the case of a persistent absentee (a student's attendance drops below 90 percent) where there are concerns with the reasons for absence or informal voluntary support has not made an improvement, the attendance officer will be informed, and a formal meeting to write an attendance improvement plan will be arranged with the student's parents and the student

Where a student has not returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence or is absent from school without authorisation for 20 consecutive school days, the school will follow the guidance for students who may be missing in education if the school and the LA have failed to establish the whereabouts of the student after making reasonable enquiries. The school will take in to account any additional steps that may be necessary in line with expectations of the safeguarding policy.

6. Attendance register

The school uses Arbor to keep attendance registers to ensure they are as accurate as possible and can be easily analysed and shared with the appropriate authorities.

Designated staff members will take the attendance register at the start of each school day and at the start of the afternoon session. This register will record whether students are:

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

The following codes are taken from the DfE's [guidance on school attendance](#).

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Student is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Student is present at afternoon registration

L	Late arrival	Student arrives late before register has closed
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Student is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Student is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Student is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Student is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Student is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Student is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Student is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Student is at a medical or dental appointment
J	Interview	Student has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Student has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination

X	Not required to be in school	Student of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Student is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Student has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	The student is a mobile child and their parent(s) is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the student is travelling with them. A mobile child is a child of compulsory school age who has no fixed abode and whose parent(s) is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require them to travel from place to place.
R	Religious observance	Student is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Student is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Student has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Student is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Student is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available

Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Student is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Student is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every student absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Student is unable to attend as they are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Student's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Student is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Student has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session

Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective student not on admission register	Student has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

When the school has planned in advance to be fully closed, the code '#' will be used for the relevant students who are absent. This code will also be used to record year groups who are not due to attend because the school has set different term dates for different years, e.g. induction days.

Students who are absent from school but are receiving remote education for any reason will still be marked as absent in the register using the most appropriate absence code.

All amendments made to the attendance register will include the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date of amendment and the name and role of the person who made the amendment.

The school will share its daily attendance data with the DfE directly from the management information system.

Where there is more than one afternoon session, and therefore the attendance register is taken more than once in the same afternoon, the school will use the codes from the last afternoon session as the basis for its statistical attendance data.

Every entry received into the attendance register will be preserved for **six** years.

7. Authorising parental absence requests

Parents will be required to request certain types of absence in advance. All requests for absence will be handled by the Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral) – the decision to grant or refuse the request will be at the sole discretion of the Assistant Headteacher and Headteacher, taking the best interests of the student and the impact on the student's education into account. The Headteacher's decision is not subject to appeal; however, the school will be sympathetic to requests for absence by parents and will not deny any request without good reason.

Leave of absence

The school will only grant a student a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. In order to have requests for a leave of absence considered, the school will expect parents to contact the Headteacher **in writing** at least **two weeks** prior to the proposed start date of the leave of absence, providing the reason for the proposed absence and the dates during which the absence would be expected to occur.

Any requests for leave during term time will be considered on an individual basis and the student's previous attendance record will be taken into account. Where the absence is granted, the Headteacher will determine the length of time that the student can be away from school. The school is not likely to grant leaves of absence for the purposes of family holidays.

Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:

- During Year 7 when a student is settling into the school, unless certain exceptional circumstances apply, e.g. the death of a family member
- Immediately before and during assessment periods
- When a student's attendance record shows any unauthorised absence
- Where a student's authorised absence record is already above **10 percent** for any reason

If term-time leave is not granted, taking a student out of school will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and may result in sanctions, such as a penalty notice. The school cannot grant leaves of absence retrospectively; therefore, any absences that were not approved by the school in advance will be marked as unauthorised.

Repeated period of unauthorised leave and penalty notices

The working together to improve attendance guidance now states that there is a two-penalty notice limit over a rolling 3-year period.

If repeated penalty notices are being incurred, it is unlikely that they are having an impact on improving students' attendance. Therefore, from autumn term 2024, only 2 penalty notices can be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within a 3-year rolling period and any second notice within that period is charged at a higher rate:

-First Offence - The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance the amount will be: £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days. Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.

-Second Offence (within 3 years) -The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance the amount will be: £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.

-Third Offence and Any Further Offences (within 3 years) - The third time an offence is committed for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance a Penalty Notice will not be issued, and the case will be presented straight to the Magistrates' Court.

