"We value education and the chances this gives us in life"

Contents

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1. Aims

At Budehaven we value education and the chances this gives us in life. Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence

- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled

- Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons. We will closely with the Education Welfare Officer to support any student whose attendance falls below 95%.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance 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:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Education Act 2002
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

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

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. School procedures

3.1 Attendance register

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

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

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

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

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8:50am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 08:50am and will be kept open until 9:20am. The register for the second session will be taken at 12:30pm and will be kept open until 13:00pm.

3.2 Registration of pupils by classroom teachers

All teachers are expected to complete a register for the class on SIMS every lesson. Teachers must complete their register within 10 minutes of the start of the lesson and ensure that it is saved on SIMS. They will record all students who are present with a "/" present mark. Teachers are responsible for ensuring that their register is accurate. Any student who does not arrive for a lesson will not be marked on the register and will show as an "N" code. This will be picked up by the attendance officer. Parents will be informed and the Ready to Learn Response team will attempt to locate the student immediately.

Teachers are responsible for updating their register and recording any child who arrives late to their lesson with an "L" code.

3.3 Unplanned absence

Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 9:10 or as soon as practically possible (see also section 6).

Parents must call in to the school switchboard and select Report an Absence. Parents can also using the school gateway app (*SchoolComms)* on their home computer, phone or tablet.

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents to provide 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.

3.4 Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.

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.

Parents can inform us about upcoming appointments by using the school gateway app (Schoolcomms) or contacting the school attendance officer. Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in section 4.

3.5 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

A pupil who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.

Any student who has more than 3 late marks in a week will receive an after school detention on a Friday from 3:30pm to 4:30pm.

3.6 Following up absence

The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use. .

3.7 Reporting to parents

Parents/ Carers are able to monitor their child's attendance using the school gateway app. Attendance is also included in the student reports sent to parents twice per year.

Parents / Carers will be informed by a SchoolComms letter if their child's attendance falls below 95% and a letter will sent with a copy of the registration certificate if the attendance continues to fall, or drops below 90%.

4. Authorised and unauthorised absence

4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments – as explained in sections 3.2 and 3.3

- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart

- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

  Any holidays that are taken during term will **not** be authorised and a referral to the EWO will be made. Any holiday totaling more than 10 sessions (5 days) will result in a fixed penalty notice being issued by the local authority.

  A second term time holiday in the school year will lead to the issuing of a fixed penalty notice.

4.2 Legal sanctions

Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a penalty notice, parents must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the headteacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:

- A number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute the parent or withdraw the notice.

5. Strategies for promoting attendance

- Attendance data in the school is carefully monitored and analysed throughout the school year by the Attendance officer, Directors of Key Stage and school leadership team. Any groups that are a course for concern or trends in poor attendance are quickly identified and strategies put in place.
- The Attendance officer and Directors of Key Stage meet the Education Welfare Officer meet every week to review students whose attendance is falling below 95%.
- Any student whose attendance falls below 93% is referred to the Education welfare Officer.
- For every student in the school they have 1 tutor time per fortnight dedicated to promoting good attendance. Those who have made improvements in their attendance are celebrated in form time and those whose attendance is a concern will discuss strategies to improve their attendance with their tutor.
- At Budehaven we believe in celebrating good attendance and rewarding improvements in attendance. School attendance is aligned to attitude to learning in class as part of our rewards system, which is celebrated by Ks directors' on a termly basis.
- We understand that for some students a high level of school attendance can be very difficult due to medical conditions or SEND. We do celebrate outstanding effort in attending school and celebrate those students who show resilience to overcome adversity in improving their attendance as far as they can.
- We run termly celebration breakfasts for tutor groups, where we offer a celebration breakfast for the tutor group in each year group with the highest attendance and also the most improved attendance.
- Every half term we run a series of attendance clinics for parents and carers. Every child who is at risk of being a persistent absentee is invited to an attendance clinic with the Education Welfare Officer, Attendance Officer and Assistant Head teacher. The clinic is aimed at promoting strategies for supporting parents to improve attendance and raise awareness of the impact of poor attendance on outcomes for the student.
- Alongside the attendance clinics the Assistant Head teacher runs a half termly attendance assembly to promote good attendance among the students.

