



Woolmore
Primary School

ATTENDANCE POLICY

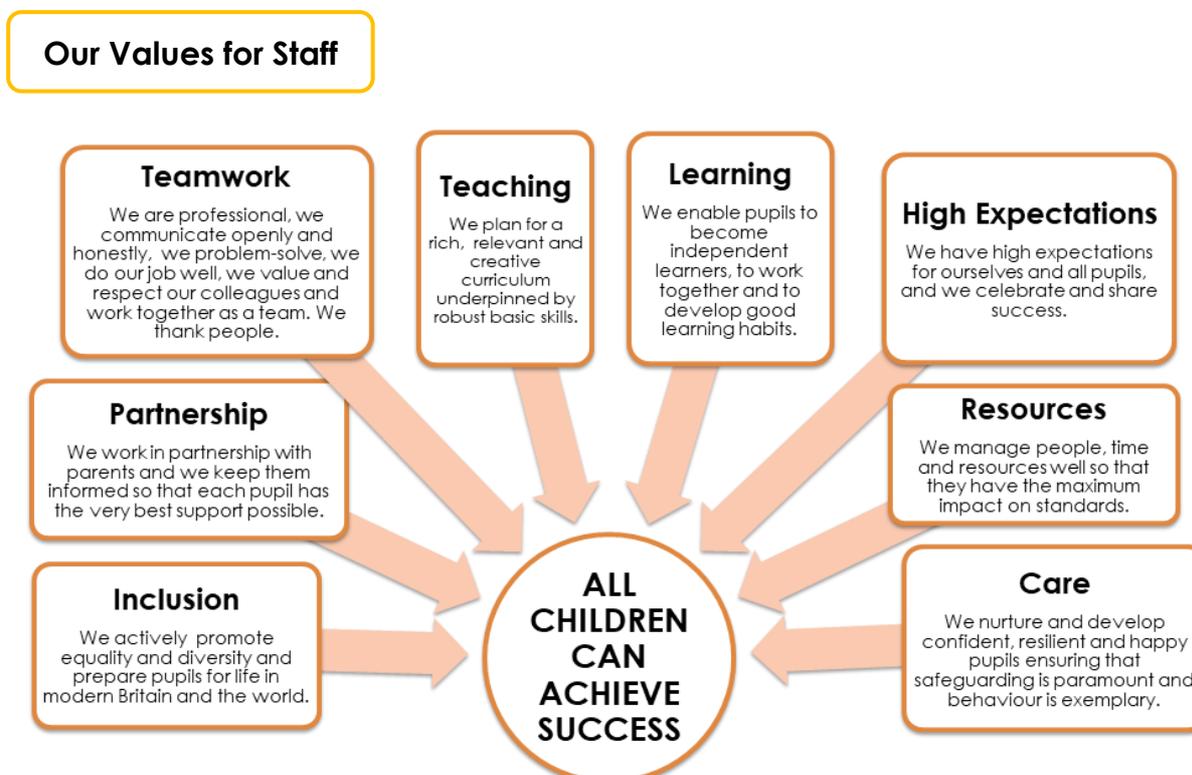
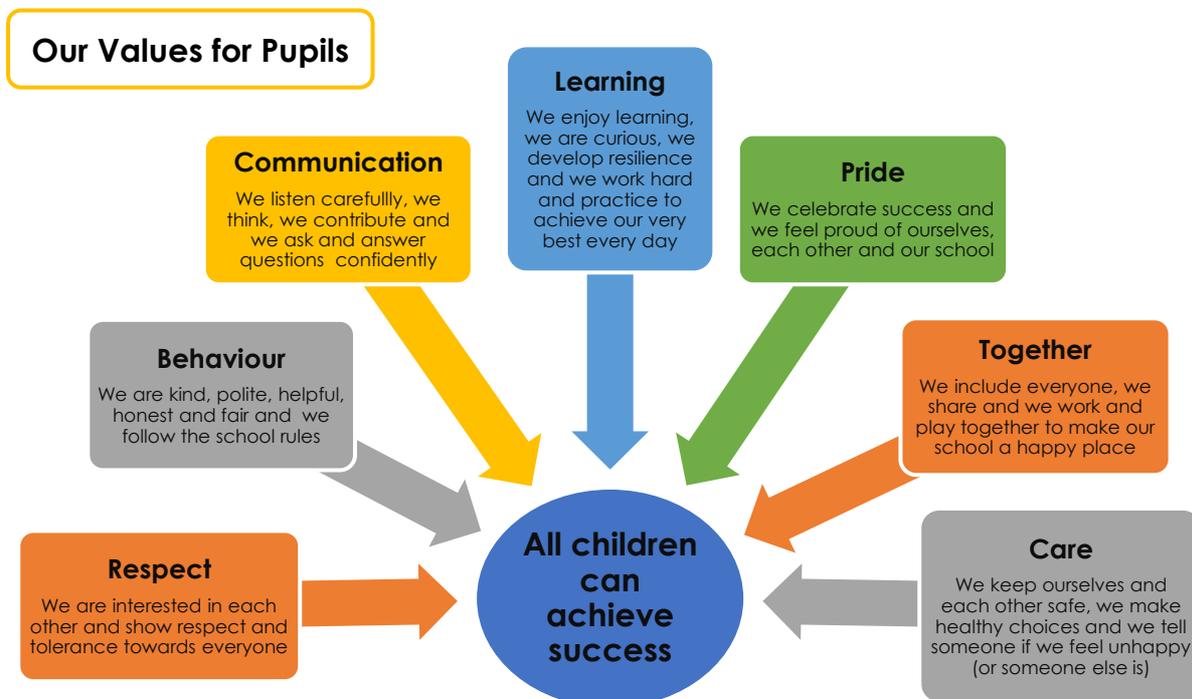
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Our School Values

