Attendance Policy

Policy author / date:	Graham Findlay, Senior Improvement and Aspirations Lead	September 2025
Last reviewed by / date:	Graham Findlay, Senior Improvement and Aspirations Lead	September 2026
Approved by:	Curriculum and Standards Committee	24 September 2026
Next review:	Autumn term 2027	

Version number	Previous version	Summary of key changes since last version:
1.0	N/A	Introduction of a Trust-wide policy
1.1	1.0	Updated to reflect updated DfE guidance around communication to parents and carers
1.2	1.1	Updated to reflect changes in the July 2026 version of 'Working together to improve school attendance' • Added that staff must receive training on attendance under HOS responsibilities • Clarity around Code U usage in the afternoon session • Alterations to monitoring section which now has greater clarity in line with the increased expectations from WTTISA July 2026. This includes the need to share reports with tutors, SENCOs, DSLs and Pupil premium leads. • Some changes to responsibility and oversight around absence requests which may be delegated to heads of school

Contents

Purpose and aims	Page 3
Why attendance matters	Page 3
Roles and responsibilities	Page 5
Day-to-day procedures	Page 8
Absence	Page 7
Students who attend alternative provision	Page 13
Attendance and punctuality intervention	Page 13
Monitoring and analysing data	Page 17
Legislation and guidance	Page 18
Monitoring and review	Page 18

The Gosforth Federated Academies Ltd trading as the Gosforth Group – Company Registration Number: 07431423
Registered Office: Gosforth Academy, Knightsbridge, Great North Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 2JH

Purpose and aims

Excellent attendance is everyone's business. Improving attendance is in everyone's interests. We aim to secure good attendance by building strong relationships with students, parents and carers so that we can support them to reduce any barriers to school attendance.

At Gosforth Group, we put the child at the centre of everything that we do. We want children and young people to feel valued and cared for, safe and prepared academically and emotionally for adulthood.

This can only be achieved if students are in school regularly, and on time.

We know that students who attend well have the best chances of success academically and socially. They are more likely to achieve well in examinations and assessments and more likely to form secure and lasting friendships.

This policy applies to all students registered at our school and ensures that swift action is taken to secure strong attendance from our students.

Why attendance matters

Missing school means that student miss out on all the great benefits of being in a Gosforth Group school. These include:

- Spending time with friends and being a valued part of our school and trust community
- Being in exciting and meaningful lessons which prepare students for the wider world
- Enjoying an engaging enrichment offer that develops students as individual
- Benefiting from academic and personal support from our staff

All these things improve children's wellbeing, and we want everyone to benefit from these things in full. We know that students who are frequently in school gain the most. We also have a curriculum which sets out exactly what students should be taught at every stage of the year. When students are absent, they risk developing large gaps in their learning. This negatively impacts on their progress. Absence can also affect their social interactions with their peers and may impact upon their friendships.

Our Trust and School target for students' attendance is 97%
This means missing no more than 5 days of school each year.

Attendance that falls below this needs to improve because it risks having a negative impact on the student. This includes their own wellbeing being negatively affected, as well as how well they learn the school's curriculum and how well they build secure and lasting friendships.

How attendance can affect student's experience and enjoyment of school

Below are some case studies of students with different attendance.

Jack - Year 8 – 100% attendance – no days off in a year

The Gosforth Federated Academies Ltd trading as the Gosforth Group – Company Registration Number: 07431423
Registered Office: Gosforth Academy, Knightsbridge, Great North Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 2JH

Jack has not missed any lessons and is on top of his learning. He's growing in confidence academically. He has good friendship groups and enjoys playing football each break and lunchtime. His enjoyed the recent visit to St James' Park as part of his engagement with the Newcastle United Foundation.

Zainab – Year 7 – 97% attendance – 5 days off in a year
Zainab's attends well. She is in school most of the time. She has made new friends with students who have come from other schools. She did not reach the expected standard in reading in her Year 6 SATS but gets daily support from a Learning Support Assistant to catch up on her reading. She is growing in confidence in lessons. She enjoys her role on the School Council and feels that she genuinely makes a difference to life in school. In October, she was off for 4 days off with a stomach bug and 1 day off to celebrate Eid. She was supported by her teachers to catch up on the work she missed, and she quickly got back into the swing of being in school.

