



# **CHANCERY EDUCATION TRUST PICKHURST ACADEMY**

## **PUPIL ATTENDANCE AND FIRST DAY CALLING POLICY**

**OCTOBER 2018**

NEXT REVIEW DATE: October 2022

Pickhurst Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

## **CHANCERY EDUCATION TRUST PUPIL ATTENDANCE AND FIRST DAY CALLING POLICY**

### **Aims**

Pickhurst Academy seeks to ensure that all its pupils receive a full time education which maximises opportunities for each pupil to realise his/her true potential.

The Academy/School will strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment, whereby each member of the Academy/School community feels wanted and secure.

All Academy/School staff will work with pupils and their families to ensure every child attends regularly and punctually.

The Academy/School will establish an effective system of incentives and rewards which acknowledges the efforts of pupils to improve their attendance and timekeeping and support those pupils and parents who give low priority to attendance and punctuality.

To achieve the above, Pickhurst Academy will maintain an effective and efficient system of communication with pupils, parents and appropriate agencies to provide mutual information, advice and support.

Staff and Governors are committed to working in partnership with parents/carers to achieve a MINIMUM of 97% attendance throughout the Academy/School.

### **Legislation and guidance**

The Law requires that children attend school on every day that it is open. Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their child is in school every day it is open.

The 'Attendance Register' should, therefore, only show children as being absent due to unavoidable circumstances. Absence without good reason is against the law and the parent/ carer who allows their child to be absent without good reason may be fined/prosecuted.

All absences from school (this includes half day absences) must be classified by the Academy/School (not the parent) as being either authorised or unauthorised. In assessing the absence as being authorised or unauthorised, it is therefore necessary to have information as to the reason (s) for the non-attendance. Only the Academy/School can authorise an absence, not the parent.

## **Academy/School procedures**

### **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 8.50am (closed at 9.20am). The register for the second session will be taken at 1.10pm (closed at 1.40pm).

### **Unplanned Absence**

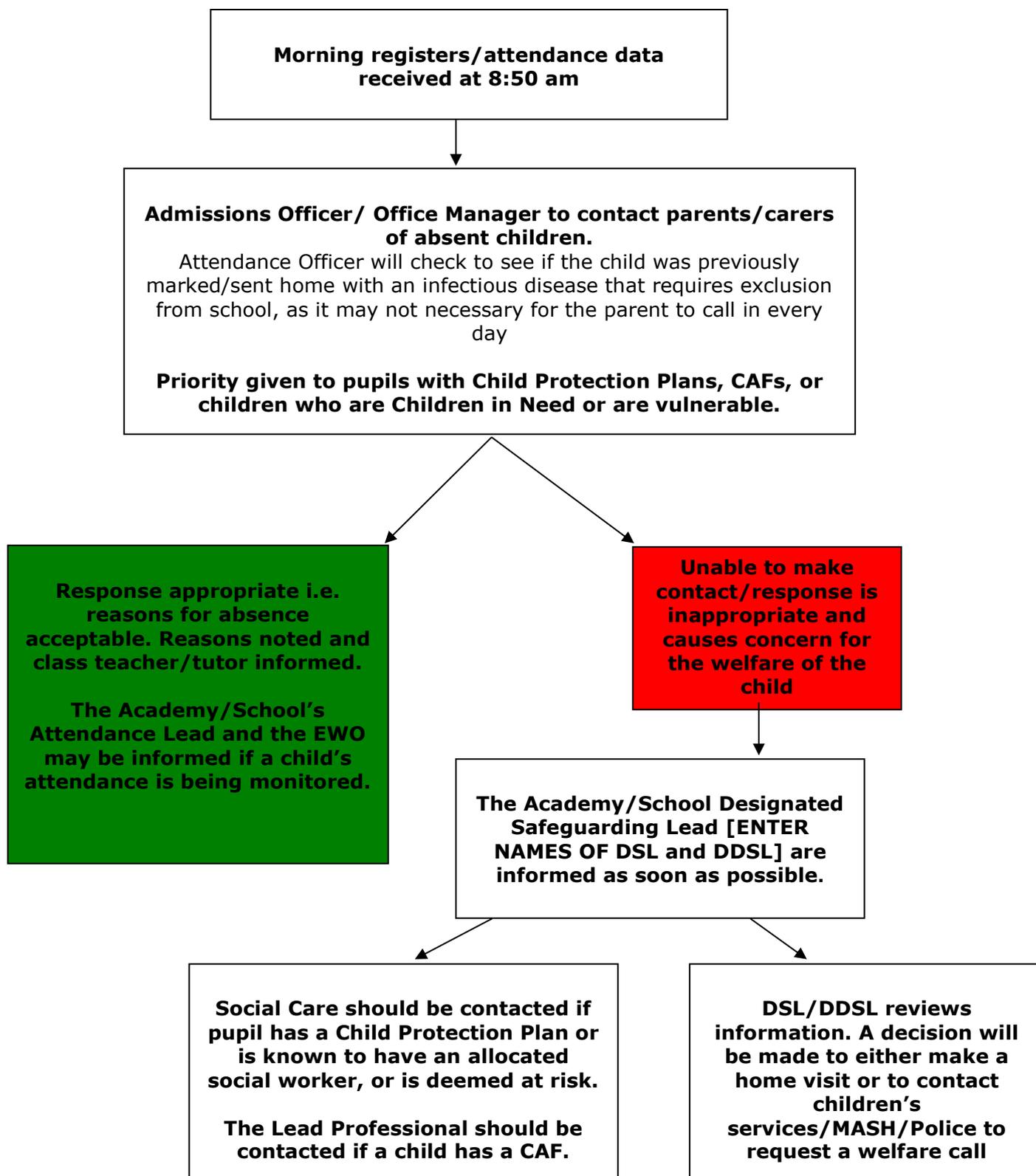
Parent/Carers must call the Academy/School on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 8.50am or as soon as practically possible.

