BALLARD

BESPOKE EDUCATION

ATTENDANCE POLICY	
Reviewed by:	**Chris Jackson – Deputy Head Pastoral**
Review Date:	**September 2026**
Next Review due:	**September 2027**

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Attendance Policy

Rationale
Staff and governors at Ballard believe that in order for pupils to be successful they need excellent attendance.

At Ballard, we believe good attendance is important because:

- High attendance helps prepare pupils for the responsibilities of adult life in the workplace;
- Statistics show a direct link between under achievement and attendance below 95%;
- Pupils with a high level of attendance make better progress, both socially and academically;
- High attenders find school routines, schoolwork and friendships easier to cope with;
- High attenders find learning more satisfying; and
- High attenders are more successful in transferring between sections of the School and higher education, employment or training.

Although good attendance is defined as 95% or above in an academic year, Ballard is committed to increasing the number of pupils achieving 100% attendance. Our aspiration is that all pupils attend school all of the time. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

We are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our pupils and endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome. Parents and pupils play a part in making our school so successful. Every child has a right to access the education to which they are entitled. Parents and teachers share the responsibility for supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and punctuality for all.

Similarly, punctuality to school and to lessons is fundamental to academic and other successes. Pupils should therefore be in school unless they are too ill to attend, are on a pre-agreed holiday of short duration or in rare cases, where family circumstances are such that they cannot attend for a short time, for example in the case of bereavement.

High attendance and punctuality are important factors for all our pupils, and this includes our new pupils on a probationary period. In order for pupils to pass a probationary period they must ensure high levels of attendance and punctuality.

The School recognises that unexplained, persistent, severe or sudden changes in attendance may be an indicator of safeguarding concerns, including neglect, child criminal exploitation (CCE), child sexual exploitation (CSE), mental health concerns, online abuse, radicalisation, domestic abuse or other forms of harm. Attendance concerns will therefore always be considered in conjunction with the School's safeguarding procedures

Objectives
This policy aims to show 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), through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, 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; and
- Supporting pupils returning to school after extended periods of absence.

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

Legislation and Guidance
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

It also refers to:

- School census guidance
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools

Promoting Good Attendance
The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the School, parents and the child. To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Provide information on all matters related to attendance on our website and in the Headmaster's frequent letters;
- Report to parents on how well each pupil is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their achievement; and
- Reward good attendance by celebrating individual achievements.

Regular Reviews of Attendance
Every half term, at the Pastoral Team meeting, the Head of Section and Attendance Officer should review pupils with less than 95% attendance and in particular, those whose attendance is less than 90% attendance. At this stage there will be a review on an individual pupil basis to evaluate any changes in their attendance figures. The form tutor and Head of Section can then praise, support or encourage as necessary.

Form tutor comments in reports must always refer to attendance and our overall goal of 95% attendance. The reports will show authorised and unauthorised attendances as a percentage.

Tutors and Heads of Section must encourage good attendance frequently. This undoubtedly influences pupils resolves to attend school.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body

The governing body is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents/carers;
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
    - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority; and
    - Making sure that the School works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the School's policies and ethos;
- Making sure the School's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources;
- Making sure the School has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs;
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most;
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge;
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the School's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils' needs;
- Where the School is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance;
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
    - The importance of good attendance
    - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
    - The School's legal requirements for keeping registers
    - The School's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data; and
- Holding the Headmaster to account for the implementation of this policy.

The Headmaster

The Headmaster is responsible for, has oversight of and ensures the following happens:

- The implementation of this policy at the School;
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors;
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils;
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies;
- Working with the parents/carers of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers;
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs;
- Communicating the School's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents/carers through all available channels;
- Sharing information from the school register with the local authority, including:
    - Notifying the local authority when a pupil's name is added to or deleted from the school admission register outside of standard transition times;
    - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who fail to attend school regularly, or who have been marked with an unauthorised absence for a continuous period of 10 school days; and

- Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who the School believes will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness.