Phillip – Year 10 – 93% attendance – 13 days off in a year

Phillip's attendance is beginning to cause him some problems. He has missed nearly three weeks of school. He had 3 days off school in September with a broken leg which couldn't be avoided. However, the other 10 days have all been spread across 7 different weeks. He is often off for one day and back in the next. He has started his GCSEs but is already falling behind in some of his coursework and is beginning to feel stressed by this. He wants to be a car mechanic but recently missed his careers advice interview because he was absent. He isn't sure when he'll be able to get the next careers appointment to discuss his next steps when he finishes Year 11.

Daisy – Year 9 – 90% attendance – 19 days off a year
Daisy is frequently absent from school and has missed nearly a month's worth of lessons. She is choosing her GCSE options this year, but she isn't sure what choices she has because she has missed three options assemblies. She likes dance and drama but has missed some rehearsals for the school pantomime. Recently Daisy had stayed off with a mild cold which meant that she missed out on a former student visiting to run a drama workshop. If she was honest, she probably felt well enough to come to school.

In summary, students who attend well have better wellbeing, higher self-esteem, stronger friendships and are better prepared to take their place in society when they leave school.

How school will work in partnership with parents where attendance needs to improve

We know that parents and carers want the best for their children. We do too. Attending school regularly is in everyone's interest and we know that for some families, there can be a range of complex factors which are impacting on a student's ability to be in school as regularly as everyone would like.

Where students are not in school as much as they could be, then we commit to working with families to support their children to attend more frequently. If families work in partnership with the school in a positive manner on efforts to improve attendance, the school will commit to taking every reasonable step to support the student to attend more regularly.

The Gosforth Federated Academies Ltd trading as the Gosforth Group – Company Registration Number: 07431423
Registered Office: Gosforth Academy, Knightsbridge, Great North Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 2JH

There may be instances when school leaders need to have challenging conversations with parents or carers about their child's attendance. Our staff will always maintain a professional and courteous manner, while acting in the best interests of the student

Roles and responsibilities

Gosforth Group Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees will ensure that attendance remains a high priority for us as a Trust/School by:

- Recognising the importance of school attendance and actively promoting it through the Trust's ethos and policies.
- Having high expectations for standards of attendance across all Trust schools.
- Ensuring that the Trust and each School meet their statutory responsibilities in relation to attendance.
- Reviewing the attendance data for each school and across the Trust and delegating responsibility to the Trust's Executive Team to provide support and challenge where needed to improve attendance.
- Ensuring that staff have received adequate training on attendance.
- Ensuring that best practice in securing high attendance is shared between schools within the Trust.

In addition, each school's Governing Committee (GC) have oversight of individual school attendance on behalf of the Trust board, offering support and challenge to leaders.

School

Role	Name	Contact Details
Executive Headteacher	Steve Campbell	Admin2@ga.newcastle.sch.uk
Head of School	Mark Fryer	Admin2@ga.newcastle.sch.uk
Attendance and Family Support Worker	Brenda McDougall	Admin2@ga.newcastle.sch.uk
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Sean Blakey	Admin2@ga.newcastle.sch.uk

All staff at our school recognise that **attendance is everyone's responsibility.** All staff aim to provide a positive learning environment for students, where they achieve, thrive and belong. We will provide an enriching and engaging curriculum so that all students look forward to coming to school every day.

The Head of School, along with the Attendance and Family Support Worker will maintain oversight of attendance on a weekly basis. They also have responsibility for overseeing the school's strategy for promoting a culture of regular attendance and reducing the barriers to attending school for identified students. They will ensure that:

- This policy is consistently applied throughout the school by all staff.

