



# Macaulay Primary School

## Attendance Policy 2024-25

### I Know Who I Am

#### Our Vision

*Create a nurturing community in the belief that every individual is uniquely and wonderfully created by God*

*Celebrate and adapt to the holistic needs of each child, inspiring them to fulfil their God-given potential*

*Join with families and church to guide and equip our children with the attitudes, skills and beliefs to participate thoughtfully in their wider communities*

#### Our Christian Values

Thankfulness, Compassion, Creativity, Responsibility, Resilience, Friendship

### Introduction

This policy reflects our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#), including:

- setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- acting early to address patterns of absence
- building strong relationships with families to make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school

## A Pupil's Entitlement to Full-time Education

Pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit fully from their education. Missing out on lessons deprives children of their entitlement to full-time education and leaves them vulnerable to falling behind instead of making the best possible progress and opening up rich and varied opportunities in life. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school.

Macaulay school expects at least 96% attendance from its pupils. On the advice of the local authority, 92% attendance or less is regarded as 'unsatisfactory', and letters will be issued to parents/carers if attendance is at or below this threshold. The Department for Education defines 90% attendance or less as 'persistent absence' and parents may be issued with a fixed penalty fine.

**Schools and Local authorities** are expected to:

- promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence
- ensure every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- monitor pupils' attendance through a daily register
- act early to address patterns of absence

**Parents** are expected to act in accordance with their legal duty (Section 7 of the Education Act 1996) by ensuring that their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly and punctually. 'Parents' means either or both parents, and anyone else who has parental responsibility for a child.

## Compulsory School Age

Compulsory school age starts on the first term after a child's fifth birthday. All children starting school at Macaulay join our Reception class in the Autumn term of the school year in which they reach the age of five.

## Full-Time Education

### *School Year*

Schools must be open to educate their pupils for at least 380 sessions or 190 days during any school year.

### *School Day*

Every school day must have two sessions divided by a break. The length of each session, break and the school day is determined by the school's governing body.

Sessions at Macaulay	Session 1	Session 2
Reception, Year 1, Year 2	8.55am – 12.00pm	1.15 – 3.15pm
Years 3-6	8.55am – 12.30pm	1.25 – 3.15pm

## Attendance Register

Schools are required by law to have an attendance register. Schools must take the register at the start of the first session of a school day and again at the start of the second session (after lunch). Schools must record a pupil as one of the following:

- present
- attending an approved educational activity
- absent, using a standard code to indicate the reason
- unable to attend because of exceptional circumstances

At Macaulay, registers are open from as follows:

	<b>Session 1</b>	<b>Session 2</b>
Nursery, Reception, Year 1, Year 2	8.55am – 9.20am	1.15 – 1.30pm
Years 3-6	8.55am – 9.20 am	1.25 – 1.40pm

Registers are taken by a member of staff as soon as possible after the start of the relevant session.

If a child arrives after 8.55 am but before 9.20 they are marked as L (late).

If a child arrives after 9.20 am they are marked as U (arrived in school after registration closed).

### **Educational Visits**

The school register is not taken off-site. For educational visits, the register is taken at the usual start of the school day, or an earlier time if required. The member of staff leading the trip, takes a copy of the register and includes it in the documents prepared for the trip (e.g. risk assessment, class emergency contact details).

### **Fire Alarm**

In the event of the fire alarm sounding, a member of staff leads the children to their fire drill station in the playground. The office staff print the attendance register every morning and take it out to the class teachers at the fire drill station.

If any child leaves during the school day, staff are alerted to this by the office staff.

### **Long Term Storage**

In accordance with DfE requirements, attendance data and letters to and from parents regarding absence are stored securely in school for three years.

### **Parents informing the School about Absence**

Parents should inform the school when their child is absent. This might be in advance (e.g. for a medical or dental appointment) or a phone call/email as early as possible on the day of the child's absence; giving a reason for the absence. If a child is absent for more than one day, the parent/carer must phone in every day to update the school regarding the reason for absence.

### **First Day Absence Calls**

When the office staff have no information about an absent child, they phone the parent of the child after registration to ascertain the reason. The reason is recorded so that the absence can be authorised or unauthorised by the headteacher. If parents cannot be contacted, the absence is recorded as unauthorised.

The school follows up unexplained absences in a timely manner. Every effort is made to establish the reason for a pupil's absence. When the reason is established, the register may be amended.

### **Late Arrival**

Children arriving after 8.55 am are late and sign in via the electronic sign-in system in the office area.