6. Attendance monitoring

The attendance officer monitors pupil absence on a daily basis.

Parents are expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 3.2).

If a pupil's attendance falls below 95% we will contact the parents to discuss the reasons for this.

If after contacting parents a pupil's absence continue to rise, we will consider involving an education welfare officer.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Pupil-level absence data is 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. We compare our attendance data to the national average, and share this with governors.
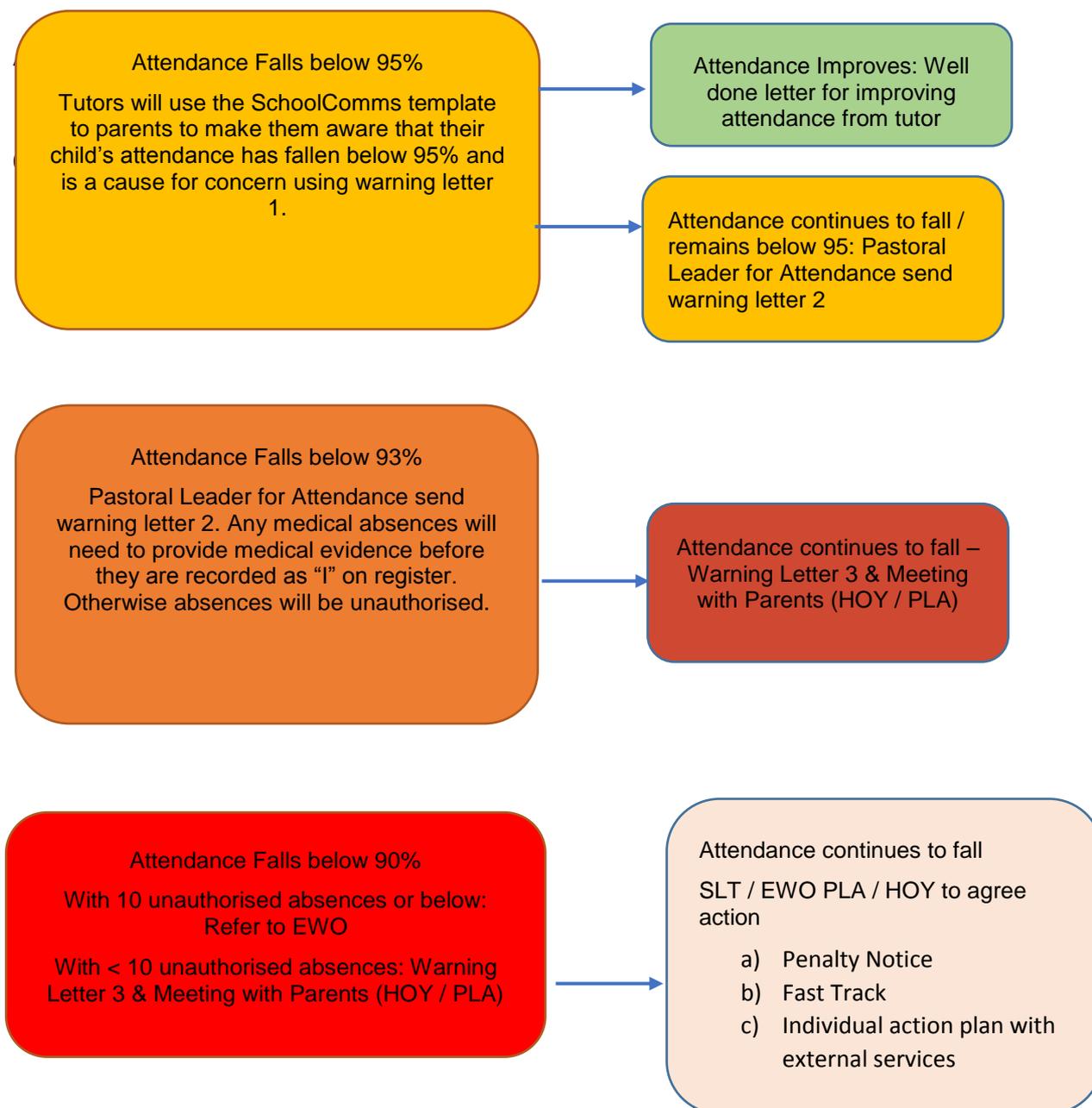
Flow chart showing all action regarding attendance.