The Senior Leader responsible for attendance

The Senior Leader (also known as the 'Senior Attendance Champion') is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the School;
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance;
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes;
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis;
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance;
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff;
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed;
- Building close and productive relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues;
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers; and
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families.

The Senior Leader responsible for attendance is Mr Chris Jackson and can be contacted via chris.jackson@ballardschool.co.uk.

The Attendance Officer - Inclusion Support Lead

The school Attendance Officer (known as our Inclusion Support Lead) is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data;
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement;
- Raising issues of concern regarding pupils with less than 90% attendance at Pastoral Team meetings and reporting concerns about attendance to the Designated Senior Leader responsible for attendance, and the Headmaster;
- Working with external agencies as required to tackle persistent absence; and
- Being proactive in contacting parents whilst keeping Heads of Section and Leadership Team informed.

The Attendance Officer is Kim Tuddenham and can be contacted via kim.tuddenham@ballardschool.co.uk

Class teachers/Form tutors

- Class teachers/Form tutors are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix), and using iSAMS; If a pupil is absent from a lesson without prior notification or a known reason, the member of staff taking the lesson register must immediately notify the Attendance Team by emailing attendance@ballardschool.co.uk. This enables the School to swiftly investigate the pupil's whereabouts and ensure appropriate attendance and safeguarding procedures are followed;
- Attending form time punctually to meet and greet pupils;
- Ensuring the pupil feels welcome in the form group and has a positive start to each school day and arranging for cover if aware of absence;
- Monitoring punctuality and attendance; informing Head of Section and Attendance Officer of any concerns. Communicating these concerns and attendance below 95% as agreed with Head of Section and Attendance Officer to parents by telephone/email, and reinforcing this in the annual school report as appropriate;
- Praising each pupil with good attendance and punctuality and those pupils whose attendance and punctuality has improved;
- Requesting absence information from pupils and parents and annotating the register weekly, using the Future Absence tab in the Registration Module in iSAMS. All absences must be accounted for by an email or phone call from the parent on the same day of absence. The reason given for the absence must constitute an 'authorised' reason; if in doubt the Form tutor must liaise with the Head of Section before authorising the absence. The Form tutor will annotate the register for any reasons given for absence;

- Where no clarification of absence is provided by a parent, the school Reception staff will contact the parent and notify the Head of Section/Attendance Officer. The school Reception staff will annotate the register accordingly and sign with initials;
- Promoting and monitoring punctuality. If a pupil is late to registration on three occasions without good reason, they will receive a Head of Section lunchtime detention;
- Monitoring patterns of absence and punctuality. If a pattern is noticed, the Head of Section should be notified. When a pupil's attendance gives cause for concern, the Form tutor may be instructed by the Head of Section to record the absence as 'unauthorised' even if a notification is provided. Any communication received from parents of these pupils should be passed to the Head of Section; and
- Encouraging pupils to access the co-curricular programme using SOCS.

School Reception Staff

School Reception staff will:

- Take calls/check My School Portal (MSP) 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 Head of Section/Deputy Head Pastoral where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance;
- Where no clarification of absence is provided by a parent, the school Reception staff will contact the parent and notify the Head of Section/Attendance Officer. The school Reception staff will annotate the register accordingly and sign with initials;
- Ensure AM and PM registration periods are monitored for missing registers and send a report to teachers by 10am for AM register and 3pm for PM register;
- Follow up and complete any inaccurate registration codes, once evidence has been provided either by the Subject Teacher, Form tutor or Head of Section;
- Support the PE Department in completing accurate registration records, including days when children attend offsite sporting activities;
- Update Out of School and Future Absence records, based on the information submitted by parents/ carers via MSP;
- Facilitate pupils signing out using the pupil signing out book, located in the main School Reception;
- Alert the Heads of Section or Attendance Officer of any persistent patterns of absence observed in pupils;
- Update registers for pupils who have attended approved on-site activities - VMT lessons, ELSA and counselling sessions; and
- Provide Form tutors with a weekly attendance report.