It is vital that all adults who work at Woolmore read, understand, and can demonstrate full commitment to our School Values. We have three layers: for pupils, for staff and for leaders and governors.



Aims, introduction and background

- At Woolmore we recognise that positive behaviour and good attendance are essential in order to raise standards of pupil attainment and to give every child/young person the best educational experience possible.
- The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have.
- It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.
- Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly.
- This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

The DfE has produced guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities: [Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance) which became statutory on 19th August 2024. Our Attendance Policy reflects the key principles of that guidance.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>

This policy is written with the above guidance in mind and underpins our school ethos to:

- **Promote children's welfare and safeguarding**
- **Ensure every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled**
- **Ensure that pupils succeed whilst at school**
- **Ensure that pupils have access to the widest possible range of meaningful opportunities at school, and when they leave school.**

- This policy seeks to ensure that all parties involved in the practicalities of school attendance are aware and informed of attendance matters in school and to outline the school's commitment to attendance matters. It details the responsibilities of individuals and groups involved and the procedures in place to promote and monitor pupil attendance.
- Our policy aims to raise and maintain levels of attendance by:
 - Promoting a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure and valued.
 - Working closely with families and our partner agencies, including community organisations, to overcome any barriers to good attendance and provide support where required.
 - Raising awareness of the importance of good attendance and punctuality and the relationship that poor attendance may have to safeguarding concerns.
 - Ensuring that attendance is monitored effectively and reasons for absences are recorded promptly and consistently.

Promoting regular attendance

It is the rule of our school that pupils must attend every day unless the circumstances are deemed exceptional / unavoidable by the Headteacher.

- At Woolmore Primary School, we believe in developing good patterns of attendance and setting high expectations for attendance and punctuality for all our pupils from the outset.
- Good attendance is a central part of our school's vision, values, ethos, and day to day life.
- We recognise the connections between attendance, attainment, safeguarding, behaviour and wellbeing.
- Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is the responsibility of parents, carers, pupils and all members of school staff.

How we promote and incentivise good attendance

- Our Attendance Policy is accessible to leaders, staff, pupils and parents. We publish it on the website and ensure it is shared with parents alongside other important information when pupils join the school. All parents and carers are reminded of our policy the beginning of each school year and when its updated.
- **High Expectations** lie at the heart of our values for staff.
- **Being Ready** for learning is one of our three school rules. Punctuality is a key part of being Ready.
- **We work together** to ensure messages to families from all staff are consistent with our expectations.
- Attendance data is analysed daily and shared with SLT.
- **Vulnerable groups** are identified and prioritised for follow up by the Attendance Team and Family Support Team – working closely with the DSL.
- Attendance Team and the AWA work closely together – meeting families weekly
- Attendance expectations are shared with parents during admissions meetings and welcome meetings.
- Children take part in a daily count of their class – encouraging them to respectfully notice and celebrate when they are doing well as a class.
- We use assemblies as a time to celebrate improvements in attendance and teach children the importance of working hard to achieve it. We work hard to ensure a team approach.
- When children are old enough, we involve them in discussions about their attendance – alongside their parents.
- We hold **100% Attendance Weeks** each term when pupils who attend all week receive a small prize.