The Gosforth Federated Academies Ltd trading as the Gosforth Group – Company Registration Number: 07431423
Registered Office: Gosforth Academy, Knightsbridge, Great North Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 2JH

- Staff receive training on attendance, including during induction, and that staff actively promote the importance of excellent attendance and punctuality to students and their parents/carers.
- There is a high-quality education that encourages all students to attend well and to achieve well. This includes the use of rewards and awards to encourage good attendance.
- Attendance and punctuality data is accurately recorded, including the prompt completion of registers daily.
- Attendance data is analysed regularly by leaders throughout the year to identify patterns and trends, using this data to identify and support students and specific cohorts whose attendance is of concern.
- Attendance is regularly reported to the school's Senior Leadership Team, the Governing Committee and the Trust's Executive Team.
- Appropriate strategies are in place to celebrate good attendance.
- Well planned strategies for tackling unsatisfactory attendance and poor punctuality are in place.
- Individual action plans are co-ordinated for students whose attendance and/or punctuality is causing concern.
- First-day calling procedures are used correctly if a student is absent from school and school has not received any contact from parents/carers.
- Effective liaison with external agencies, such as the local authority, is undertaken where necessary. The school will also challenge external agencies if they feel it is necessary to do so because a student or family is not receiving the appropriate support. Equally, the school will be receptive to challenge from agencies in return.

All staff

All staff in school will promote the importance and value of good attendance. They will ensure that registers are accurately recorded and completely in a timely fashion. By providing students with good teaching and learning experiences, they will encourage all students to attend school frequently.

Staff understand that poor attendance increases safeguarding risks. Staff know that they have a key role to safeguard students by supporting and promoting excellent attendance. Staff also set a good example through their own attendance and punctuality.

Good attendance from students will be celebrated in school. Good attendance is promoted to pupils throughout the school by teachers including in form time, assemblies and lessons. Displays are placed in strategic positions in schools to raise the profile of attendance amongst all stakeholders. Good attendance is recognised and rewarded through a range of incentives throughout the year. This includes whole-school rewards as well as targeted incentives to key groups who need to improve their attendance. These can include sweet attendance, 100% attendance awards and bespoke rewards for individuals who improve attendance.

Staff will build positive relationships with students, parents and carers as key stakeholders in our school community. Where staff have concerns about a student's attendance, this will be shared with parents and carers in a professional and supportive way, seeking to work together with the family to improve the student's attendance. This will include looking to address any in-school barriers to attendance. Where necessary, such as where barriers are outside of the

The Gosforth Federated Academies Ltd trading as the Gosforth Group – Company Registration Number: 07431423
Registered Office: Gosforth Academy, Knightsbridge, Great North Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 2JH

school's control, staff may also engage with external agencies to help students to attend regularly. For example, schools may suggest that a referral to Family Help would be useful to address any barriers to attending.

Recording absence

Nominated school staff will manage contact from parents about absence and record this on the school system. Staff should make sure that the reasons for absence are clear and record sufficient detail to allow those with overall responsibility for attendance to identify any trends in the reasons for poor absence.

School Attendance Team

Admin staff will contact the parents/carers of all absentees on the first day of absence if a reason has not been provided. The Attendance and Family Support Worker (Brenda McDougall) will undertake home visits for students who are absent for an extended period.

Parents and carers

Parents and carers have a key role to play in ensuring good attendance. There are additional legal duties on parents and carers to ensure that their child attends school regularly. This means that any absences should only be for a very small number of allowable reasons, such as a student being too ill to attend school. Therefore, it is important that parents and carers:

- Make sure that their child attends school every day on time.
- Ensure that their child returns to school as quickly as possible after any period of illness and consider the NHS guidance on when it is necessary for a child to stay away from school due to ill health (Is my child too ill for school? - NHS (www.nhs.uk))
- Do not expect the school to automatically agree to any requests for absence or condone unjustified absence from school.
- Work with the school to reduce all identified barriers to non-attendance.
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child (such as medical appointments) are made outside of the school day.
- Ensure that their child remains in school for the full school day, as removing the child for part of the session also constitutes absence.
- Call the school to report any absence before 8:40am on the day of absence and advise when they anticipate that their child will be back in school.
- Provide at least two emergency contact numbers for their child.

Students

Students are expected to attend school regularly and on time. They should register at the appropriate times and attend all lessons in the school day promptly.

If students become aware of any barriers to them attending school regularly, then they should talk to staff in school so that the right support can be identified and put in place.