If the Academy/School have not heard from the parent/carer by 9.30am, the Attendance Officer will check to see if the child was previously marked/sent home with an infectious disease that requires exclusion from school, as it may not be necessary for the parent to call in every day.

(Refer to [Guidance on infection control in schools and other childcare settings](#) for further information), if this is not the case then the First Day Calling procedure must be followed (Refer to flowchart below) to ensure that the Academy/School is aware of the child's whereabouts and that everyone in the household is safe.

## FIRST DAY CALLING –FLOWCHART

'First Day Calling' is important because school absence and safeguarding are closely linked. This practice not only encourages good attendance it also helps to monitor a pupil's wellbeing and is an alert to their safety.



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

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the Academy/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 Academy/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.

### **Lateness and punctuality**

All children must attend school on time, and be present in class registration to receive their mark for the session.

Parents/carers are expected to ensure that their child is in school by:

8.50am (morning registration) or 1.10pm (afternoon registration)

Any child arriving after these times, but before the registers are closed, will be recorded as arriving late.

Any child arriving after the registers are closed will be counted as unauthorised absence, unless there are extenuating circumstance.

(Refer to Appendix 1 for DfE Attendance Codes).

For Health & Safety reasons we must record every person who is present on the school premises. The late book is regularly monitored to alert the Principal/Headteacher's attention to persistent latecomers. The Principal/Headteacher will write to those parents/carers and invite them in for a meeting. The aim is to offer support and advice and to stress the importance of being at school on time. Repeated lateness has a negative impact on the child, the teacher and others in the class. It can impede children's social and emotional development as well as academic development.

### **Following up absence**

The Academy/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.

### **Communication/ Reporting to parents**

Parents/carers will be updated with their child's attendance annually in their written end of year report. The Academy/School will be in regular contact with

parents/carers should their child's attendance fall below the required time a child is expected to be in school.

Information on lateness, illness and absence are explained in the Academy/School brochure. This highlights the importance of being in school on time and notifying the Academy/School if their child is absent for any reason.

The importance of regular attendance and punctuality are also explained at induction meetings with new parents/carers.

Parents/Carers are also encouraged to share any worries or concerns that their child may have which may impact them not wanting to come to school.

### **Authorised and unauthorised absence**

Under DfE guidance, Principals/Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

**Authorised Absences** are mornings and/or afternoons away from school with good reasons which make non-attendance unavoidable, for example:

- Illness (absence for longer than a week may require a Doctor's letter)
- Hospital or special clinic appointments - for those operating during school hours only.
- Therapy sessions e.g. speech & language, physio, occupational etc. where appointments cannot be made outside school hours.
- Medical /dental appointments for emergencies only (not check-ups).
- Extenuating circumstances as deemed appropriate by the Principal/Headteacher and in accordance with DfE guidance.

All such appointments must be requested in writing, in advance, to the Principal/Headteacher.

Children must be "signed out" of school and "signed in" by Academy/School staff, on return from appointments with the time of arrival/departure logged.