Pupils

The pupil is responsible for:

- Attending school on time (we expect pupils to be in their form room by 8.30am daily). Any absence or lateness must be with the consent of a parent. A pupil arriving in school after the registration period (8.30am – 8.45am) must go to the main School Reception in the main building to be signed in by the Reception staff. Signing out in the carpark when leaving at 4.00pm (Years 6 to 11) or by the junior canopy (Years 3 to 5); or attending the correct activity/prep at 4.15pm. Failure to do so will lead to a demerit detention the following day;
- Reporting to main School Reception to see the School Nurse if they are unwell or absent from a lesson. They should never contact parents directly before seeing the School Nurse or a member of the Pastoral Team;
- Attending each lesson on time;
- Attend co-curricular activities unless have parental permission in advance to be absent;
- Registering at the main School Reception if a formal registration period is missed due to an appointment. There must be an absence request online or hardcopy, email, or a note from parents to explain the absence;
- For afternoon registration a pupil, who, for any reason, does not register with their class teacher or Form tutor, must go to the main School Reception to be signed in; and

- Following school procedures if they need to leave the site before 4.00pm.

Parents
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 are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every timetabled session on time;
- Call the School to report their child's absence before 9.00am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence and advise when they are expected to return. Absence Line: 01425 626901;
- Provide the School with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child;
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day;
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting the Form tutor and/or a member of the Pastoral Team;
- Ensure their child arrives punctually for school;
- Ensure their child is signed up to a co-curricular club each night, including 'Opt out' if they are going home at 4.00pm;
- Report absence via MSP using either the 'Report School Absence' or 'Request for Authorised Absence' forms. Please provide a copy of the appointment letter and/or signed note from home to main Reception staff or School Office, so that any absence can be recorded correctly. If possible, we ask that parents accompany pupils into the main School Reception to sign out and sign in;
- Avoid holidays during term time; if a parent wishes to seek permission from the Headmaster to take their child out of school during term time, they should complete a 'Request for Authorised Absence' form, via MSP in advance;
- Give the Form tutor/school Reception staff the address and telephone number of the temporary person with parental responsibility if they are away during term time; and
- Check their child's attendance using the parent portal. If an N is present in the Register, please inform the School of the reason for the absence.

Head of Section
The Head of Section is responsible for:

- Setting a good ethos within the year groups, which will encourage good attendance and punctuality;
- Monitoring overall patterns of attendance and punctuality for the year groups, by using the 'Week View' tab within the Registration Manager in iSAMS, and reviewing the weekly attendance report for each tutor group and overall statistics for their year groups;
- Inform both the Deputy Head Pastoral in his role as Attendance Champion and the Attendance Officer of attendance issues;
- Undertaking regular classroom visits;
- Carrying out a review of attendance at the Heads of Section's weekly meeting with the Deputy Head Pastoral and responding appropriately where concerns exist. Responses may include meeting with the pupils to set targets, writing home, a telephone call or a meeting with parents;
- Providing information to all staff on pupils where attendance and punctuality to lessons have been identified as a cause for concern;
- Setting up intervention groups to address poor punctuality and low attendance (including persistent absence);
- Acting promptly on any causes for concern; e.g., by speaking to the pupil, contacting home, referring to the Deputy Heads;
- Ensuring that the Form tutors are fulfilling their responsibilities, by knowing exactly what is expected of them and have the skills to carry this out. This also includes the induction of new Form tutors. The Head

of Section is also responsible for challenging poor practice, in consultation with their Line Manager, the Deputy Head Pastoral;
- Notifying the Form tutor, Attendance Officer and main Reception staff of the names of pupils whose absence should be recorded as unauthorised, regardless of any absence note provided; and
- Monitoring all unauthorised absences, including that which the Form tutor has not authorised, at the request of the Head of Section. In addition, at the end of the Spring term, the Head of Section must review all unauthorised absences.