Medical or dental appointments

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

Performances and activities, including paid and unpaid work

The school will ensure that all students engaging in performances or activities, whether they receive payment or not, which require them to be absent from school, understand that they will be required to obtain a licence from the LA which authorises the school's absence(s).

Additional arrangements will be made by the school for students engaging in performances or activities that require them to be absent from school to ensure they do not fall behind in their education – this may involve private teaching. These arrangements will be approved by the LA who will ensure that the arrangements are suitable for the student.

The student will receive education that, when taken together over the term of the licence, amounts to a minimum of three hours per day that the student would be required to attend a school maintained by the LA issuing the licence. This requirement will be met by ensuring a student receives an education:

- For not less than six hours a week; and
- During each complete period of four weeks (or if there is a period of less than four weeks, then during that period), for periods of time not less than three hours a day; and
- On days where the student would be required to attend school if they were attending a school maintained by the LA; and
- For not more than five hours on any such day.

Where a licence has been granted by the LA and it specifies dates of absence, no further authorisation will be needed from the school. Where an application does not specify dates, and it has been approved by the LA, it is at the discretion of the Headteacher to authorise the leave of absence for each day. The Headteacher will not authorise any absences which would mean that a student's attendance would fall below **96 percent**. Where a licence has not been obtained, the headteacher will not authorise any absence for a performance or activity.

Attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution

The school will usually grant leave of absence where an application has been made in advance by the parent who the student normally lives with and the leave is to enable the student to attend an interview for employment or admission to another educational institution, e.g. university or college.

Study leave for a public examination

The school may grant leave of absence for a student to study for a public examination and the leave has been agreed in advance with a parent who the student normally lives with.

Study leave will not be granted by default once tuition for the examination syllabus is complete and will be used sparingly. Provision will still be made available for students who want to continue to come into school to revise.

Students subject to a part-time timetable

In very exceptional circumstances and where it is in a student's best interests, the school will grant leave of absence to accommodate for a student on a part-time timetable. In such circumstances, the days on which the student is expected to attend school will be agreed in advance.

Religious observance

Parents will be expected to request absence for religious observance at least **two weeks** in advance.

The school will only accept requests from parents for absence on grounds of religious observance for days that are exclusively set apart for religious observance by the relevant religious body. The school will define this as a day where the student's parents would be expected by an established religious body to stay away from their employment to mark the occasion.

The school may seek advice from the religious body in question where there is doubt over the request.

Parent travelling or occupational purposes

If a student is travelling with their parent as a result of the parent's trade or business and is therefore unable to attend, the school will assure itself that this is a genuine reason. Proof will not be sought without genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the reason for absence given. The parent will be encouraged to ensure that the student can attend a school where they are travelling to, and be dual registered at that school.

SEND - and health-related absences

The school recognises that students with SEND and/or health conditions, including mental health issues, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers, and will incorporate robust procedures to support students who find attending school difficult.

In line with the SEND Policy and Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy, the school will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for disabled students to reduce barriers to attendance, in line with any EHC plans or IHPs that have been implemented. The school will secure additional support from external partners to help bolster attendance where appropriate.

Where the school has concerns that a student's non-attendance may be related to mental health issues, families will be contacted to discuss the issue and whether there are any contributory factors to their child's lack of attendance. Where staff have a mental health concern about a student that is also a safeguarding concern, they will inform the DSL's and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will be followed. All students will be supported with their mental health in accordance with the school's Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy.

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

- Inform the Local authority if a student is likely to be away from the school for more than 15 consecutive school days, are placed on a temporary part-time timetable or a dual placement.
- Provide the Local authority with information, when necessary, about how the student's needs are being met.
- Help the student reintegrate at school when they return.
- Encourage the student to stay in contact with other students during their absence.

The school will incorporate an action plan to help any students with SEND and/or health issues cope with the stress and anxiety that attending school may cause them. Such plans will be regularly monitored and reviewed until the student is attending school as normal and there has been signs of significant improvement.

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

- Holding regular (at least termly) meetings to evaluate any implemented reasonable adjustments.
- Using any internal or external specialist.
- Enabling a student to have a temporary reduced timetable if this is in the best interests of the student.
- Temporary late starts or early finishes.
- Phased returns to school where there has been a long absence.
- Tailored support to meet their individual needs.