The Gosforth Federated Academies Ltd trading as the Gosforth Group – Company Registration Number: 07431423
Registered Office: Gosforth Academy, Knightsbridge, Great North Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 2JH

Day-to-day procedures

Children can arrive from 8:00am and attend the library, morning sports or breakfast club. All children should be on the correct yards and lining up at 8:35am to enter school. Children arriving after 8:40am must come into main reception and will be marked late. Late arrival results in a C3 behaviour point; three lates in a week will result in a detention.

All registers are recorded on our school management information system (MIS) which is called SIMS. A register must be taken at the start of each morning session and once during the afternoon session. On each occasion, staff must accurately record who is present in school and who is not. This ensures that no students are missed, and that information can be shared quickly and securely so that absence can be followed up.

Our morning session starts at 8:40am. The register is taken at 8:40am. Students who arrive after this time will need to sign in as 'late before register close' (Code: L) at the school office. The register will close at 9:10am. Anyone who arrives after this time will be marked as 'late after registers close' (Code: U).

Our afternoon session starts at 1:30pm. This is when the register is taken. Students who arrive after this time will need to sign in as 'late before register close' (Code: L) at the school office. The register will close at 2:00pm. Anyone who arrives to school after this time will be marked as 'late after registers close' (Code: U).

The school day finishes at 3:20pm.

Absence

If a child is unable to attend school, then parents/carers should inform the school by telephone on 0191 2559000.

This contact should be made before 8:40am (registration).

Where a student is persistently absent, we may advise the parent/carer that absence should be reported to a particular member of staff so that appropriate support can be swiftly put into place. Where this is the case, parents will be informed as part of an agreed plan to reduce absence.

All students will be identified as absent once the registers have closed. If we have not received a reason for a student's absence, we will initiate our first-day calling procedures.

Contact will be made with the main contact listed for the student to establish the reason why the student is not in school. If no contact is established and we have not received a suitable reason for the student's absence, we will contact all individuals listed as emergency contacts.

If school is unable to make contact by telephone, then a home visit may be conducted to establish the welfare of the student.

These procedures will continue to take place for each subsequent day of absence where the school has not been informed of the reasons why the student is absent from school.

The Gosforth Federated Academies Ltd trading as the Gosforth Group – Company Registration Number: 07431423
Registered Office: Gosforth Academy, Knightsbridge, Great North Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 2JH

If, after 3 days of the absence, the school has not received satisfactory reason for absence, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) must be informed. They will then decide the appropriate next steps which may include a visit to the child's home, liaising with Children's Services or requesting a safe and well check from the police. It is expected that, for students identified as vulnerable by the school, these actions would be taken on the first day of absence. The DSL will routinely make the Attendance and Family Support Worker, SEND team and relevant pastoral staff aware of the vulnerable students within the school. Vulnerable students could include:

- Students who are subject to a multi-agency plan
- Students who have had previous involvement with children's social care
- Students who are looked after children
- Students with an education, health and care (EHC) plan
- Any other students identified as vulnerable by the school

This is so that the DSL can be informed of these students' first day of absence, and each subsequent day. This will allow the DSL to make an informed decision on the necessary response to the absence to ensure that students are safe.

Where students are receiving support from a social worker through local authority children's services, any unexplained absences should be reported on the same day to the child's social worker.

Types of absence

Any student who is not present at registration will be marked as absent. This is unless leave of absence has been granted by the school in advance or if the reason for absence is already known and accepted by the school as legitimate.

The decision about whether the absence should be authorised or unauthorised rests with the Executive Headteacher/Principal/Head of school or staff that have been designated to lead on attendance matters. Parents/carers cannot authorise absences and should be aware that while calling the school or providing a note for an absence complies with the school's attendance and safeguarding procedures, it does not automatically mean that an absence will be authorised.

Where a reason for absence is given and accepted by the school at a later stage, the register will be amended to reflect the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date on which the amendment was made, and the name and title of the person who made the amendment.