## **Authorised Absence**

The headteacher has the right to authorise absence from school, for example, in the following circumstances:

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

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

### *Interviews with another Educational Establishment*

The headteacher should be satisfied that the interview is linked to transfer to another educational establishment. This includes transfer to secondary school.

### *Supervised sporting activity*

A pupil must be engaged in a sporting activity approved by the headteacher and supervised by someone authorised by the headteacher.

### *Illness*

Illness is recorded as authorised absence and parents are required to inform the school each day regarding the cause of the absence. The school may ask parents to provide written medical evidence. The school may request written medical evidence if there are frequent occurrences of consecutive or non-consecutive absences attributed to illness resulting in unsatisfactory attendance (92% or less) or persistent absence (90% or less). Medical evidence can include prescriptions, appointment cards and doctors' notes.

### *Medical or Dental appointments*

Parents are required to notify the school in advance or on the day of the appointment. Parents should seek to arrange appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, the child should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary to keep the appointment.

### *Religious Observance*

The day or period of absence must be exclusively set apart for religious observance. Where necessary, schools will seek advice from the parents' place of worship about whether the day has been assigned to religious observance.

### *Authorised Leave of Absence*

Parents can ask for authorised leave of absence based on exceptional circumstances. The headteacher will consider the specific facts and circumstances and relevant context behind each application.

*Other reasons for authorised absence can be found at:*

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1099677/Working\\_together\\_to\\_improve\\_school\\_attendance.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1099677/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance.pdf)

## **Unauthorised Absence**

Parents must always provide a reason for their child's absence. Absence is unauthorised if the reason for it does not match any of the categories of authorised absence.

The following are examples of unauthorised absence:

### *Unauthorised Holidays*

Leave is unlikely to be granted for the purposes of a family holiday. The headteacher may only authorise leave of absence for this reason **in exceptional circumstances**.

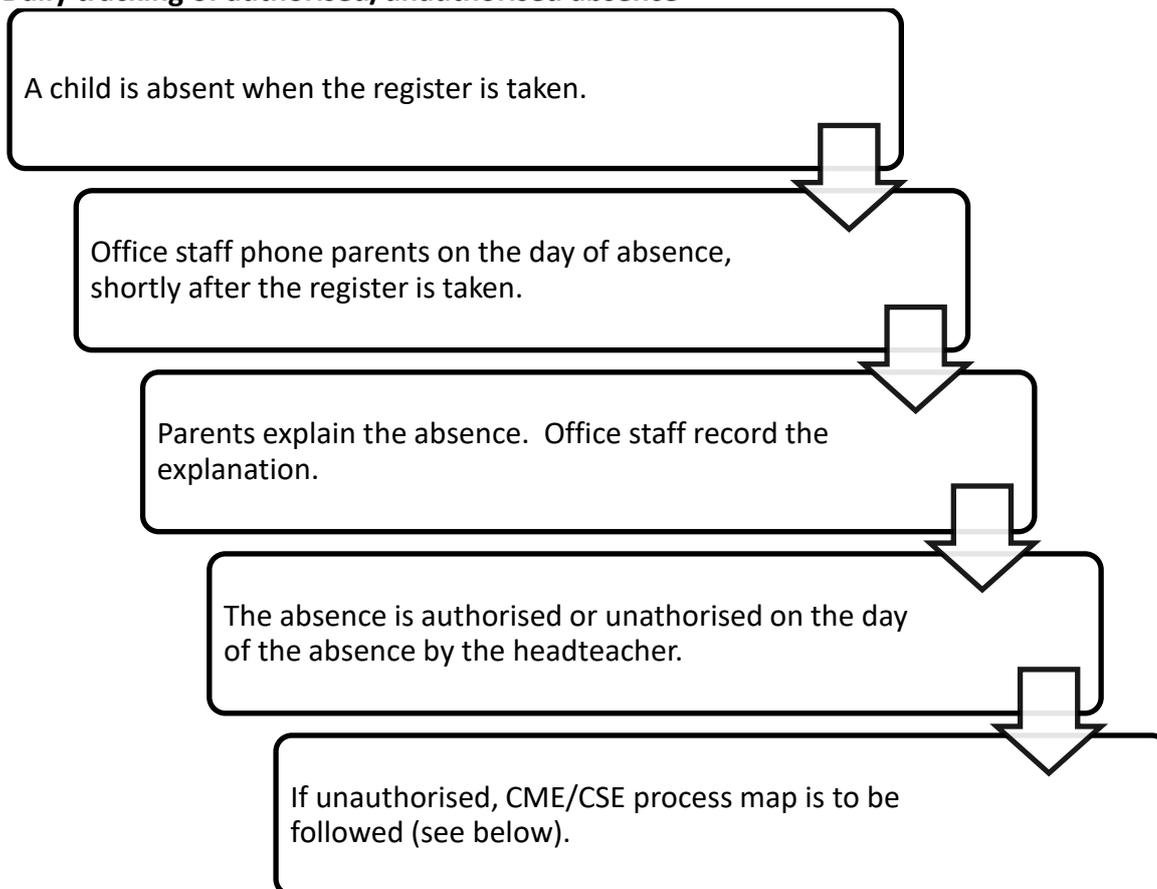
If permission is granted, it will be for the headteacher to determine the length of time that the child can be away from school. A return to school date must be fixed and met. If it is missed, parents must inform the headteacher of the reason for this as soon as possible. The headteacher will decide if the reasons are valid.