Leave during lunch times

Families may be permitted to take their child away from the school premises during lunch times in exceptional circumstances or if it is in the best interests of the student with permission from the Headteacher – it is at the Headteacher's discretion as to whether a student will be allowed to leave the premises.

Families must submit a written request, outlining the reasons for their child to leave the premises during lunchtime.

Truancy

Truancy will be considered as any absence of part, or all, of one or more days from school, during which the school has not been notified of the cause behind such absence and parents/carers are not aware.

All staff will be actively engaged in supporting the regular attendance of students and understand the importance of continuity in each student's learning.

All students are expected to be in their classes for registration, where the teacher will record the attendance electronically. Any student with permission to leave the school during the day must sign out at the school office and sign back in again on their return.

Immediate action will be taken when there are any concerns that a student might be truanting. If truancy is suspected, the pastoral/attendance/safeguarding team are notified, and they will contact the parent in order to assess the reasons behind the student not attending school.

The following procedures will be taken in the event of a truancy:

- In the first instance, a letter of warning will be sent to the Families of the student, informing them of the truancy and stating that any future occurrences could result in further action being taken.
- If any further truancy occurs, then the school will consider issuing a penalty notice.
- A penalty notice will be issued where there is overt truancy, inappropriate parentally condoned absence, excessive holidays in term-time and persistent late arrival at school.

The DSL will be involved where an instance of truancy may be linked to a safeguarding concern. Any safeguarding concerns will be dealt with in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. Police will be contacted if the child's whereabouts are not known.

Missing children

Students will not be permitted to leave the school premises during the school day unless they have permission from the school and parent/carer. The following procedures will be taken in the event of a student going missing whilst at school:

- The member of staff who has noticed the missing student will inform the safeguarding/pastoral staff /attendance team or other senior staff immediately. This will be via on call emergency alert or in person.
- The reception and pastoral staff will also be informed as they will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search.
- A member of staff will stay with the rest of the class, and other available members of staff will conduct a thorough search of the school premises as directed by the senior leader.
- The following areas will be systematically searched:
 - All classrooms
 - All toilets
 - Changing rooms
 - Other communal spaces
 - Other learning spaces
 - Office spaces
 - Any outbuildings
 - The school grounds
- Available staff will begin a search of the area immediately outside of the school premises and will take a mobile phone with them so they can be contacted.
- If the student has not been found after 30 minutes, then the families of the student will be notified.
- The school will attempt to contact parent/carer using the emergency contact numbers provided.
- If the families have had no contact from the student, and the emergency contacts list has been exhausted, the police will be contacted.
- A member of staff will record the incident, describing all circumstances leading up to the student going missing.
- If the missing student has an allocated social worker, is a looked-after child, or has any SEND, then the appropriate personnel will be informed.
- When the student has been located, members of staff will care for and talk to the student to ensure they are safe and well.
- Families and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the student has been located.

The Headteacher or senior leader will take the appropriate action to ensure that students understand they must not leave the premises, and sanctions will be issued if deemed necessary. Appropriate disciplinary procedures will be followed in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

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

Attendance intervention

The school expects students to aim for 100% attendance.

In order to ensure the school has effective procedures for managing absence, the attendance team, supported by the SLT, will:

- Establish a range of specific, evidence-based interventions to address barriers to attendance.

- Monitor the implementation and quality of escalation procedures and seek robust evidence of the escalation procedures that work.
- Attend or lead attendance reviews in line with escalation procedures.
- Establish robust escalation procedures which will be initiated before absence becomes a problem by:
 - Conversations and informal meeting with parents and students.
 - Sending texts, emails and letters to parents.
 - Having a **fortnightly** review. Review of key attendance concerns will take place in Pastoral Meetings.
 - Engaging with local authority attendance teams.
 - Using fixed penalty notices.

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

see Appendix 1 – Summary of Attendance monitoring procedures

The school will recognise outstanding attendance and punctuality in the following ways:

- Text/Email messages to parents/carers
- Attendance Certificates
- Attendance Letters for outstanding attendance
- Reward activities
- Other reasonable rewards

It may also choose to recognise improvements in attendance, good attendance despite long term barriers that may prevent a student reaching the expected standards and improvements in punctuality to school or lessons.