ELSA staff, VMT staff, School Counsellor
The ELSA staff, VMT staff, School Counsellor are responsible for:

- Keeping a record of pupils attending their sessions and inform Reception staff of any unexplained absence.

Recording Attendance

Legally the register must be marked **twice** daily. This is once at the start of Lesson 1 (8.50am – 9.39am) and again at the start of Lesson 5 (1.45pm – 2.34pm).

In addition, every class teacher will take a register at the **beginning of each lesson from Years 3 to 11**. Nursery to Year 2 will take an AM and a PM register.

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

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; or
- 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; and
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment.

See Appendix for the DfE attendance codes. We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not, for pupils of compulsory school age;
- The nature of the activity, where a pupil is attending an approved educational activity; and/or
- 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.

The school day starts at 8.30am and ends at 5.00pm.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.29am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.30am and will be kept open until the end of lesson 1, 9.40am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1.45pm and will be kept open until 2.30pm.

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 9.00am or as soon as practically possible, by calling the school Reception staff, who can be contacted via the absence line: 01425 626901 or completing MSP.

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 5 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.

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.

However, we encourage parents 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 must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence.

Punctuality and lateness

It is important to be on time at the start of the morning and afternoon school sessions and to lessons. The start of school/lessons are used to make announcements, give out instructions or organise work. If pupils are late, they can miss work, time with their class teacher getting vital information and cause disruption to the lesson for others. In turn, this can be embarrassing, leading to possible further absence.

The school day begins with morning tutor time at 8.30am and all pupils are expected to be in school by this time. Morning tutor registration closes at 8.39am.

All lateness is recorded daily. Head of Section detentions will be set for persistent lateness without a valid reason (i.e., three late arrivals).

For any arrival after 5 minutes of the start of the registration or lesson period, will be marked as late (L) with annotation of the register to explain the reason.

If a pupil is late due to a medical appointment, they will receive an authorised absence coded 'M'; parents will be advised that, where possible, doctor and dentist appointments should be made outside of school hours or during the school holidays.

Parents, guardians, or carers of pupils who have patterns of lateness will be contacted to discuss the importance of good timekeeping and how this might be achieved. If lateness persists, parents, guardians or carers will be invited to attend the School, discuss the problem and have support offered.

Amendments to school attendance regulations were updated and enforced from September 2013. Pupil registration (England) regulations state that:

> 'Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. It is important to note that Headteachers can determine the length of the authorised absence as well as whether absence is authorised at all. The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are rare, significant, or unavoidable which means the event could not reasonably be

scheduled at another time. There are no rules on this as circumstances vary from school to school and family to family. There is, however, no legal entitlement for time off in school time to go on holiday and in the majority of cases holiday will not be authorised.'

If term-time leave is taken without prior permission from the School, the absence will be unauthorised.

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

- Where a pupil is identified as missing from an expected lesson, the member of staff will notify attendance@ballardschool.co.uk immediately so that the Attendance Team can investigate, verify the pupil's location and, where necessary, initiate safeguarding procedures
- 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 the 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 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 external agency
- 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; and/or
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals.
- Where attendance concerns indicate a potential safeguarding risk, staff will immediately consult the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and record concerns in accordance with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. Attendance and safeguarding records will be reviewed together to ensure a complete assessment of risk

Reporting to parents
The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels via communication from Form tutors and formally twice yearly alongside school reports.

Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

Approval for term-time absence
The Headmaster will allow pupils to be absent from the School site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings.

The Headmaster will only grant a **leave of absence** to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. 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; or
- Exceptional circumstances

A leave of absence is granted at the Headmaster's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

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.

The School considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 4 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via MSP. The Headmaster may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

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

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental;
- 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; and/or
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made).

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; and/or
- 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

Strategies for promoting attendance
Our school will celebrate and promote good attendance in assemblies, form times and on displays.

Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance
Addressing complex barriers to attendance requires a comprehensive and empathetic approach. Here are some strategies we will consider:

Understanding Pupils and Families:

- **Holistic Understanding**: We will develop a thorough understanding of each pupil's circumstances, including family dynamics, health issues, and socio-economic factors.
- **Personalised Support**: Tailor interventions to meet the specific needs of each pupil, recognising that one-size-fits-all solutions are often ineffective.
- **Family Engagement**: Build strong, trusting relationships with families. Engage them as partners in their child's education through regular, personalised communication and culturally responsive outreach.
- **Empowering Parents**: Provide resources and support to help parents understand the importance of attendance and how they can contribute to improving it.

Removing In-School Barriers

- **Positive School Climate**: Promote a welcoming and inclusive school environment where pupils feel safe and valued.
- **Mental Health Support**: Offer mental health services and accommodations for pupils with health and disability needs.
- **Tiered Interventions**: Implement a tiered approach to attendance interventions, starting with universal supports for all pupils, followed by targeted interventions for those at risk, and intensive support for those with chronic absenteeism.

- **Multi-Agency Collaboration**: Work with local authorities, health services, and community organisations to address external barriers to attendance.

Where attendance concerns indicate emerging needs rather than immediate safeguarding risk, the School will consider an Early Help assessment and engage relevant services to prevent issues escalating

Pupils absent due to mental or physical ill health or SEND
We will want to work effectively with families by:

- **Open Communication**: Maintain regular, empathetic communication with families to understand their child's needs and circumstances.
- **Collaborative Planning**: Involve families in creating Individual Education Plans (IEPs) or Health Care Plans to ensure that support is tailored to the pupil's specific needs.
- **Family Resources**: Provide families with resources and guidance on how to support their child's learning and well-being at home.

School Adjustments
- **Flexible Timetables**: Implement flexible or part-time timetables to accommodate pupils who may not be able to attend full days.
- **Accessible Learning Materials**: Provide learning materials in accessible formats, such as large print or digital resources.
- **Physical Adjustments**: Make physical adjustments to the school environment, such as installing ramps, handrails, or adapted furniture.

Additional Support
- **Mental Health Services**: Offer access to school-based mental health services, including counselling and ELSA.
- **Medical Support**: Ensure that our School Nurse is available to manage medical needs and provide necessary care.
- **Specialist Staff**: Employ or consult with specialist staff, such as SEND coordinators, occupational therapists, and educational psychologists.

Educational Strategies
- **Personalised Learning**: Adapt teaching methods to suit the learning styles and needs of each pupil, using strategies like scaffolding and explicit instruction.
- **Assistive Technology**: Utilise assistive technologies, such as speech-to-text software, to support pupils with SEND.
- **Peer Support**: Encourage peer mentoring and buddy systems to help pupils feel included and supported by their classmates.

Monitoring and Review
- **Regular Check-ins**: Schedule regular check-ins with pupils and their families to monitor progress and adjust support as needed.
- **Data-Driven Decisions**: Use attendance and performance data to identify patterns and make informed decisions about interventions.
- **Continuous Improvement**: Regularly review and update policies and practices to ensure they remain effective and responsive to pupils' needs.

Where a pupil has an education health and care plan (EHCP) and their attendance falls, or the School becomes aware of barriers to attendance that related to the pupil's needs, the School will inform the local authority.

Pupils returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence
Here are a few ways our school can support them:

1. **Personalised Reintegration Plans**
   - **Individual Meetings:** Schedule one-on-one meetings with returning pupils to understand their needs, concerns, and any challenges they might face.
   - **Tailored Learning Plans:** Develop customised learning plans to help them catch up on missed work without feeling overwhelmed.

2. **Emotional and Social Support**
   - **Counselling Services:** Provide access to our School Counsellor who can offer emotional support and coping strategies.
   - **Peer Support Programs:** Pair returning pupils with peer buddies to help them reintegrate socially and academically.