The Attendance Officer, Director of Key Stage, will meet with the Education Welfare officer fortnightly and discuss actions

Director of Key Stage will meet with Assistant Head teacher once every 4 weeks and discuss attendance for their year group. They will focus on any groups of students where there is an attendance concern and present on the actions they will take to support each target group top improve their attendance.

Week 2 to 4: In attendance review meetings any student's causing concern will be flagged and attendance officer will compare with attendance from previous year and decide if letter warning letter needs to be sent regarding attendance (based on previous 100 sessions / 10 weeks)

Week 6 onwards: As below

Attendance Falls below 95%

Tutors will use the SchoolComms template to parents to make them aware that their child's attendance has fallen below 95% and is a cause for concern using warning letter 1.

→ **Attendance Improves:** Well done letter for improving attendance from tutor

→ **Attendance continues to fall / remains below 95:** Pastoral Leader for Attendance send warning letter 2

Attendance Falls below 93%

Pastoral Leader for Attendance send warning letter 2. Any medical absences will need to provide medical evidence before they are recorded as "I" on register. Otherwise absences will be unauthorised.

→ **Attendance continues to fall –** Warning Letter 3 & Meeting with Parents (HOY / PLA)

Attendance Falls below 90%

With 10 unauthorised absences or below: Refer to EWO

With < 10 unauthorised absences: Warning Letter 3 & Meeting with Parents (HOY / PLA)

→ **Attendance continues to fall**

SLT / EWO PLA / HOY to agree action

a) Penalty Notice
b) Fast Track
c) Individual action plan with external services

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Proposed actions regarding pupil absence

Student attendance concern – signpost those students who are under the school's minimum attendance target of 96% Yellow attendance category of 90%-95.9%; tutor to School Comms parents and names to be shared in meetings with Pastoral leader and HoY
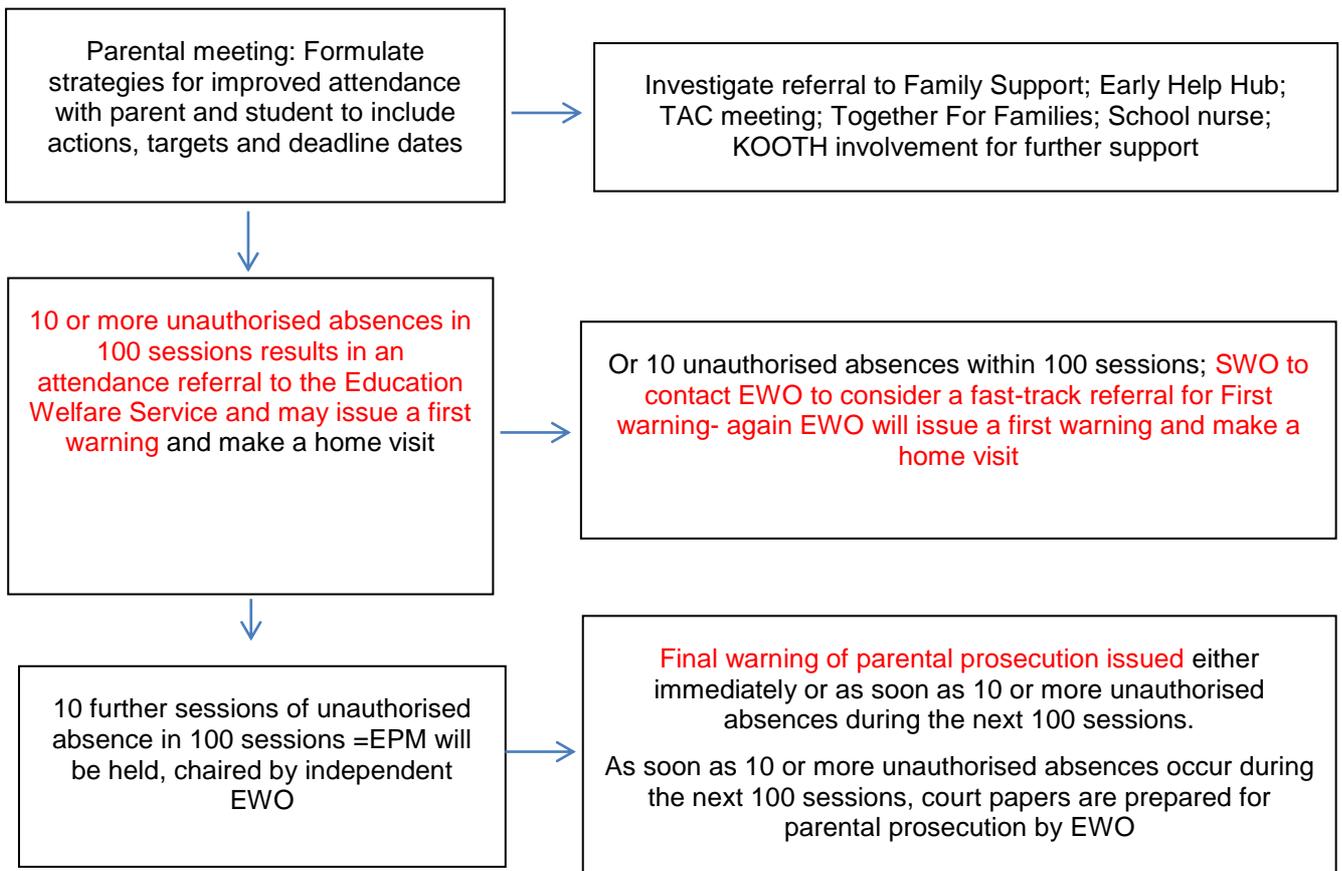
↓