The Importance of good school attendance

- Improving attendance is everyone's responsibility
- Barriers to accessing education can be complex and often specific to individual pupils and families.
- We understand that the foundation of securing good attendance is that we provide a calm, orderly, safe and supportive environment where all pupils can achieve success.
- Our work is to acknowledge the specific barriers for individual children and families and to work at removing those barriers by building strong and trusting relationships, working together to put the right support in place.
- Our practise must include efforts in all areas; curriculum, behaviour, bullying, SEND, pastoral and mental health and well-being and effective use of resources and pupil premium.
- It is not the sole preserve of a single member of staff but a concerted effort across all teaching and non-teaching staff in school, our governing body, the LA and other local partners.

Expectations of our Governing Body

Our Governing Board understand that improving attendance requires constant focus and effective whole school approaches require ongoing support, guidance and challenge. Our Board has a responsibility to;

- Recognise the importance of good school attendance and ensure it is promoted in our vision, meetings and policies.
- Ensure there are high expectations of all leaders, staff, pupils and parents.
- Recognise that attendance should be prioritised in wider improvement strategies such as raising attainment, behaviour, SEND, well-being and safeguarding.
- Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- Work with the SLT to ensure our attendance management processes are delivered effectively and consistent and appropriate attendance support is provided for pupils who require it most by prioritising the staff and resources needed. This includes ensuring we engage with and work effectively with the local authority and wider local partners and services.
- Regularly review attendance data, discuss and challenge trends and help leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most.
- Regularly evaluate the effectiveness of our school's processes and improvement efforts to ensure they are meeting the needs of pupils and addressing the barriers to good attendance.
- Ensure school staff receive adequate training on attendance.
- Ensure high aspirations are maintained for all pupils and that processes and support is adapted to the individual needs of particular pupils.

School attendance linked to educational outcomes

- Pupils with the highest attainment at the end of KS2 and KS4 have higher rates of attendance over the Key Stage compared to those with the lowest attainment.
- At KS2 pupils not meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and maths had an overall absence rate of 4.7% compared to 3.5% among those meeting the expected standard.
- At KS4 pupils not achieving grade 9-4 in English and Maths and an overall absence rate of 8.8% compared to 5.2% among those achieving grade 4.
- We understand that for our most vulnerable pupils' regular attendance is also an important protective factor.
- Research has shown associations between regular absence from school and a number of extra-familial harms. This includes crime; 90% of young offenders had been persistently absent.

Working together to improve attendance

Successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance requires us to work collaboratively with families.

We work alongside families and other partner agencies to:

EXPECT

We aspire to a high standard of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all children *can*, and all children *want* to be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.

MONITOR

We take a rigorous and granular approach to analysing attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance at individual and cohort level and work together to resolve them.

LISTEN AND UNDERSTAND

When patterns are identified, we discuss with pupils and parents to listen and understand barriers and agree how we work together to solve them.

FACILITATE SUPPORT

We help pupils and parents access the support they need

FORMALISE SUPPORT

Where absence persists and voluntary support is not being engaged with, partners will work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is in place to enable families to respond. This may include formalising support through a parenting contract.

ENFORCE

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working we would enforce attendance through statutory intervention or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

Building a culture of good attendance

At Woolmore we recognise that good attendance is a learned behaviour. We expect all our children to develop good patterns of behaviour from the outset. In building a culture of good attendance we:

- Work to ensure good attendance alongside good behaviour as a core of our vision, values, ethos and day to day life
- Recognise the interplay between good attendance and wider school improvement efforts building it into strategies on attainment, behaviour, bullying, SEND support, supporting pupils with medical conditions, safeguarding, wellbeing and support for disadvantaged students
- Ensure that our SLT see attendance as a priority and identify a senior leader with overall responsibility for improving attendance in school. Responsibilities of this role include working with the Headteacher, other senior leaders and the attendance team to ensure there is a clear vision for improvement, evaluation and monitoring expectations and an oversight of data analysis and communicating messages to pupils and parents
- Make sure all staff know the importance of good attendance and are consistent in their communication with pupils and parents
- Make sure attendance support is appropriately resourced, including attendance support staff who can work with families, conduct home visits and work in partnership with school leaders and our LA AWA
- Ensure high expectations for attendance and punctuality of all pupils and communicate them regularly through a variety of channels. In doing so we help parents understand what is expected from them and why attendance is so important to their child's attainment, well-being and wider development. This includes clarity on the consequences of poor attendance
- Visibly demonstrate the benefits of good attendance throughout school life. This includes displays, assemblies or in registration periods. This can also be used sensitively and without discrimination to include praising and rewarding improvements in attendance at year group, class and individual level
- Recognise that attendance is never solved and it requires a continuous process of regular review, updating and strategies
- Recognise that children missing education (CME) can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, sexual abuse and child sexual and criminal exploitation.