3. **Academic Support**
   - **Tutoring Sessions:** Offer extra tutoring sessions or homework clubs to help pupils catch up on missed lessons.
   - **Flexible Deadlines:** Allow flexibility with assignment deadlines to reduce stress and give pupils time to adjust.

4. **Parental Involvement**
   - **Regular Communication:** Keep parents informed about their child's progress and any support being provided.
   - **Resources:** Offer resources for parents to help them support their child's return to school.

5. **Health and Wellbeing**
   - **Health Checks:** Ensure returning pupils have access to health checks and support if they have been absent due to illness.
   - **Wellbeing Programs:** Implement programs that promote physical and mental wellbeing, such as mindfulness sessions or physical activities.

6. **Gradual Reintegration**
   - **Staggered Return:** Allow pupils to return to school gradually, starting with part-time attendance if needed.
   - **Reduced Timetable:** Offer a reduced timetable initially to help them ease back into the school routine.

Attendance monitoring
The School will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) weekly, half-termly, termly and yearly across the School and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level.

Specific pupil information will be shared with the DfE on request.

Data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics.

The School will benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement and share this with the governing board.

Analysing attendance
The School will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and
- Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends

- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

Using data to improve attendance
The School will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis;
- Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severed absence, and their families;
- Provide regular attendance reports to the Pastoral Team to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders;
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies; and
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate.

Reducing persistent and severe absence
Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the School's strategy for improving attendance.

The School will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence;
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education;
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the School (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
    - Discuss attendance and engagement at school
    - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
    - Explain the help that is available
    - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
    - Review any existing actions or interventions
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant; and
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the School will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence.

Monitoring arrangements
This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the Deputy Head Pastoral. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

Links with other policies
This policy links to the following policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy

Chris Jackson, Deputy Head Pastoral
September 2026

Reviewed and updated by Deputy Head Pastoral:
August 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, March 2025 (AMR)
April 2026 (CJA)

Appendix: Attendance Codes

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
Attending a place other than the school		
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
Absent – leave of absence		
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

C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	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
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	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
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention

Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

Appendix:

Attendance Support Flowchart

Attendance concerns should be addressed promptly to prevent issues from becoming entrenched. They can often be resolved informally, through supportive conversations with pupils and their parents/carers.
The below flowchart is a guide to using formal communication where an informal approach has not worked or not been engaged with.
The process outlined below can be applied flexibly and adapted to individual pupil circumstances. Steps can be skipped or repeated if necessary, and timings can be altered.

1. Low-level concerns for pupils with 95-97% attendance - form tutor to check in with pupil and contact home if a concern is raised.