If there is no improvement in attendance or attendance falls below 93%, Pastoral Leader for Attendance send warning letter 2. Any medical absences will need to provide medical evidence before they are recorded as "I" on register. Otherwise absences will be unauthorised.

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If attendance remains below 93%, Parents to be invited to an attendance meeting to discuss strategies to help improve attendance. If the parent doesn't attend the Attendance meeting, a home visit will be considered in conversation with EWO / HOY & Pastoral Leader.

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Attendance falls below 90%. Referral made to EWO and attendance monitored at fortnightly attendance meeting. Parent o be contacted and invited in to meeting. Flow diagram below to be followed.

Parental meeting: Formulate strategies for improved attendance with parent and student to include actions, targets and deadline dates

→ Investigate referral to Family Support; Early Help Hub; TAC meeting; Together For Families; School nurse; KOOTH involvement for further support

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10 or more unauthorised absences in 100 sessions results in an attendance referral to the Education Welfare Service and may issue a first warning and make a home visit

→ Or 10 unauthorised absences within 100 sessions; SWO to contact EWO to consider a fast-track referral for First warning- again EWO will issue a first warning and make a home visit

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10 further sessions of unauthorised absence in 100 sessions =EPM will be held, chaired by independent EWO

→ Final warning of parental prosecution issued either immediately or as soon as 10 or more unauthorised absences during the next 100 sessions.

As soon as 10 or more unauthorised absences occur during the next 100 sessions, court papers are prepared for parental prosecution by EWO

7. Roles and responsibilities

7.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

7.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.

The headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

7.3 The attendance officer

The attendance officer:

- Monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the headteacher
- Works with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Advises the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

7.4 Class teachers/form tutors

Classroom teachers are responsible for recording attendance to their lessons on a daily basis in SIMS, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office. Form tutors are responsible for recording attendance at morning registration on a daily basis in SIMS, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.

7.5 Office/reception staff

Reception staff and the attendance officer are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed yearly by the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

9. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our child protection and safeguarding policy and register of attendance policy.

Appendix 1: 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
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment

R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day