If the headteacher does not authorise a leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday but the parents still take the child out of school, or the child is kept away for longer than agreed, absence is unauthorised. The regulations do not allow schools to give retrospective approval.

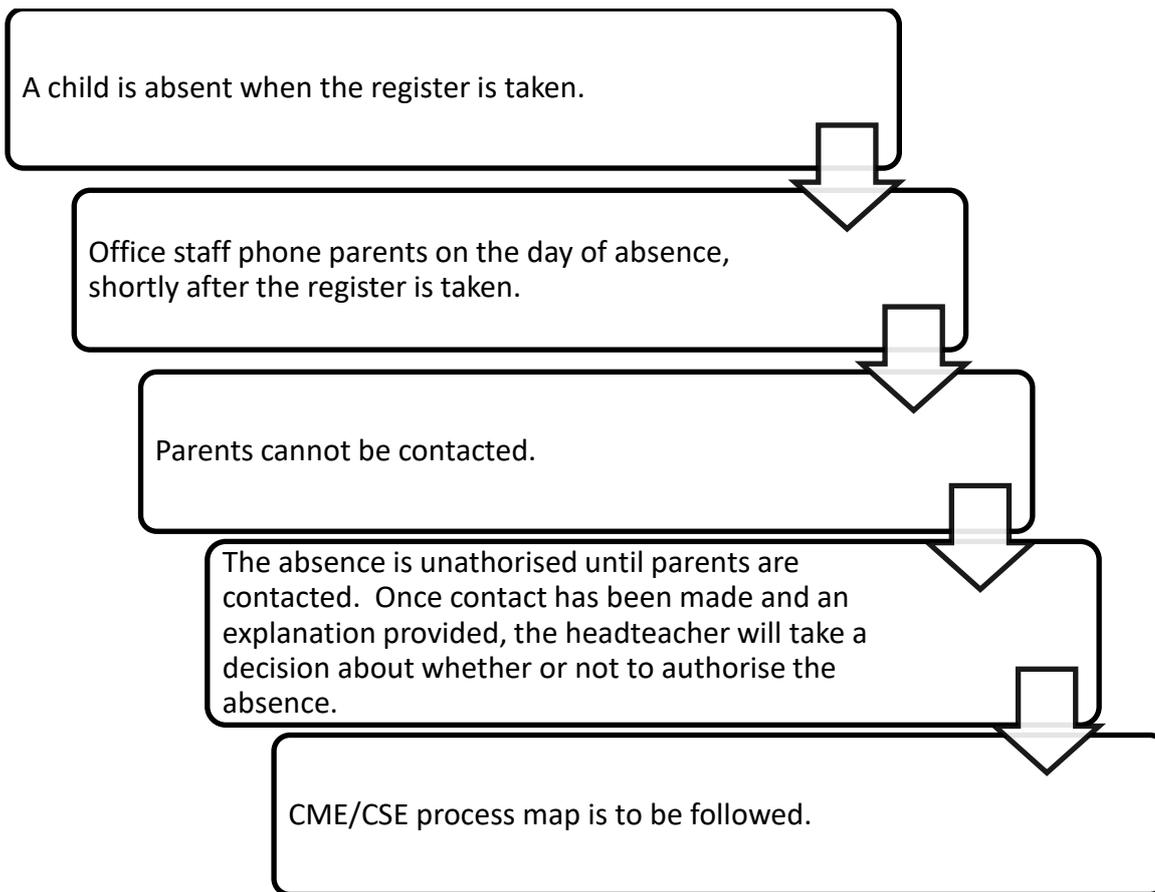
### *Illness*

If a child is absent due to illness for five or more consecutive days and no written medical evidence is forthcoming, all absence from day five onwards will be unauthorised. The first four days will be unauthorised retrospectively in the absence of medical evidence on the fifth day, even if parents have informed the school of their child's illness each day (see 'authorised illness'). In such circumstances, the 'child at risk of missing education' procedure will be followed (see below).