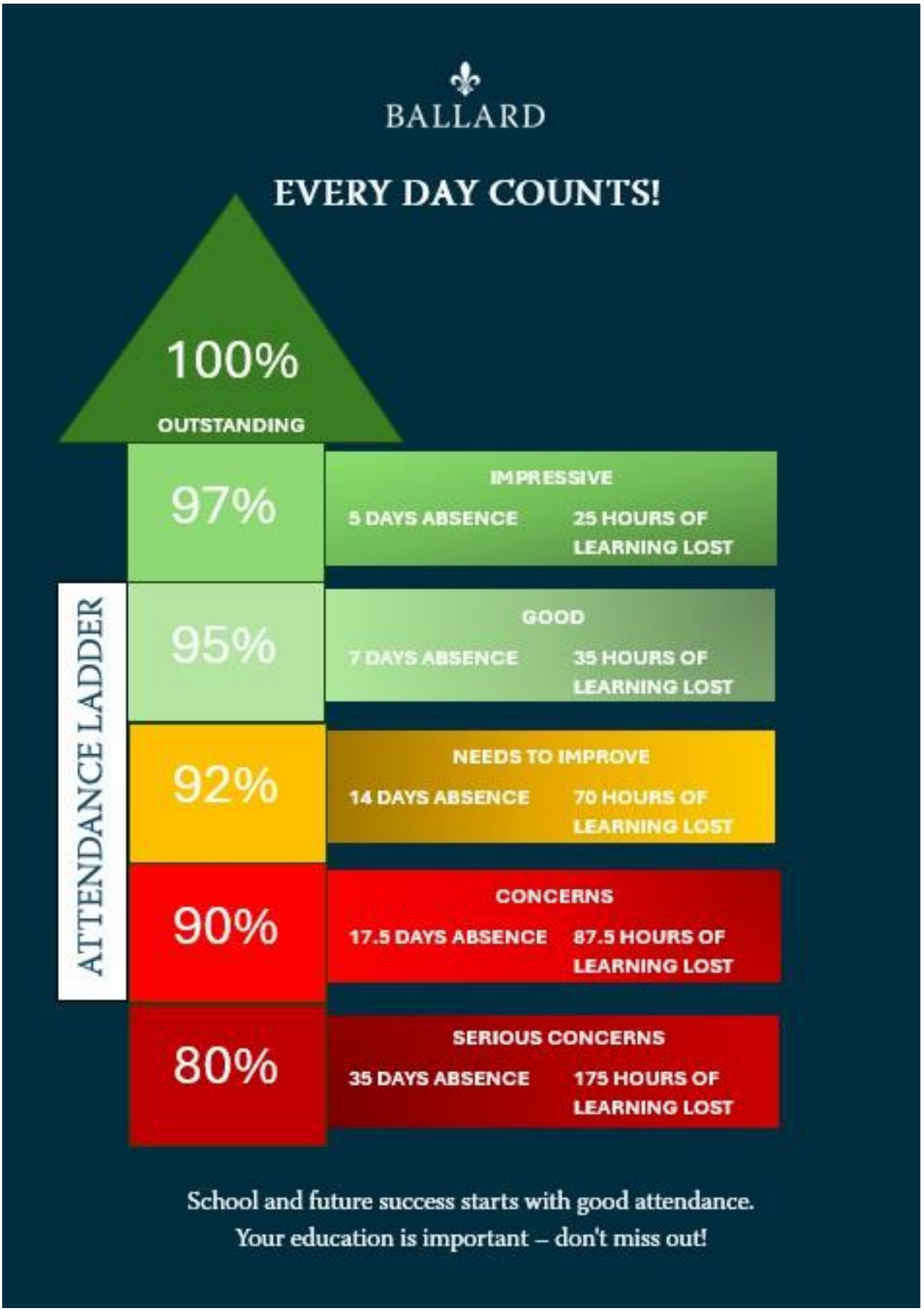
2. Continued low-level concerns for pupils with 91-94% attendance – form tutor to discuss any concerns with pupils and offer support to improve their attendance. Form tutor to discuss with Head of Section (HOS) and attendance concern raised at relevant pastoral meeting by HOS.

3. Continued concerns for pupils with attendance of 90% or below – HOS to invite parents/carers to an informal attendance support meeting with HOS & Lead Pastoral Support Assistant (LPSA). Pupil Support Plan (PSP) initiated, and follow-up email sent by HOS.

4. Continued concerns - formal school attendance support meeting (SASM) – HOS to send written invitation to parents/carers to SASM with HOS, LPSA & Deputy Head Pastoral (DHP). Medical evidence for illness absence requirement may be instigated. PSP reviewed and follow-up email sent by HOS.

5. Continued concerns if attendance does not improve – DHP to send written invitation for a non-attendance support meeting (NASM) in school or at home, attended by DHP & LPSA. PSP reviewed. Parents/carers advised about potential referral to Early Help Hub. Follow-up email sent by DHP.

Appendix: Attendance Chart



Ballard Pupil Attendance

Thank you to parents for their work in securing pupils' good attendance.