**Unauthorised absences** are those which the school **does not consider reasonable** and no leave of absence has been given. Examples of this are:

- Keeping children off school for trivial reasons such as birthdays, outings as treats, shopping trips, tiredness after parties or holidays etc.
- Because it's raining, too hot, too cold.
- Looking after siblings
- Illness of parent
- Holidays/ family holidays during term time
- Truancy
- Minding the house

**No holidays are authorised during term time.** The Academy/School has a duty to ensure children are in school regularly and parents are legally obliged to ensure that their children are in school regularly.

A fixed penalty will be considered for parents/carers who take children out of school for holidays during term time. The penalty will be that deemed appropriate by the Governing Board.

For clarification, all leave during term time will be recorded as unauthorised absence. Extended absences due to pupil illness will require medical authentication.

### **Strategies for promoting attendance**

- Attendance Trophy – The class with the best attendance wins the weekly trophy in assembly
- Newsletter – Each class' attendance is recorded in the weekly newsletter and promoted
- 100% WOW Certificates sent to children each term

### **Attendance monitoring**

- The Attendance Officer monitors pupil absence on a daily basis
- Registers are marked twice a day, at 8.50am and 1.10pm
- The class teachers and office staff will log reasons for absence
- Regular attendance meetings are held between the Principal/Headteacher and attendance support
- Termly and annual absence data is monitored closely by attendance support
- Regular checks are made to identify children with less than 95% attendance, worrying patterns of absence etc

### **What we do when we are concerned about a child's absence**

- An initial letter of concern will be sent to parents/carers inviting them to discuss the problem in order to find ways to improve attendance
- Attendance support makes contact with parents to discuss concerns and ways of improving attendance. Brief notes are kept of outcomes of discussions
- Principal/Headteacher will hold attendance meetings with Parents/carers
- If after contacting parents/carers the child's absence continues to rise, we will consider involving an Education Welfare Officer

### **Fabricated or Induced illness**

All staff should be aware of what fabricated or induced illness (FII) is and the signs and symptoms to look out for, whilst this is a very rare condition, it should never be ignored.

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## **What is fabricated or induced illness?**

Fabricated or induced illness (FII) is a rare form of child abuse. It occurs when a parent or carer, usually the child's biological mother, exaggerated or deliberately causes symptoms of illness in the child. In fabricated or induced illness, the parent may present the child as ill when they are healthy, deliberately induce symptoms of illness, manipulate test results, or exaggerate or lie about symptoms.

## **Indicators of fabricated or induced illness**

Some of the indicators of fabricated or induced illness, include

- The medical history doesn't make sense
- Treatment is ineffective
- The symptoms disappear when the parent/carer isn't around
- They can be seen repeatedly by different professionals looking for different things

In all cases, the child's normal life is restricted. Cases of fabricated or induced illness are very complex. Where fabricated and induced illness is suspected, referrals should be made without alerting the child's parent/carer.

## **Roles and responsibilities**

### **The Governing Board**

The Governing Board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the Academy/School. This information is contained in the Principal/Headteachers Report that presented and discussed at the board meetings on a termly basis. It also holds the Principal/Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

### **The Principal/Headteacher**

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

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

### **The Attendance Officer**

The Attendance Officer:

- Monitors attendance data at the Academy/School and individual pupil level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the Principal/Headteacher

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- Arranges calls and meetings with parents/carers to discuss attendance issues

### **Class Teachers**

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.

### **Office/reception staff**

Office/reception staff are expected to take calls from parents/carers about absence and record it on the academy/school system.

## **PICKHURST ACADEMY ATTENDANCE POLICY PARENT INFORMATION**

### **Aims**

1. To create a warm, welcoming, secure atmosphere where children feel valued
2. To provide a stimulating and accessible curriculum
3. To provide a bright, clean and attractive environment
4. To encourage children to attend every day and arrive punctually
5. To develop a positive attitude to the importance of prompt arrival and regular attendance

### **Parents' Responsibilities**

Parents and carers are required to ensure that children of compulsory school age receive full-time education. This means that they are responsible for ensuring that children attend and stay at school unless alternative arrangements for their education are made. They are also responsible for informing the Academy/School of any absence on each day of absence. They should state the nature of the illness and when the child is expected to return to the Academy. When the child returns to the Academy/School, a brief letter or email should be sent informing the Academy/School of the reason for absence. If no reason for absence is provided, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

### **Objectives**

At the Academy/School, we recognise that regular and punctual attendance is absolutely vital if children are to make sustained progress. Using the Academy/School's computerised attendance system, children's attendance is carefully monitored by the Principal/ Headteacher, class teachers, office staff and attendance support.