Authorised absence

Absences may be authorised by the Executive Headteacher/Principal/Head of school or other designated staff in the following circumstances:

Code	Description
C	Leave has been granted by the school in advance for exceptional circumstances. An application must be made in writing with appropriate evidence, in advance of the

The Gosforth Federated Academies Ltd trading as the Gosforth Group – Company Registration Number: 07431423
Registered Office: Gosforth Academy, Knightsbridge, Great North Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 2JH

	intended circumstance wherever possible. A leave of absence application is available via the school's website or from the school office
C1	Leave of absence has been granted so that the student can participate in a regulated performance (such as a theatrical production), employment or to undertake regulated employment abroad
C2	The student has been granted leave of absence by the school as part of a temporary part-time timetable.
I	The school is satisfied that the child is too ill to attend. At any point during illness, if the school have reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness, they may ask for medical evidence to support the absence. All evidence should be passed to the school.
J1	The student is attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution. An application must be made in writing with appropriate evidence, in advance of the intended circumstance wherever possible.
M	The student has a medical appointment. Parents should try to make these out of school hours wherever possible. Students should be in school until immediately before the appointment and return to school immediately afterwards.
R	The absence occurs on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance when it falls on a day that is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the parents' religious body
S	Study leave has been granted by the school. Study leave will not be granted by default once tuition of the exam syllabus is complete. In line with DfE guidance, it will be used sparingly and only granted to students during public examinations
T	The student is of no fixed abode, his/her parent is engaged in a trade which requires him/her to travel, the student has attended school as often as the nature of the trade permits and, having reached the age of six, he/she has attended 200 sessions in the preceding 12 months.
X	Student who is of non-compulsory school age is not required in school. An example of this is a sixth form student is not required in school for a session because they have no timetabled lessons
Y1 to Y7	There is an unavoidable cause for the absence beyond the control of the school

Unauthorised absence

A student's absence will be unauthorised when the school has not received an appropriate reason for the absence, or the absence was not approved prior to it occurring. The executive headteacher/principal is ultimately responsible for determining whether the reason given for the absence is appropriate.

We monitor all absence and the reasons given thoroughly, regardless of whether it has been authorised or unauthorised. Parents/carers will be informed regularly of their child's attendance and will be offered support where there is a decline in attendance.

Truancy

Truancy is when a student does not attend school and their parents/carers think that they are attending school. It can also be when a student goes missing from school having previously

The Gosforth Federated Academies Ltd trading as the Gosforth Group – Company Registration Number: 07431423
Registered Office: Gosforth Academy, Knightsbridge, Great North Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 2JH

registered for the session. This behaviour is concerning. It puts students in a vulnerable position and may, in some cases, also indicate that they are at increased risk of harm or exploitation.

If it is established that a student has been in school, but is not where they are supposed to be, then a search of the site will be conducted to establish their whereabouts. If it is established that a student appears to have left the school site without permission, the school will attempt to contact the student's parents/carers immediately to inform them. Failing this, the police will be contacted and informed.

Any truancy will be managed in accordance with our Behaviour Policy and Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Requesting a leave of absence

Any leave of absence during term time will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. It can only be authorised by the executive headteacher/principal/head of school. Each application will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Requests for leave of absence must be made in advance and submitted to the executive headteacher/principal/head of school using the 'Request for leave of absence' form (see Appendix A). The form is available via the school's website and from the school office. The form should be submitted to the school, along with any other relevant supporting evidence.

If term time absence is not granted, taking a student out of school will be recorded as any unauthorised absence. This may result in a referral to the local authority, and the absence could incur sanctions from the local authority such as a fixed penalty notice or fine.

Except in exceptional circumstances, the school will not authorise any application for leave during term time in the following cases:

- At any time in September. This is a vital period for all students to settle into new classes and routines.
- During assessment and examination periods in the school's calendar which affect your child e.g. GCSEs.
- When a student's attendance for the academic year already includes any level of unauthorised absence.
- Where a period of leave of absence has already been granted earlier in the academic year.

Temporary part-time timetables

All students are entitled to a full-time education. Reducing a student's timetable is rarely in their best interests.