There is no doubt that pupils need to have good attendance if they are to be successful at school. Good attendance is defined as 95% or above in an academic year. Similarly, punctuality to school and to lessons is fundamental to academic and other successes. Pupils should therefore be in school unless they are too ill to attend or, in rare cases, where family circumstances are such that they cannot attend for a short time, for example in the case of bereavement.

Good attendance is intertwined with good pupil behaviour and effective teaching and learning. Equally pupils with poor attendance tend to fall behind with their work and can struggle to catch up. They often have more difficulty making friends. Poor attendance can also lead to poor behaviour. All our experience tells us that pupils with good attendance are happier, better behaved and more successful – and not just in school.

We will continue to use electronic registration to track punctuality and attendance lesson by lesson. This means that we telephone parents if their child is not in school. Where parents have not already contacted us to explain an absence, either by phone or use of the school portal, we will try to telephone them before break to clarify the reason for absence.

Family Holidays
The law relating to family holidays during term time changed from 1st September 2013, and laws and regulations were tightened again in August 2024. In the past, Heads Teachers have been able to grant leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday during term time for up to ten school days per year. The law has made it clear that Heads may not grant any leave of absence during term time, unless there are exceptional circumstances. Holidays taken during term time are required to be unauthorised. During ISI inspections, schools may well be challenged on their absence data and questioned over those term time absences that are authorised.

Medical Appointments
We ask parents, where possible, to arrange medical or dental appointments outside school hours. If it does need to take place on a school day, we ask that, if the consultation is local, pupils do attend the rest of the school day. Of course, some medical appointments last longer and a lengthy journey is sometimes necessary; in such cases it would be unreasonable to expect your child to attend any part of the school day.

Signing out for Appointments During the School Day
For safeguarding and health and safety reasons, any pupils leaving the site must sign out at the main Reception Office.

We ask that when an appointment is made, this is reported in advance via the 'Request for Authorised Absence' on My School Portal (MSP) or by phoning main Reception as soon as possible.

Sometimes an appointment is made after the child has left for school, in which case there will not be a note in the logbook. In such cases we ask parents to phone the School as soon as possible and the main Reception staff can sign the logbook.

First (1) Day Absence
A child not attending school is considered a safeguarding matter. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

If your child is absent, you must:

- Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence, preferably by calling the absence line on 01425 626901;
- Send an email/phone call in on the first day they return with an explanation of the absence – you must do this even if you have already telephoned us; and/or
- Or you can call in to school and report to main Reception.

If your child is absent, we will:

- Telephone, text or email you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you; this is because we have a duty to ensure your child's safety as well as their regular school attendance.

Third (3) Day Absence

If your child is not seen and contact has not been established with you after three days of absence, the School is required to start a child missing in education procedures as set down by Hampshire County Council. We will write to you to tell you this is happening.

We will make all reasonable enquiries to establish contact with parents and the child including making enquires to known friends and wider family. We may even try visiting your home.

The School recognises that children who are regularly absent may be as vulnerable as those who are missing education entirely. Patterns of absence will be considered alongside wider welfare information and safeguarding indicators

Ten (10) Days' Absence

We have a legal duty to report the absence of any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days. If the child is not seen and contact has not been established with the named parent/carer, then the Local Authority is notified that the child is 'at risk of missing'. Children's Services Staff will visit the last known address and alert key services to locate the child.

So please help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up-to-date contact number. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.

Fifteen (15) Days Absence Due To Illness

We have a duty to provide the local authority with the full name and address of all pupils of compulsory school age who have been recorded with code I (illness) and who the School has reasonable grounds to believe will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness.

My Child is trying to avoid coming in to school. What should I do?

Children are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the School, the parents and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse.

Contact your child's Form tutor or Head of Section immediately and openly discuss your worries. Your child could be avoiding school for a number of reasons – difficulties with schoolwork, bullying, friendship problems, family difficulties. It is important that we identify the reason for your child's reluctance to attend school and work together to tackle the problem. In some cases, you may find it helpful to discuss the circumstances of your child's difficulties with another professional.