Where a child's attendance gives cause for concern, the Academy/School will contact the parents. If the child's attendance does not improve, the Academy/School will write to the parents inviting them into school to discuss the issue. If a pattern of poor or non-attendance continues, the Academy/School may inform the Educational Welfare Officer and a formal referral may be made. The Educational Welfare Officer will then pursue the issue and make parents aware of their legal responsibilities.

### **First Day Call Procedure**

**If your child is not going to be in school please call the office on 0208 462 5867 or send an email to [office@pickhurst.com](mailto:office@pickhurst.com) Please do this before 8.50am on each day of their absence.**

If we have not heard from you by **9: 30am**, the Attendance Officer will contact you. If we are unable to contact you, we will start to call all the contact numbers that you have provided in order to gain an explanation for the absence.

If we still have not been able to ascertain where your child is, then we may make a home visit. However if we still have not been able to get a response, consideration will be given as to whether we report your child as missing to the police.

This procedure is to ensure that we know where your child is and that you are all safe.

## **Lateness**

Parents should ensure that their child is at school by 8.50am. Once the children are settled, the class teacher marks the registers. Any child not in the classroom for registration is marked as absent. Any child arriving after the register has been taken must report to the office to be signed in. Any child arriving between class registration and 9.20am is marked by the attendance officer as present but late. Any child arriving after 9.20am continues to be marked as absent for that session. It will be marked as authorised/unauthorised absence depending on the reason for late arrival and will require a letter of explanation.

If lateness persists then parents are invited into school to meet with the Principal or attendance support to discuss the issue.

- The Attendance Officer monitors pupil absence on a daily basis
- Registers are marked twice a day, at 8.50am and 1.10pm.
- The class teachers and office staff will log reasons for absence
- Regular attendance meetings are held between the Principal/Headteacher and attendance support
- Termly and annual absence data is monitored closely by attendance support
- Regular checks are made to identify children with less than 95% attendance, worrying patterns of absence etc.

## **What we do when we are concerned about a child's absence**

- An initial letter of concern will be sent to parents/carers inviting them to discuss the problem in order to find ways to improve attendance
- Attendance support makes contact with parents/carers to discuss concerns and ways of improving attendance. Brief notes are kept of outcomes of discussions
- Principal/Headteacher will hold attendance meetings with parents/carers
- Education Welfare Officer alerted and a referral made

<b>AUTHORISED ABSENCE</b>	<b>UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Illness of child</li> <li>▪ Medical/dental appointments</li> <li>▪ Therapy sessions (Speech &amp; Language, Physio)</li> <li>▪ Family bereavement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Minding the house</li> <li>▪ Looking after brothers/sisters</li> <li>▪ Shopping trips in school hours</li> <li>▪ Illness of parent</li> <li>▪ Day trips</li> <li>▪ Family holiday</li> </ul>

## **Holidays During Term Time**

Parents are not permitted to take holidays during term time, as children are then missing valuable education time.

Under Department for Education guidance a Principal/Headteacher may only grant leave of absence **in very exceptional circumstances**.

### **This does not include:**

- A Family Holiday;
- A surprise visit or one booked without your knowledge;
- Leave to visit relatives abroad;
- Holiday booked due to difficulties with shift work patterns or rotas.

Leave of absence during term time may be granted in the event of a **medical emergency only**. In this eventuality, details of flights or travel arrangements and when they were booked may be required before authorised absence is granted. This does not include a planned trip to coincide with cheaper flight times during term time for example, to visit a poorly relative.

For clarification, all leave during term time will be recorded as unauthorised absence and extended absences due to pupil illness will require medical authentication.

Should you need to discuss the implementation of this policy further, please contact the Academy/school.

## **Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed every four years by the Principal/Headteacher and approved by the Local Governing Board.

## **Useful Links and Policies**

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Gov.uk - [School attendance: guidance for schools](#)

Gov.uk - [Safeguarding children in whom illness is fabricated or induced](#)

### **Monitoring and Implementation**

	Name	Date
Policy written by	B Rutherford/Attendance Officer/Principal/Headteacher	20/05/18
Agreed by Committee	Local Governing Board	
Adopted by Governing Board	Local Governing Board	27/11/18
To be reviewed every four years		
Review by		
Review by Committee		
Adopted by Governing Board		

## 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
<b>Authorised absence</b>		
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

<b>I</b>	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
<b>M</b>	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
<b>T</b>	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
<b>Unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	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)
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
<b>U</b>	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>Y</b>	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
<b>Z</b>	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
<b>#</b>	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

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