Working with Families to improve attendance

The school will work to cultivate strong, respectful relationships with parents, carers and families to ensure their trust and engagement. Open and honest communication will be maintained with students and their families about the expectations of school life, attendance and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them. The school will offer early help or liaise with other agencies working with students and their families to support attendance, e.g., social care and the school nurse.

We will support families by working together to improve attendance by building effective relationships with families.

These could include;

- Regular parent drop ins, coffee mornings
- A welcome for parents
- A positive environment for parents and an open-door policy for parents
- Celebration events and assemblies
- Attendance rewards for students and celebration messages for parents

The school will ensure that there are **two** sets of emergency contact details for each student wherever possible to ensure the school has additional options for getting in touch with adults responsible for a student where the student is absent without notification or authorisation. Both contact numbers will be used if necessary.

The school will ensure that parent/carers are aware of their legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and to facilitate their child's legal right to a full-time education – families will be made aware that this means their child must attend school every day that it is open, unless in certain circumstances, e.g., sickness or absences that have been authorised by the headteacher in advance. The school will regularly inform parent/carers about their child's levels of attendance, absence and punctuality, and will ensure that they are aware of the benefits that regular attendance at school can have for their child educationally, socially and developmentally.

If a pattern of absence becomes problematic, the attendance officer and pastoral team will work collaboratively with the student and their families to improve attendance by addressing the specific barriers that prevent the student from being able to attend school regularly and developing an attendance improvement plan. The school will always take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for student absence and will approach families to offer support rather than immediately reach for punitive approaches.

Where these barriers are related to the student's experience in school, the attendance team will work with the headteacher and any relevant school staff, e.g., the DSL and SENCO, to address this. Where the barriers are outside of the school's control, e.g., they are related to issues within the student's family, the attendance team will liaise with any relevant external agencies or authorities, e.g., through an early help assessment, children's social care or the local authority, and will encourage families to access the support that they may need.

Persistent Absentee

There are various groups of students who may be vulnerable to high absence and Persistent Absentee, such as:

- Children in need
- LAC
- Young carers
- Students who are eligible for FSM
- Students with EAL
- Students with SEND

The school will use a number of methods to help support students at risk of becoming Persistent absentee to attend school. These include:

- Meeting with students to discuss patterns of absence, barriers to attendance, and any other problems they may be having.
- Making regular contact with families to discuss progress.
- Assessing whether an EHC plan or IHP may be appropriate.
- Considering what support for re-engagement might be needed, including for vulnerable groups.

The school will focus particularly on students who have rates of absence over 50 percent and will work with the local authority and other partners to engage all relevant services needed to identify and address the wider barriers to attendance these students are facing.

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

Penalty Notices and Legal intervention

The school will allow sufficient time for voluntary support to identify and tackle barriers for students' attendance; however, where engagement strategies have not had the desired effect, the attendance team will consider:

- Holding a formal meeting with parents/carers and the school's point of contact in the School Attendance Support Team at the Local authority to develop a formal attendance panel meeting
- Working with the Local authority to put an education supervision order in place.
- Completing an early help with the family.
- Engaging children's social care where there are safeguarding concerns.

Where the above measures are not effective, the Headteacher will issue a notice to improve as a final opportunity for parents to engage in support and improve attendance before a penalty notice is considered.

Where a student reaches the national threshold of 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks, the school will consider whether a penalty notice is appropriate. Each case will be considered individually to determine whether a penalty notice, or another tool or legal intervention should be used to improve attendance.

A fixed penalty notice will be issued in line with the LA's code of conduct and the DfE's '[Working together to improve school attendance](#)' guidance.

A penalty notice is an alternative to prosecution. It requires the parent to pay a fixed amount as a fine for their child's non-attendance and avoids court proceedings. It is intended to secure better attendance without taking legal action through the courts. **When two parents/carers are issued with a penalty notice for the same child both penalty notices must be paid. The fine will apply to each parent for each child who fails to attend regularly and punctually.**

Penalty notices for unauthorised absences will be charged at £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.

A penalty notice of £120 may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first five days of a fixed period or permanent exclusion. This will be reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days.

Parents will only get up to two fines for the same child in a three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action such as a parenting order or prosecution will be considered.

Where attendance still does not improve following a fixed penalty notice, the school will work with the LA to take forward attendance prosecution as a last resort.

Parents who are prosecuted and attend court because their child has not been attending school may be fined up to £2,500.