### **Daily tracking of authorised/unauthorised absence**



Or



### **Termly Tracking**

Attendance records on SIMS (the school's information management system) are recorded every day. This enables the school to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with DfE regulations. The data help the school, the local authority and the DfE to gain a greater understanding of the level of and reasons for absence.

Attendance is monitored by the deputy headteacher.

The school will act if in any term children are

- missing more than 10% of sessions
- regularly missing the same day/s of the week
- marked in as unauthorised absence for any session
- late for 6 or more sessions (or 5 or more sessions in a shorter five-week term)
- by the end of Term 2 or subsequent terms, a child's attendance is unsatisfactory (92% or less).

Preliminary action is likely to be a letter informing parents that attendance needs to improve because of one of the listed above reasons. Attendance will be monitored weekly and further action will be taken if there is no improvement. If this is the case, a letter will be issued warning of the possibility of a fixed penalty notice.

### **Persistent Absence Threshold**

The DfE defines persistent absence (PA) as school-age pupils missing 10% or more of sessions in a school year, even for authorised reasons.

Schools must intervene early when there are attendance concerns about a child, they must not wait until the end of the year to determine whether they have attended for 90% or more sessions before they act

There should be recognition that, in any one term attendance may fall below 90% for reasons that have been authorised; but also that, when a child's average attendance from the end of Term 2 onwards falls below 90%, it may not rise again to above 90% unless action is taken by the school. The school will take the action described in the previous sections.

### **Duty to inform Local Authority**

All schools must inform their local authority of children at risk of missing education due to:

- frequent absence from school or absence that follows a pattern
- absence without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more
- unexplained absence
- deletion from the school's admissions register

Where there is concern about a child's welfare, this will be referred to the local authority children's social care department.

Macaulay follows a set process for pupils described as ‘Children Missing Education’ (CME) and ‘Children at Risk of Sexual Exploitation’ (CSE) and ‘vulnerable pupils’.

**CME/CSE Process Map**

<b>Absence</b>	<b>CME</b>	<b>CSE/vulnerable pupils</b>
Stage 1	School to make first day absence calls. These will continue over subsequent consecutive days of absence. Office staff will inform the deputy headteacher (DHT)	School to make first day absence call, and DHT to inform the child’s social worker if one is allocated/preventive worker/school police officer.
Stage 2	Where there has been no contact with parents, DHT will conduct or authorise reasonable checks, e.g. texts, emergency contact numbers, letters, home visits. DHT to contact the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) for advice and next steps.	DHT to inform the EWO after day 2. Where a child is deemed vulnerable and there has been no contact with or co-operation from parent/carer, the school will request a police welfare check. Local authority EWO to conduct home visit and report to school and professionals where no contact has been made.
Stage 3	Where no contact has been made with parents, the DHT will complete a CME referral to local authority Education Welfare Officer (EWO). The EWO will carry out checks and report back to school.	
Stage 4	After 20 consecutive days of absence and when the local authority has carried out its checks, the school can off-roll the pupil. This must be authorised by the headteacher. Office staff will send an off-roll form to the local authority CME officer.	

*Pupils to be deleted from admissions register and an off-rolling form completed and submitted to Lambeth.* Reasons for this will be:

- they have been taken out of school by their parents for home education or education outside the school system. The Designated Safeguarding Lead to make welfare checks until the involvement of the local authority is confirmed.
- they have ceased to attend the school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered
- they have moved school
- the school medical officer has certified that a child has a medical condition such that they are not in a fit state of health to attend school
- they have been permanently excluded

## Action to Improve Attendance

In addition to the action outlined in the CME/CSE Process Map, attendance will be monitored regularly.