The school will only ever agree to a temporary part-time timetable in the most exceptional circumstances, and this must be discussed and agreed with Head of School/Principal If the exceptional decision is made to reduce a student's timetable, it will be very time limited and only to support the student to build up their ability to attend full time. **It will never be used as a strategy to improve a student's behaviour.**

The Gosforth Federated Academies Ltd trading as the Gosforth Group – Company Registration Number: 07431423
Registered Office: Gosforth Academy, Knightsbridge, Great North Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 2JH

Where the school has agreed to a student being absent from school for part of the week or day then this absence will be recorded using Code C2.

Study leave

Study leave will only be granted for public examinations and will be communicated in advance with a parent. If a parent does not wish the student to take study leave, then provision will be made for them to attend school to undertake study.

Please note that study leave does not apply to internal examinations such as mocks, as DfE guidance states that study leave should not be granted in such cases.

Students who attend alternative provision arranged by the school

A very small number of students may be registered at alternative provision on either a part- or full-time basis. This is typically a time-limited arrangement and will be discussed and agreed with the Trust's Executive Team.

When a student is attending alternative provision arranged by the school, then one of two attendance codes will be used:

- Where the student attends an unregistered provider – Code B
- Where the student attends a registered provider and is dual registered with the provider – Code D

For students who are dual registered with another provider but only attend part-time, Code D will only be used for those sessions that the student is expected to attend/access the provision.

Where the school has formal sports partnerships where students leave site during the school day, such as to attend a football academy, on a regular basis, attendance at these approved sporting activities will be recorded using Code P.

Where a student is attending alternative provision, arrangements will be in place so that school is notified swiftly if the student does not turn up at the provision so that the absence can be followed up promptly. Attendance of students at alternative provision is monitored in line with all students at the school. The actions and support outlined in this policy apply equally to students in alternative provision.

Students who attend provision arranged by the local authority

In some cases, the local authority will take a lead on arranging the education provision for a student, such as where a student is too ill to attend school for a period of time. Where the local authority arranges the educational provision for a student, this will be recorded by the school using Code K. The school remains responsible for ongoing checks on the safeguarding arrangements and quality of provision for the student. Where the school disagrees with the local authority about the placement of the student, or where concerns arise as part of routine monitoring, the school should take swift action to provide appropriate challenge to the local authority. This must be recorded in writing and in any student records. Schools may wish to contact the Trust's education team for support in these instances.

The Gosforth Federated Academies Ltd trading as the Gosforth Group – Company Registration Number: 07431423
Registered Office: Gosforth Academy, Knightsbridge, Great North Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 2JH

Communication around attendance and punctuality intervention

All children are informed of attendance targets and the benefits of good attendance in assemblies and form time. Each week, form attendance is celebrated with 'Sweet Attendance'. Every half term, children are informed of their individual attendance via school communications. Children whose attendance is between 97% and 90% will receive a call from their form tutor to discuss whether any support is needed and to identify any barriers to attendance. Children whose attendance falls below 90% will be invited to meet with the Attendance and Family Support Worker (Brenda McDougall) to discuss their attendance and to sign an attendance contract. This is reviewed after four weeks to monitor improvement. Children whose attendance fails to improve following these supportive measures may face legal referral to the local authority.

Each school produces a communications calendar using a template provided by the Trust central team. This sets out what routine communication will take place around attendance. At the start of each academic year, no later than the end of week two, a letter or communication will be sent to parents/carers of all current students who were on roll at the school in the previous academic year. This will state their attendance for the previous year and make clear the school's expectations that all students will aspire to achieve the school target of at least 97% attendance.

The school will also routinely send correspondence to parents, on a half-termly basis, to keep them abreast of their child's attendance. This correspondence will vary depending on how well a student is attending.

Where school identifies that a student's attendance or punctuality is causing concern, we will work with the family to support them to improve their child's attendance. Our support will take a staged approach. The focus will be on identifying any barriers to good attendance and working together with families and agencies to overcome these.

Parents/carers should speak openly about any concerns that they have around attendance. The school will provide support and guidance initially. If, however, it becomes clear that additional support from other agencies is needed, then further discussions will be held with parents/carers to identify what more can be done to improve a student's attendance. The school will also clearly explain the consequences of persistent and severe absence in these meetings but primarily, this meeting is an opportunity to explain the help that is available to avoid those consequences. This is likely to include a referral for Family Help where relevant.

We recognise that in the first half of the Autumn term, any absence may have a more significant impact on the overall attendance percentage for a student. However, we also know that catching poor attendance early, and taking prompt action to address this, avoids regular absence becoming a habit. Therefore, school leaders will monitor attendance on a fortnightly basis from the start of the academic year. During the first half term, we will use our professional judgement as to whether any intervention is necessary, based upon a student's previous attendance record. This may include letters home, and/or meetings with parents/carers.

The Gosforth Federated Academies Ltd trading as the Gosforth Group – Company Registration Number: 07431423
Registered Office: Gosforth Academy, Knightsbridge, Great North Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 2JH

From the second half of the autumn term onwards, we will follow the procedures outlined in the flowchart below:

All parents and students receive:

- A letter in September outlining last year's attendance and the school's expectations for this year.
- Regular reminders to students throughout the week about the importance of attendance and punctuality.
- Half-termly communication to parents about individual student's attendance and any punctuality concerns.
- Rewards and recognition for strong attendance.

Stage 1 – Student's attendance falls below 97%

If children's attendance falls below 97% their parents will be sent a letter sharing schools concerns about their child's attendance. The letter will explain the importance of attendance and parents' responsibility to ensure their children are attending school. It will have key information on how to support families with attendance and how school can support. School will track these children's attendance across the coming weeks.

Stage 2 – Student's attendance does not improve after stage 1

Following a monitoring period, if the student's absence has not improved they will receive a phone call from school to further discuss attendance. In the call staff will discuss any barriers that are in place for attendance and again discuss the importance of good attendance. These students will continue to be on the monitoring list for attendance.

Stage 3 – Student's attendance does not improve after stage 2

If following the phone call the students attendance fails to improve, parents will be sent a second letter. The second letter will explain that a failure to improve the attendance for their child will result in a meeting with our attendance lead and pastoral or SEND staff to work on an attendance support plan. The support plan will be a period of four weeks where attendance is tracked closely for signs of improvement.

Stage 4 – Student's attendance does not improve after stage 3 or is below 90% without clear reason.

Where attendance does not improve after stage 3 then families will be invited into school for an attendance support plan meeting. During this meeting targets for improvement will be set out and agreed upon. However, if parents or students do not engage with the school's support or attendance continues to be an issue then the school will refer the case to the local authority. This can result in a fixed penalty notice and/or further legal intervention.

The Gosforth Federated Academies Ltd trading as the Gosforth Group – Company Registration Number: 07431423
Registered Office: Gosforth Academy, Knightsbridge, Great North Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 2JH

Where a student becomes persistently absent (absent for 10% or more) then we require parents/carers to work with school to identify and remove any barriers to poor attendance. Where appropriate, this may include liaising and working with external agencies, such as the local authority and other organisations. In addition, medical evidence may be requested when the school deems necessary. For example, this could be where the school needs clarification to accurately record absence in the attendance register or if there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness. In all cases of absence, the school has the final decision on whether to record the absence as authorised or unauthorised.

Where a student has severe absence (absent for 50% or more), a joint approach to addressing the absence with the family will be agreed with the local authority. This support will be built around the individual student and look to address the root cause of the absence. Again, any family who is fully engaged with the support offered by the school would not be referred to the local authority of legal interaction.

Legal intervention

We want to work positively and proactively with families to secure good attendance. If parents/carers are fully engaging with any support and acting responsibly to try to improve their child's attendance, the school's approach will always be supportive. The school will allow sufficient time for any identified intervention to result in attendance improving. Where attendance is improving, the school will not take any legal intervention against a parent/carer. However, where engagement strategies are not having the desired effect, we will consider the following next steps:

- Holding a formal meeting with parents/carers.
- Working with the local authority to put an attendance contract place.
- Engaging children's social care where there are safeguarding concerns in line with our child protection policy, particularly where absence becomes severe.