Education Supervision Orders (ESOs)

Where interventions have not been successful, an ESO can be an alternative to provide formal legal intervention without criminal prosecution. ESOs are made through the Family or High Court and give the LA a formal role in supporting the student and parents to improve their attendance. LAs will issue parents with a notice of the intention to consider an ESO, set up a meeting to discuss with the parent and student, and decide whether the case will be taken forward.

Once an SEO is secured, a supervisor from the local authority will decide any actions or requirements. These may include:

- Requiring the parents to attend support meetings.
- Requiring the parents to attend a parenting programme.
- Requiring the parents to access support services.
- Requiring an assessment by an educational psychologist.
- Review meetings involving all parties to be held every 3 months.

Failing to comply with an SEO will result in a fine and decisions will be made about whether further action is required.

Monitoring and analysing absence

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

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

- The school, as a whole.
- Individual year groups.
- Individual students.
- Individual classes
- Other groups of students, e.g. students with SEND, LAC and students eligible for FSM.
- Students at risk of persistent absence.

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

- Patterns in uses of certain codes.
- Particular days of poor attendance.
- Historic trends of attendance and absence.
- Barriers to attendance.

The Attendance Officer will present this information to the Headteacher or member of the senior leadership team **half-termly, termly and full-year** to celebrate success, identify trends and agree actions moving forward.

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

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

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

The board of trustees will also monitor attendance and ensure staff from different schools within the trust regularly share expertise and collaborate on interventions.

Training of staff

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

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

Training will cover at least the following:

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

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

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

Deletions of names from the admission register

The school will ensure that it only deletes names from the admission register for a reason set out in regulation 9 of the School Attendance Regulations. A student's name will never be removed for any other reason and the school is aware that doing so could constitute off-rolling.

The school will make returns to the LA when students' names are deleted from the admission register. This will be with the exception of students whose name has been deleted from the register

at or after the end of the last term of the school year when they are in the most senior year group, unless the LA has requested this information.

When the school is notifying the LA that a student's name is being deleted from the admission register, the following information about the student will be provided:

- Full name
- Address
- The full name and address of any parent the student normally lives with
- At least one telephone number by which any parent the student normally lives with can be contacted in an emergency
- If applicable, the student's future address, the full name and address of the parent who the student is going to live with and the date the student will start living there
- If applicable, the name of the student's other school and when the student began or will begin to attend the school
- The reason under which the student's name has been deleted from the admission register

Names will never be retrospectively deleted from the admission or attendance register – these registers will remain an accurate record of who is a registered student and their attendance at any given time. Students' attendance will be recorded up until the date that their name is deleted from the admission register.

Monitoring and review

Attendance and punctuality will be monitored throughout the year. The whole school attendance target is 97%.

This policy will be reviewed annually by Embark and the Headteacher.

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

Appendix 1

Attendance Monitoring Procedures

1. Attendance will be discussed with student's Tutor/Pastoral Manager and students will record their attendance on the sheets. Any attendance/punctuality trends noticed by Tutor should be passed immediately to heads of Pastoral Managers and Attendance Officer.
2. Contact will be made with parents on the first day of absence for any student absence not reported. Any N codes not established after a week will be recorded as unauthorised absence.
3. Student attendance drops below 95% – the Pastoral Manager who will speak to students to discuss any issues or problems to ascertain how the school can help to improve their attendance. Pastoral Manager will make a phone call home, if applicable.
4. Student attendance drops below 93% – Our Attendance Officer will send a letter will home raising concerns that attendance has fallen below the school target of 95 percent. The letter will also have a leaflet attached outlining how parents can work with the school and their child to help improve attendance.
5. Student attendance drops below 90% – a letter from the Attendance Officer will be sent home explaining that a student's absence is now being monitored. Attendance Officer will contact parents. Attendance monitored for two weeks. If attendance has not improved, then parents will be required to attend a meeting in school with their child's Pastoral Manager and Attendance Officer. If parents are unwilling to co-operate, or genuinely unable to attend next steps to be adopted.
6. If attendance has not improved within the two-week monitoring period (likely to be close to 85% or below), or if attendance has fallen rapidly, parents will be invited to either: a school attendance panel meeting with Attendance Officer and Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral), or a medical action planning meeting with the school nurse, Pastoral Manager, Attendance Officer and SENCo. Provision will be discussed, and targets will be set for raising attendance. This will be monitored over a further two-week period.
7. After the two-week monitoring period, if targets are met, a letter will be sent home from the leadership team to congratulate the student and the family. Monitoring and communication with the family will continue until attendance stabilises – if targets are not met, the Attendance Officer or Assistant Headteacher will make a referral to the relevant bodies/agencies.
8. Education Welfare protocol will be followed, and a parental contract will be drawn up – there will be a four week monitoring period. No improvements in this time will result in a final written warning. If there is still no further improvement following this, then a fixed penalty notice will be issued.