Attendance profile	Action
<p>The child's average attendance is unsatisfactory (92% or less) or meets the definition of persistent absence (90% or less).</p>	<p><b>First occurrence:</b>            Children's attendance will be notified to parents on their Autumn 1 report card along with a letter to explain actions which have been or will be taken.            If the 10%+ absence includes more than two sessions of unauthorised absence, see below.  <b>If attendance does not improve, the</b> deputy headteacher. (DHT) sends a letter to parents informing them that their child's attendance currently meets the definition of unsatisfactory attendance or persistent absence and, unless there is an improvement, the school will be obliged to contact the Local Authority Court Panel for action to be considered.            The parents are invited to a meeting with the DHT to establish what can be done to improve the child's attendance, and to form an action plan for the purpose over a set period of time.  <b>If there is no further improvement there will be a</b> meeting between parents and the headteacher to examine the causes of the child's absence and to establish what can be done to improve attendance. The Headteacher will consider referring the case to the local authority Education Welfare Officer (EWO).  <b>When no improvement has been made,</b> the headteacher will refer the case to the local authority EWO.</p>
<p>The child has more than 2 full days unauthorised absences in a term.</p>	<p>Parents are invited to a meeting with the DHT to establish what can be done to improve the child's attendance. If the school is not satisfied with the stated reasons for the child's absence, or parents are uncooperative, the headteacher may refer the case to the local authority EWO.</p>
<p>A child regularly misses the same day/s of the week in a term or terms.</p>	<p>Parents are invited to a meeting with the DHT to establish what can be done to improve the child's attendance, and to form an action plan to the purpose. If dissatisfied with the reasons for the child's absence, or parents are uncooperative, the headteacher may refer the case to the local authority EWO.</p>
<p>A child is late before close of registration on 6 or more occasions in a half term, or 5 or more in a shorter 5-week half term.</p>	<p><b>One term:</b> Support is offered to parents to improve their child's punctuality.  <b>Two terms:</b> A meeting takes place between the parents and DHT to form an action plan to improve the child's punctuality. The possibility may be raised of referring the case to the local authority EWO, particularly if the DHT is dissatisfied with the reasons for the child's poor punctuality, or parents are uncooperative.  <b>Three terms or more:</b> A meeting takes place between the parents and the headteacher to form an action plan to improve</p>

	<p>the child's punctuality. Until improved punctuality has been demonstrated to the DH's satisfaction, the DH checks the register every week. The DH issues the parents with a warning when there are five instances of poor punctuality (four in a five-week term). If there is a further instance of poor punctuality in the term, the case will be referred to the EWO.</p>
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**Fixed Penalty Notice**

The headteacher (or someone authorised by them) and the local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child (of compulsory school age), by issuing a penalty notice.

If the school issues a penalty notice, it will check with the local authority before doing so, and send it a copy of any penalty notice issued.

Unauthorised term leave time

A fine can be issued without warning when:

- the school has not authorised your child to be taken out of school
- a holiday has been taken without it being authorised by the headteacher
- when a child does not return to school after an agreed date

Unauthorised Absence

A fine can be issued when:

- a parent has failed to notify the school of absence
- when a child is absent for 5 consecutive days
- when a child attends school after the close of the register
- if attendance does not improve or there has been no engagement with any support plan

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- giving a fixed period to improve your child's attendance if attendance does not improve and there is an overall absence of 10 sessions
- whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil
- whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

Each parent who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

**If a second penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days.**

**Reporting Attendance to Parents**

- Report cards are sent to parents early in Terms 2 and 4. These show attendance up to the end of Term 1 and the end of Term 3 (including Terms 1 and 2).
- Children's end of year reports, sent to parents in Term 6, show their attendance for Terms 1-5.

### **Further Sources of Information**

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) and [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of the [Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of the [Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment](#)

Mrs. Sarah Thomas  
Chair of Governing Body

Mrs Susan Eade  
Headteacher

Dated: January 2025

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

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
<b>Attending a place other than the school</b>		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil 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	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
<b>Absent – leave of absence</b>		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend

<b>C2</b>	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
<b>C</b>	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
<b>Absent – other authorised reasons</b>		
<b>T</b>	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a ‘mobile child’ who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>I</b>	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
<b>E</b>	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
<b>Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause</b>		
<b>Q</b>	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
<b>Y1</b>	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
<b>Y2</b>	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
<b>Y3</b>	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
<b>Y4</b>	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
<b>Y5</b>	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In police detention</li> <li>• Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Detained under a sentence of detention</li> </ul>
<b>Y6</b>	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
<b>Y7</b>	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
<b>Absent – unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
<b>O</b>	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
<b>U</b>	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
<b>Administrative codes</b>		
<b>Z</b>	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
<b>#</b>	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays