



## **Frays Academy Trust Attendance Policy**

***Be here, belong here, thrive here***

**Date Ratified: subject to final approval August 2026**

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**Version 5.0**

## Approval

|                                     |                    |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Signed by Chair of Directors</b> |                    |
| <b>Date of Approval/Adoption</b>    | August 2026        |
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To enable continuous improvement, all readers are encouraged to notify the author of errors, omissions and any other form of feedback.

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## 1 Scope

This policy applies to all pupils attending schools within Frays Academy Trust.

Frays Academy Trust is committed to creating safe, inclusive and aspirational schools in which all pupils can thrive academically, socially and emotionally.

Regular attendance and punctuality are essential to ensuring that every pupil can access the full educational opportunities available to them. This policy sets out how schools, families, the Trust and partner agencies will work together to promote excellent attendance, remove barriers to attendance and support pupils to attend regularly.

Whilst parents/carers have the legal responsibility for ensuring their child attends school regularly, schools will work in partnership with families and other agencies to promote good attendance and provide support where attendance concerns arise.

This policy is published on each school's website and is available to parents/carers on request.

## 2 Aims

At Frays Academy Trust, we believe that attendance is fundamental to safeguarding, belonging, achievement and wellbeing.

Our attendance strategy is underpinned by the principle: **Be Here, Belong Here, Thrive Here**

This policy reflects the expectations set out in the Department for Education's statutory guidance, [Working Together to Improve School Attendance](#), and promotes a whole-school, whole-family and whole-system approach to improving attendance.

We are committed to fostering a culture where every pupil feels welcomed, valued and supported to attend school every day.

Through this policy we aim to:

- Set high expectations for attendance and punctuality for all pupils.
- Promote the importance and benefits of regular attendance.
- Reduce absence, including persistent and severe absence.
- Ensure every pupil can access the full-time education to which they are entitled.
- Identify attendance concerns early and intervene promptly.
- Work in partnership with families to understand and remove barriers to attendance.
- Ensure attendance is recognised as an important safeguarding responsibility.
- Provide a differentiated and proportionate response for pupils who are vulnerable or face additional barriers to attendance.
- Develop a culture in which attendance is everyone's responsibility and is actively led and prioritised by school leaders.

Frays Academy Trust regards attendance of **96% or above** as strong attendance. Where attendance falls below this level, schools will work proactively with pupils and families to understand barriers, provide appropriate support and secure improvement.

## **2.1 Attendance in Brief – Summary for Parents and Carers: Be Here, Belong Here, Thrive Here**

In line with the principles set out in the Department for Education's [Working Together to Improve School Attendance](#), we expect every child to attend school every day, on time, unless there is an unavoidable reason for absence.

If attendance starts to decline, we will work with families at an early stage to understand barriers, provide support and agree actions to help improve attendance.

We believe that strong attendance helps children feel they belong, achieve their potential and thrive in school. Attendance is everyone's responsibility. Every absence is treated as a safeguarding matter until the school is satisfied that the child is safe.

Where absence is unauthorised, repeated, or support is not engaged with, schools may use formal attendance procedures, including legal interventions, in line with national and the relevant local authority requirements.

## **3 Legislation and guidance**

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

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

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)
- [Ofsted 2025 framework toolkit](#)

## **4 Roles and responsibilities**

### **4.1 Board of Directors**

The Board of Directors is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations for attendance across the Trust and promoting the importance of attendance through the Trust's ethos, policies and strategic priorities.
- Monitoring Trust-wide attendance performance and reviewing attendance trends across all academies.
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data, including persistent absence, severe absence, SEND, disadvantaged and other vulnerable groups, to ensure improvement efforts are focused where they are most needed.
- Holding leaders to account for addressing variation in attendance outcomes between academies and promoting effective practice across the Trust.
- Seeking assurance that appropriate systems and resources are in place to support good attendance and remove barriers to attendance.
- Holding the CEO and Headteachers to account for the effective implementation of this policy and for fulfilling statutory attendance duties.

#### **4.2 CEO and Trust Leaders**

The CEO and Trust leaders are responsible for:

- Monitoring attendance across the Trust and reviewing attendance trends and priorities with school leaders through termly Leadership Impact Meetings.
- Reviewing attendance data regularly, including half termly DfE attendance returns, and maintaining oversight of progress between formal review meetings.
- Holding Headteachers to account for the effective implementation of this policy and for securing improvements in attendance outcomes.
- Ensuring attendance is reflected within school improvement planning and remains a priority for school leadership teams.
- Identifying schools requiring additional attendance support and coordinating appropriate Trust resources and expertise to help secure improvement.

#### **4.3 Local Governing Body (LGB)**

The Local Governing Body is responsible for:

- Reviewing school-level attendance data and monitoring attendance trends across the school.
- Evaluating the effectiveness of the school's attendance processes, interventions and improvement strategies to ensure they are meeting pupils' needs.
- Monitoring the attendance and engagement of vulnerable groups, including pupils with SEND, disadvantaged pupils and those facing barriers to attendance.
- Holding school leaders to account for the implementation of this policy and for securing improvements in attendance outcomes.
- Using governor visits and other monitoring activities to seek assurance that the policy is being implemented effectively and that attendance improvement strategies are having a positive impact on pupils' outcomes and achievement.

#### **4.4 Headteacher (the Designated Senior Leader for Attendance)**

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and promoting a culture of excellent attendance across the school.
- Ensuring the effective implementation of this policy and the school's attendance strategy.
- Setting clear expectations for attendance, punctuality and inclusion, and ensuring all staff understand their role in promoting and securing good attendance.
- Ensuring statutory attendance duties are fulfilled, including the accurate completion of attendance and admission registers and compliance with attendance-related legislation and guidance.
- Monitoring attendance data, trends and patterns, and reporting attendance outcomes to the Trust and Local Governing Body.
- Evaluating the effectiveness of attendance strategies and interventions and ensuring resources are targeted where they will have the greatest impact.
- Holding staff to account for carrying out their attendance responsibilities effectively.
- Issuing penalty notices where appropriate and/or authorising designated staff to do so in line with local authority procedures.

The Headteacher may delegate aspects of the operational delivery of attendance processes to appropriately trained staff. This includes responsibility for:

- Implementing the school's daily attendance procedures and following up absence promptly.
- Maintaining effective systems for monitoring attendance and identifying pupils who may require additional support.
- Building positive relationships with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies to address attendance concerns.

- Developing, implementing and reviewing attendance support, intervention and reintegration plans.
- Coordinating targeted support for pupils and families experiencing barriers to attendance, including those with SEND and other vulnerabilities.
- Liaising with the local authority and external agencies where attendance concerns require additional support or statutory intervention.
- Supporting communication with parents/carers regarding attendance expectations and concerns.

#### **4.5 School Attendance Officer**

The School Attendance Officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance and punctuality data on a daily and weekly basis.
- Identifying attendance patterns, trends and emerging concerns, and reporting these to school leaders.
- Implementing the Trust's Attendance Strategy on behalf of the Headteacher and supporting the school's attendance improvement priorities.
- Following up pupil absence in line with school procedures and maintaining accurate attendance records.
- Coordinating communication with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies regarding attendance concerns.
- Preparing attendance reports and providing attendance information to school leaders, the Trust and governors as required.
- Working with relevant school staff and external agencies to support pupils whose attendance is causing concern, including those who are persistently absent.
- Advising the Headteacher (or member of staff authorised by the Headteacher) on the use of formal attendance interventions, including penalty notices where appropriate.

Please see Appendix 1 for contact details for your child's school's Attendance Officer.

#### **4.6 Class teachers**

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions daily, using the correct codes, and submitting this information via the school MIS system that day.

#### **4.7 School office staff**

School office staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the Attendance Officer where appropriate, to provide them with more detailed support on attendance.

#### **4.8 Parents and carers**

Where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult the school and/or local authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them)

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure your child attends every day on time

- Call the school to report your child's absence before the time stated in Appendix 1 on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when your child is are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than one emergency contact number for your child. If you child is in our early years provision we need to be provided with more than two emergency contact numbers, where possible.
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for your child are made outside of the school day
- Keep to any attendance contracts made with the school and/or local authority if applicable
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting the school, for example your child's class teacher.

#### **4.9 Pupils**

Pupils are expected to attend school every day on time.

## **5 Attendance procedures**

### **5.1 Attendance register**

We will keep an electronic attendance register and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, whether every pupil is:

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

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

We will also record:

- For pupils of compulsory school age, whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity, where a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances, where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Please refer to Appendix 1, which sets out the timings of the school day.

### **5.2 Unplanned absence**

The pupil's parent must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by the time specified in Appendix 1, or as soon as practically possible, by calling the school by email or by phone.

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised, unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where the absence is longer than five days, or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

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

### **5.3 Planned absence**

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment. Leaves of absence should be requested by contacting the school as set out in Appendix 1.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. A form is included as Appendix 2.

### **5.4 Lateness and punctuality**

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

If your child has a persistent late record we will meet with you, but you can approach us at any time if you are having difficulties getting your child to school on time.

### **5.5 Following up unexplained absence**

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may contact police
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session(s) for which the pupil was absent
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer
- We may also carry out ad-hoc 'safe and well' home visits for the purpose of promoting attendance and ensuring pupil safety. At Frays we regard regular attendance as very important to assist in your child's progress, therefore visits at your home could be necessary to provide relevant support and/or advice.
- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the pupil's youth offending team officer
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals

- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with the school may issue a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention as appropriate.

## 5.6 Reporting to parents/carers

We will talk to you about your child's attendance during parent consultation meetings.

# 6 Authorised absence

## 6.1 Approval for term-time absence

The Headteacher will only grant a **leave of absence** to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the [2024 school attendance regulations](#). These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances

Exceptional circumstances are defined as rare, significant, unavoidable and short. By 'unavoidable' we mean an event that could not reasonably be scheduled at another time. Rare and unexpected circumstances which are unlikely to re-occur. Examples include medical emergencies or family emergencies (e.g. death of a relative).

The school will consider each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 4 weeks before the absence. A leave of absence request form is available as Appendix 2 to this policy or from the school office. The Headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Leave of absence will not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

## 6.2 Other reasons for authorised absence

Other valid reasons for authorised absence include (but are not limited to):

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – a pupil is a mobile child if their parent is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with them. In these circumstances a pupil will be considered as a mobile child, provided they are of compulsory school age and have no fixed abode and whose parent is in a trade or business that requires them to travel from place to place
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

### **6.3 Absences from the school site (which are not classified as absences)**

Other reasons the school may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
- Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority
- Attending work experience
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

## **7 Attendance Monitoring and Reporting**

To ensure a consistent approach across the Trust, all schools will operate a structured cycle of attendance monitoring and review.

This will include:

- Daily first-day absence response procedures.
- Daily review of unexplained absence by the School Attendance Officer (or designated member of staff).
- Weekly attendance reports reviewed by the Headteacher.
- Fortnightly review of attendance by the Senior Leadership Team.
- Weekly identification of pupils whose attendance is declining.
- Fortnightly review of pupils whose attendance falls below agreed thresholds.
- Half-termly analysis of attendance data, including vulnerable pupil groups.
- Termly reporting to the Local Governing Body and through Trust Leadership Impact Meetings.
- Half-termly Trust-wide reporting to the Board of Trustees.

### **7.1 Monitoring Vulnerable Groups**

Schools will routinely monitor attendance for all pupils and will pay particular attention to those who may face barriers to attendance, including:

- Disadvantaged pupils.
- Pupils receiving SEND Support.
- Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).
- Pupils with a social worker.
- Pupils previously known to social care.
- Children looked after and previously looked after.
- Young carers, where known.
- Pupils experiencing emotionally based school avoidance or anxiety-related absence.
- Pupils with repeated medical absence.
- Pupils with repeated lateness.
- Pupils on part-time timetables or reintegration plans.
- Pupils with suspensions or behaviour-related patterns of absence.

### **7.2 Attendance Data and Reporting**

To support consistent monitoring and reporting across the Trust, all schools will report a core set of attendance measures, including:

- Whole-school attendance.
- Authorised absence.
- Unauthorised absence.
- Persistent absence.

- Severe absence.
- Lateness before and after the register closes.
- Attendance by year group.
- Attendance by class.
- Attendance for disadvantaged pupils.
- Attendance for pupils receiving SEND Support.
- Attendance for pupils with an EHCP.
- Attendance for pupils with a social worker.
- Attendance for children looked after and previously looked after.
- Pupils with declining attendance.
- Pupils receiving attendance support plans.
- The impact of attendance interventions.
- Comparison with national, local authority and Trust attendance figures.

### **7.3 Using Attendance Data to Improve Outcomes**

Schools will regularly analyse attendance data to:

- Identify pupils, groups and cohorts who may require additional support.
- Identify emerging patterns, trends and causes of absence, including persistent and severe absence.
- Inform attendance support plans, interventions and reintegration arrangements.
- Monitor the effectiveness of attendance strategies and interventions.
- Target support and resources where they will have the greatest impact.
- Inform reporting to school leaders, governors and Trust leaders.
- Work collaboratively with external agencies, local authorities and other partners where appropriate to improve attendance outcomes.

Attendance data will be used to inform school improvement planning and to ensure that support is provided at the earliest opportunity to pupils experiencing barriers to regular attendance.

## **8 Frays Attendance Strategy**

### **8.1 Trust-wide Expectations**

Frays Academy Trust expects every school to promote attendance as a core safeguarding, inclusion, achievement and school improvement priority.

Each school will foster a culture of belonging, high expectations and positive relationships so that pupils feel safe, valued and motivated to attend. Attendance will be promoted through a consistent approach to prevention, early identification, targeted support, intervention and review.

Attendance will be monitored at pupil, group, class, year group, school and Trust level, with particular attention given to vulnerable groups, pupils with persistent or severe absence, and pupils whose attendance is declining.

### **8.2 Attendance, Inclusion and Achievement**

Attendance is central to a pupil's educational achievement, wellbeing, safeguarding and inclusion. Attendance concerns will not be considered in isolation. Schools will consider attendance alongside safeguarding, SEND, mental health, behaviour, disadvantage, family circumstances and academic progress to ensure that barriers to attendance are identified and addressed at the earliest opportunity.

Weak or declining attendance may be an indicator of wider vulnerability and will be considered through the school's pastoral, safeguarding, inclusion and pupil progress processes.

Parents/carers are legally responsible for ensuring their child receives a suitable education and attends school regularly. Regular absence can significantly impact a pupil's learning, wellbeing and future outcomes.

### **8.3 Promoting Good Attendance**

Schools will actively promote good attendance and punctuality through strategies appropriate to their age range, context and community, recognising both consistently strong attendance and positive improvement over time.

This may include:

- Regular communication with pupils and parents/carers regarding attendance expectations.
- Sharing attendance information through school communications and reports.
- Celebrating good and improved attendance.
- Attendance-focused events, activities and awareness campaigns.
- Early engagement with families where attendance concerns begin to emerge.

Each school may set out its specific attendance promotion strategies within its local procedures.

### **8.4 Supporting Attendance**

Schools will work proactively with pupils and families to identify and remove barriers to attendance.

Support may include:

- Early conversations with pupils and parents/carers.
- Attendance support plans.
- Pastoral support.
- SEND support and reasonable adjustments.
- Early Help assessments and family support.
- Multi-agency working.
- Referrals to external support services.

Where appropriate, schools may convene Team Around the Child (TAC), Team Around the Family (TAF), or other multi-agency meetings to coordinate support.

### **8.5 Supporting Pupils Facing Complex Barriers to Attendance**

Some pupils may face significant barriers to attendance, including those related to:

- Special educational needs and disabilities.
- Mental health and emotional wellbeing.
- Long-term medical conditions.
- Family circumstances.
- Social care involvement.

For these pupils, schools may implement a personalised attendance support plan developed in partnership with parents/carers, pupils and relevant professionals. Support may include:

- Individualised attendance targets.
- Reasonable adjustments.
- Enhanced pastoral support.
- Curriculum adaptations.
- Flexible reintegration arrangements.
- Involvement of external agencies.
- Regular review meetings.

Where a pupil has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and attendance concerns are linked to their needs, the school will work closely with the local authority and relevant professionals. Where a pupil has a social worker, the school will ensure they are informed and involved as appropriate.

#### **8.6 Reintegration Following Absence**

Where a pupil returns following a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence, the school may implement a reintegration plan. Reintegration plans may include:

- Phased returns.
- Pastoral and wellbeing support.
- Academic support.
- Reasonable adjustments.
- Regular review meetings.

Parents/carers will be involved throughout the planning and review process.

#### **8.7 Part-Time Timetables**

Part-time timetables will only be used in exceptional circumstances and where they are in the pupil's best interests. All part-time timetables must:

- Be approved by the Trust Inclusion Strategy Manager.
- Be agreed with parents/carers.
- Be time-limited.
- Be subject to regular review.
- Be accurately recorded.
- Be reported to the local authority where required.

Part-time timetables will not be used as a behaviour management strategy or as a long-term solution.

#### **8.8 Reducing Persistent and Severe Absence**

Persistent absence occurs when a pupil misses 10% or more of their possible sessions. Severe absence occurs when a pupil misses 50% or more of their possible sessions.

Reducing persistent and severe absence is a key priority for all schools within the Trust.

Schools will adopt a graduated approach to support, intervention and escalation, recognising that absence is often a symptom of wider barriers that require understanding and support. Schools will:

- Use attendance data to identify patterns, trends and underlying causes of absence.
- Identify and respond to safeguarding concerns in line with the school's safeguarding procedures and
- Work in partnership with pupils, parents/carers and relevant professionals to understand and address barriers to attendance.
- Hold regular review meetings with parents/carers where attendance is a concern.
- Develop attendance support plans, reintegration plans or other targeted interventions where appropriate.
- Provide access to internal and external support services.
- Coordinate support with local authorities and other agencies where additional intervention is required.
- Monitor the effectiveness of interventions and adapt support where necessary.
- Use formal attendance measures, including legal interventions, where supportive approaches have not secured improvement and where this is considered appropriate.

## **8.9 Prolonged Absence in the Early Years Foundation Stage**

Where an EYFS pupil is absent for a prolonged period, or is absent without explanation, the school will make reasonable attempts to contact parents/carers and emergency contacts.

In determining whether an absence is of concern, the school will consider:

- The child's previous attendance patterns.
- The child's individual circumstances and vulnerabilities.
- The family's circumstances.

Where concerns remain, safeguarding procedures will be followed and referrals made to children's social care and/or the police for welfare checks where appropriate.

## **9 Formal Attendance Measures**

### **9.1 Attendance contract**

We use attendance contracts as a form of attendance support.

An attendance contract is a formal written agreement between a parent and the school to address irregular attendance at school. An attendance contract is not legally binding, but it provides a more formal route where previous support has not worked or would not have been appropriate.

Parents cannot be compelled to enter an attendance contract, and the trust/school cannot agree an attendance contract in a parent's absence.

Where an attendance contract would be an appropriate form of support, the trust/school will arrange a meeting with the parent (and pupil if they are old enough to understand) to discuss how we can work in partnership to improve the pupil's attendance.

Where parents fail to comply with an agreed attendance contract, the trust/school may seek an alternative course of action. In the first instance, this will include discussions with the parents to seek explanations and determine whether the attendance contract remains useful. Where there is further non-compliance following these discussions, the trust/school may take further action.

### **9.2 Notice to improve**

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the trust/school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

They will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under [section 7 of the Education Act 1996](#)
- Details of the support provided so far
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis

- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

### **9.3 Penalty notices**

The Headteacher (or an authorised Deputy Headteacher or Assistant Headteacher), the local authority or the police may issue a penalty notice to parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, in accordance with the relevant local authority's Code of Conduct.

Where the school proposes to issue or request a penalty notice, it will do so in accordance with the relevant local authority's Code of Conduct and local procedures

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

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks)
- 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.

A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

A penalty notice 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 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day). These penalty notices are not included in the National Framework, are not subject to the same considerations about support being provided, and do not count towards the limit as part of the escalation process.

In these cases, the parent must pay £60 within 21 days, or £120.

### **9.4 Education supervision orders**

In cases where voluntary early help plans and attendance contracts have been unsuccessful, we may work with the relevant local authority to issue an education supervision order. If an education supervision order is considered, the local authority will inform the parent(s) in writing and will set up a meeting.

An education supervision order is a formal intervention but not criminal prosecution.

An education supervision order initially lasts for 1 year, but it can be extended within the last 3 months for a period of up to 3 years at a time.

In cases where parents persistently fail to meet the directions given under the education supervision order, they may be liable to a fine of up to £1,000 upon conviction.

## **10 Links with other policies**

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child Protection
- Behaviour
- Children with health needs who cannot attend school
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions
- Early Years

## Appendix 1 – Our School Day and School Contact Details

*Be here, belong here, thrive here*

The school day starts at [time] and ends at [time].

Pupils must arrive in school by [time] on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at [time] and will be kept open until [time – not longer than 30 minutes after the session begins, or the length of the form time or first lesson in which registration takes place]. The register for the second session will be taken at [time] and will be kept open until [time]. [time – it should be open for the same length of time as the morning session and no longer than 30 minutes, according to page 19 of [Working together to improve school attendance](#)].

## Appendix 2 – Application for Exceptional Leave of Absence

The Department for Education has advised schools to only authorise leave of absence in ‘exceptional’ circumstances, hence schools within Frays Academy Trust will not approve any absence in term time, except in such circumstances. The Headteacher will determine whether the reason given for requesting leave of absence is exceptional or not. Please also note that there is no automatic right to take holidays in term time nor will your child/children’s current overall attendance affect the Headteacher’s decision.

Please complete the section below and return to school **at least 4 weeks** before the requested absence. We will endeavour to respond to your request within 10 school days. If your request for leave of absence is approved your child will be expected to collect and complete all missed work. Please note that taking your child away during the school term is detrimental to their educational progress.

If leave of absence is taken without approval, a Penalty Notice may be issued.

Please think carefully before deciding to request exceptional leave.

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| <b>Address:</b> |  |
|-----------------|--|

|                         |                     |  |                   |  |
|-------------------------|---------------------|--|-------------------|--|
| <b>Leave requested:</b> | <b>From (date):</b> |  | <b>To (date):</b> |  |
|-------------------------|---------------------|--|-------------------|--|

**Reason for Exceptional Leave request:** This must be completed. If the absence is for religious observance, please include the name and contact details of your place of worship.

|                              |  |              |  |
|------------------------------|--|--------------|--|
|                              |  |              |  |
| <b>Name of Parent/Carer:</b> |  |              |  |
| <b>Address:</b>              |  |              |  |
| <b>Signature:</b>            |  | <b>Date:</b> |  |
| <b>Name of Parent/Carer:</b> |  |              |  |
| <b>Address:</b>              |  |              |  |
| <b>Signature:</b>            |  | <b>Date:</b> |  |

This is an example of the number of lessons your child will miss. Remember these will not be repeated.

1 day’s absence = 6 lessons missed

3 days absence = 18 lessons missed

1 week’s absence = 30 lessons missed

2 weeks absence = 60 lessons missed

**Exceptional leave absences which have not been agreed by our school will be marked as unauthorised absences. A Penalty Notice or other action may be considered by the school or the local authority.**

**For School Use:**

|                                                    |         |              |  |
|----------------------------------------------------|---------|--------------|--|
| Any previous Exceptional Leave (any Academic Year) | Yes/No* | No. of days: |  |
| Meeting arranged with parent/carers                | Yes/No  | Date:        |  |
| Request authorised                                 | Yes/No  | Date:        |  |

## **Appendix 3 – Attendance flowchart for parents and carers**

To follow