Anthony Gell
— School —

Attendance Agreement Form

Student Attendance Agreement

I agree to attend school and understand the consequences I may face if my attendance drops below 100 percent. I will ensure that the school is made immediately aware of when I will not reasonably be able to attend, and will give the school full details of my absence.

As a student of **Anthony Gell School**, I am dedicated to:

- Being in attendance every day.
- Always being punctual to school and lessons.
- Informing the school of the reason for any absence.
- Not missing school for trivial reasons.

Student name:		Date:
Form tutor name:		Date:

Parental Attendance Agreement

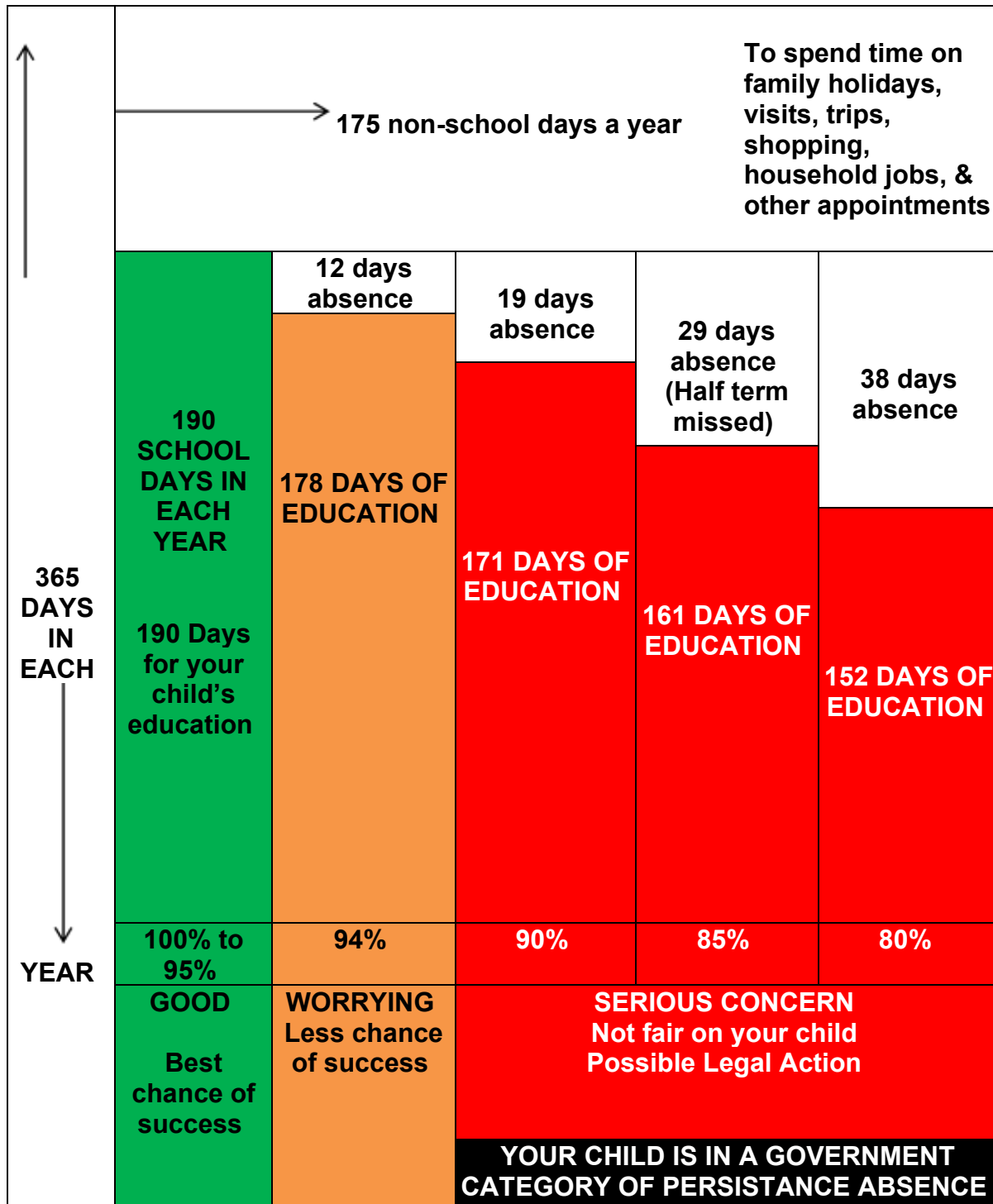
I understand that it is my responsibility to send my child to school. I agree to send my child to school every day and understand the consequences if I fail to do so. When my child is absent from school due to exceptional circumstances, I will ensure the correct procedures are followed.

Parent name:	Date:
Form tutor name:	Date:

Appendix 2

Days off add up to Lost Learning

There is clear evidence to show that days off school impact on your child's attainment and progress.

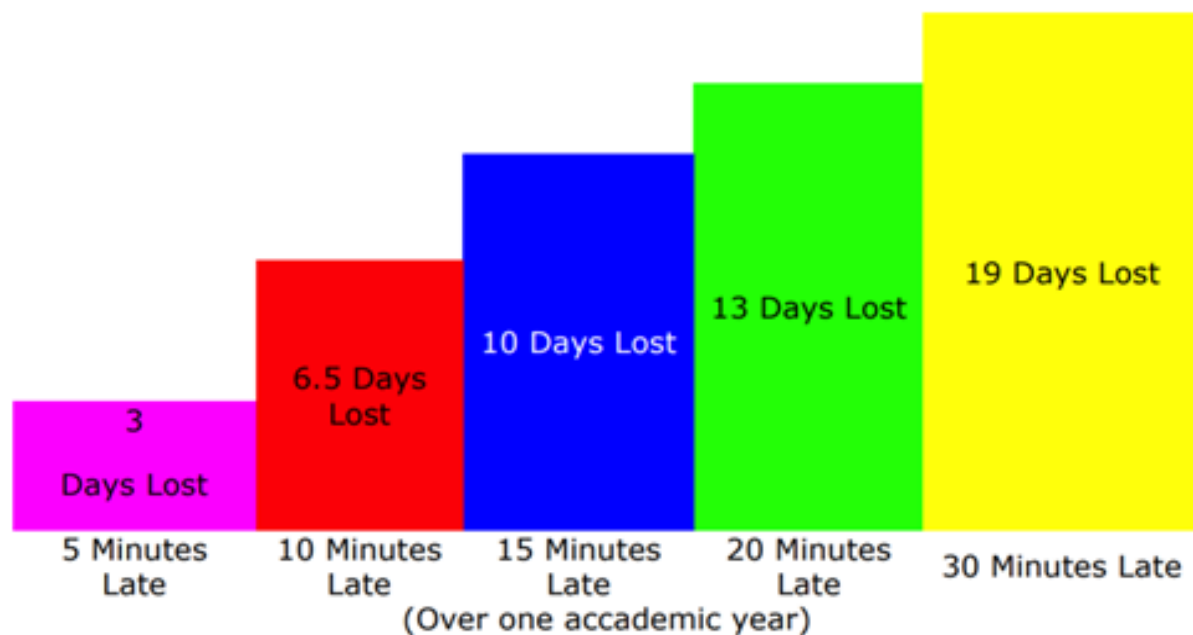


Appendix 3

Number of minutes late that add up to Lost Learning

Every Minute Counts

If you arrive late to school everyday your learning begins to suffer. Below is a graph showing how being late to school everyday over a school year adds up to lost learning time.



Appendix 4 – Risk Register

	Criteria	Intervention	Exit
Wave 1: Early Identification and Mentor-Led Interventions	Attendance below expected (above 90%)	Tutor/Mentor support, check-ins - challenging and supporting negative feelings, supporting with any barriers to coming in to school, friendships/lesson issues, 'soft landings', liaison and support with teachers, have they got equipment? Need anything? Check any vulnerabilities e.g. problem solving transport etc, Really lovely to see you (avoid negative language and refusal, positive and optimistic)....gaining child's voice	Attendance stabilizes above 90%
	Identifiable concerns (illness, minor issues)	Informal action plans - focused work on attendance tracking, progress week on week, check in points confirmed, any special arrangements re health/supportive strategies, acknowledging progress with student and parent, rewards Regular tracking - discussion and completion of tracking sheet in tutor times. Complete Arbor pastoral note of interaction with student related to above content. Working on a half termly cycle of review. Pastoral Manager will meet tutors twice in a half term session to support with this. Approaching PA email, nearing PA emails/letters through Arbor. On Communications log.	
Wave 2: Targeted Interventions	Wave 1 ineffective	Professional support - pastoral manager may call before school, TAFs/meetings/regular communication in place, additional signposting for support with anxiety, mental health, school health, Elm Foundation, SPACE 4 U, Young Futures, SEND support and action plans etc. This is in addition to 'soft landings' re form tutor role and welcoming back. It is expected that staff will check in with students at least twice over each half term. Liaison with other schools for other siblings.	Attendance sustains above 90%
	Additional risk factors (bereavement, crisis)	Family engagement - TAFs/meetings/regular communication in place, safe and well checks, must gain child's voice as well using a range of strategies - house of worries, RAG rating timetable, TAF DCC doc or communication includes child's voice. Written action plan - actions and plan to be written on My Concern at this stage with reviews/actions/follow up Well-being checks - safe and well checks in line with attendance policy (10 days), action plan re return. RAG rating timetable, seating plan discussions, any issues with social time? Any aspects of school an issue/areas? Soft starts, completion of some work if appropriate. Attendance has dropped below 90% letter sent to parents. Possible Parental responsibility letter depending on pattern of absence and number of unauthorised sessions missed. Request for medical evidence letter if relevant.	

Wave 3: Intensive and Multi-Professional Intervention	Wave 2 ineffective (<85%)	External agencies, curriculum leaders - As of wave 2 plus - Early Help intervention and possible social care intervention depending on risk factors and threshold. Pastoral managers, attendance officer and Assistant Headteacher intervention. Documenting support and trying to affect change and improvements. Use of OOST and TMP where applicable, application of EBISA strategies including Gremlin work. Mentoring for DA students, in particular by curriculum leaders and SLT. Use of G16 for SEND students on specific programmes. Use of quiet space next to inclusion base and use of the library as a 'soft start.' Attendance officer pick-ups or Early Help pick-ups.	Improvement, risk reduction, stable support
	Multiple risk factors (family, academic, emotional)	Professional referrals (CAMHS, social services) - CAMHS, school nurse, Compass, Space 4U, Elm Foundation, CGL etc. Use of Young Futures to support students coming in and reducing social anxiety. ISAT involvement and advice. Inform social workers re attendance regularly and with any other concerns arising from checks DA notifications etc. SPOA or SEND exploration examined and SEND progress and provision discussed and evaluated regarding student passport and support programme. Multi-agency meetings - Recording needs to be on My Concern to add to chronology with actions highlighted and student voice gained. Safer families grid being used for meetings DCC and a log of multi-agency involvement and referrals made. PR letter sent out if relevant. Medical evidence letter sent out if relevant. Attendance panels set up and parents invited into school to discuss and action plan formulated with SMART, timed actions and targets. Copy given to parents. Family approach involving all schools	
Wave 4: Critical Interventions and Strategic Reviews	Wave 3 ineffective (<80%)	Full strategic review - Failure to improve following staged intervention. Failure to improve letter sent out if relevant and sent to DCC on fining route. Review strategy. Strategic discussions between attendance officer and AHT Pastoral, outside agencies and social worker/support workers. Family approach involving all schools. CME OR CRE assessment needed?	Attendance >85% or alternative provision
	High-risk concerns (exclusion, safeguarding)	Specialised programmes - Higher level attendance panel meeting with governor. Discussions around managed move, attendance officer pick-ups and gradual exposure to school with severe attendance concerns. Use of C4 as an alternative programme of study and Alternative Provision offers explored. Use of SAM learning/GCSE POD and alternatives re education and receiving work. Autism and SEND support if relevant for the student. EHCP evaluation and review procedure. Phased return, part time timetables. Safeguarding escalation - referral to starting point after review. Continued Early Help if review deemed productive. Safeguarding meeting with doctors where we are raising concern also with the police if child is at risk and not being seen. Safeguarding for children who are at risk safe and well checks will be more frequent.	