Where the above measures do not improve attendance, then the Executive Headteacher will consider referring the case to the local authority for consideration of legal intervention. The local authority may then decide to issue a fixed penalty notice, in line with the National Framework for penalty notices. The threshold for considering whether to issue fixed penalty notice is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks.

The first penalty notice issued to a parent in respect of a particular student will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.

A second penalty notice issued to a parent in respect of the same student is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.

A third penalty notice cannot be issued to a parent in respect of the same student within three years of the date of issue of the first. In these case, alternative action should be taken which will often include considering prosecution.

Where a student's attendance still does not improve following these measures, then the local authority may consider an Education Supervision Order (ESO). As a last resort, the local

The Gosforth Federated Academies Ltd trading as the Gosforth Group – Company Registration Number: 07431423
Registered Office: Gosforth Academy, Knightsbridge, Great North Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 2JH

authority may consider prosecuting parents for failing to address their child's poor attendance. The decision to prosecute remains solely with the local authority.

Term-time holidays and missing school for recreational activities

Generally, the DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance. This would include missing school to attendance a trip away with an external sports club or attending dance competitions that are not linked to the school.

In light of the DfE's stance on holidays, in the vast majority of cases the school is unable to grant leave of absence for a term-time holiday.

Where leave of absence has not been granted, but the student does not attend, the Executive Headteacher will refer the case to the local authority in line with the National Framework. This may lead to the local authority issuing a fixed penalty notice.

Monitoring and analysing attendance data

The school will conduct ongoing monitoring of attendance and punctuality as well as thorough analysis of half-termly, termly and full year data to identify patterns and trends. Leaders will identify whether there are particular groups of students whose attendance of punctuality may be a cause for concern. They will also look for patterns in the use of certain codes, days of poor attendance and where appropriate, subjects which have low lesson attendance.

As well as days missed and attendance percentages, leaders will take particularly close attention to the number of weeks that a student has had at least one day of absence across the year. Where we identify a student with 3 or more weeks with one session of absence, we will seek to work in partnership with parents and carers to avoid further absences.
Leaders will analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify individual students who need additional support with their attendance and use this analysis to provide targeted support to students and their families We will routinely monitor attendance for the following cohorts:

- Whole school
- Individual year groups and classes
- Boys and girls
- Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND)
- Students eligible for free school meals
- Students eligible for pupil premium funding
- Students who are looked after children or previously looked after children
- Students who have a social worker or on a multi-agency plan
- Students with English as an additional language
- Student who are Young Carers
- Student with 3 or more broken weeks in an academic year
- Students who are persistently absent or severely absent

The Gosforth Federated Academies Ltd trading as the Gosforth Group – Company Registration Number: 07431423
Registered Office: Gosforth Academy, Knightsbridge, Great North Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 2JH

This analysis will support individual level analysis for students who need support and to focus staff efforts on developing targeted actions for those cases. This will include early identification to students who can be supported before patterns become entrenched.

Regular reports will be provided to form tutors to facilitate discussions with students. Relevant leaders in school such as the SENCo, designated safeguarding lead and pupil premium lead will also receive regular attendance reports to support their work.

Absence data is published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. Leaders will compare the school's attendance data to national, regional and local averages and the same time period for the previous academic year. They will share this with the Governing Committee who will explore the impact of leaders' work to reduce absence.

The school will also use this attendance information to monitor the impact of any interventions put in place to evaluate them and inform future strategies.

Legislation and Guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the Working together to improve school attendance from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- 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, 2016 amendments)
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024
- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- Education (Information about Individual Pupils) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024.

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

The policy has taken account of the Education Select Committee's report on tackling absence: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm5803/cmselect/cmeduc/970/report.html.

The policy is also informed by the DfE publication A guide for schools on communicating with parents about attendance from June 2026.

Monitoring and Review

The governing committee is responsible for monitoring implementation of this policy at school level. The Board of Trustees are responsible for monitoring implementation of this policy at Trust level and may delegate this responsibility to the Trust's Executive team. This policy will be reviewed annually or in line with legislative changes.

The Gosforth Federated Academies Ltd trading as the Gosforth Group – Company Registration Number: 07431423
Registered Office: Gosforth Academy, Knightsbridge, Great North Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 2JH