Attendance and punctuality expectations

Expectations for Pupils

- Pupils start to be ready for learning from 8:50. The school gates are closed at 9.00am

Expectations for Parents

- Parents are expected to ensure their children arrive punctually between 8:50 and 9:00. The school gates close at 9:00 and every pupil arriving after this time will need to go through the main reception where their name is noted down, reason for lateness and a late slip given. Lateness is monitored and followed-up.

Start and close of school day

- 8:00 – 8.45 Breakfast Club

- 8:50 External school gates are opened by the HT and SLT. Key staff are expected in the playground to meet and greet our children. Bagels are also available in the playground for those that need / would like them.
- 8:50 Children begin to enter class and get ready for their day of learning
- 9:00 Gates close. Admission after 9:00 is through the office where our late children will be given a late slip.
- Afternoon registers are taken at the following times:
 - Early Years and Foundations Stage: 13:00
 - Years 1, 2, and 3: 12:50
 - Years 4, 5, and 6: 13:55
- The school day finishes at 3.30pm

Name and contact details of leaders responsible for strategic approach to attendance.

- Tracy Argent - Headteacher
- Hannah Williams – Deputy Head Teacher / DSWL / Inclusion Lead
- Lois McManus-Sykes – Office Manager / Attendance Lead
- The above colleagues are contactable through Woolmore.
- Sonia Rawlings – Local Authority Attendance Officer from the Behaviour and Attendance Support Service (BASS)

Information and contact details of the school staff who pupils and parents should contact about attendance on a day-to-day basis and for more detailed support on attendance

- First port of call is the main school office: 0207 987 2778. Our Reception Team will answer queries and questions and ensure information regarding absence is correctly responded to and appropriately recorded.
- Our **Attendance Office** is Lois Sykes. Lois is responsible for data input and the necessary preparation for data sharing and analysis daily. Lois is also part of the team who make the necessary daily follow up calls. The attendance officer will also dedicate time each week to analyse attendance data and make appropriate referrals to the AWA. This allows the AWA to use the time allocated to our school to meet directly with families each week rather than every other week.
- **The Family Support Team (FST)** work alongside the Attendance Officer in making the follow up calls and carrying out the important work of building relationships with families to remove barriers to good attendance. *Building strong relationships with our families, listening to understand barriers and working to remove them is integral to the work of all staff but particularly the FST. Our school values are at the heart of our work around attendance. We treat all pupils and parents with dignity and all staff are expected to model respectful relationships and to work to build a positive relationship between home and school that can be the foundation of good attendance. When we communicate with our parents, we discuss the link between attendance and attainment and wider well-being and challenge parental misconceptions about what good attendance looks like. We consider who is the best placed person in the school to work with and support the family and wherever possible we aim to keep that person consistent.*

Our processes for managing attendance

We follow up any absences to;

- Ascertain the reason
- Ensure the appropriate safeguarding action is taken
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not – considering all circumstances
- Identify the correct code to use before entering it on to the school's management information system which is used to download data for the school census.

A note on Nursery attendance

Nursery is non-statutory schooling. However, we expect high levels of attendance for nursery children as we believe that this not only gives them an excellent start to their education but also fosters good habits. It is very difficult for children to settle if they are not attending regularly. We aim to work closely with parents to ensure Nursery attendance is reflective of the expectations for the rest of the school.

Safeguarding and Attendance

- Woolmore Primary School recognises that attendance is a safeguarding issue. In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025, all staff must be aware of the school's safeguarding response to children who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions and/or for prolonged periods. Absence from school may be an indicator of abuse, neglect, exploitation, or other safeguarding concerns.
- As stated in KCSIE 2025:
“All staff should be aware of systems within their school or college which support safeguarding... This should include the safeguarding response to children who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions and/or prolonged periods.”
(KCSIE 2025, Part One, Paragraph 11)
- Staff must exercise professional curiosity and report any concerns about patterns of absence to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Attendance monitoring is a key part of our safeguarding practice and is embedded in our early help and intervention processes.
- We understand that sometimes there are reasons to be concerned about a child's welfare in relation to their attendance. For example, if the family have not been in contact with the school and despite our best efforts we have not been able to establish contact...

Our safeguarding response includes:

1. Call all emergency contacts
2. Try all methods of communication e.g. emails and SchoolPing being clear about our concerns and the required actions
3. AWA, FST, Office Manager and DSL to arrange a home visit
4. DSL to ensure any agency worker, including social workers, are contacted and made aware of the situation

5. A letter would be posted during the home visit sharing our concerns and asking for the family to contact school within a time frame
6. Notify the police and ask for a Welfare call to the family
7. A referral to children's care would also be completed
8. If absence continues beyond 20 days we would refer to CME.

Understanding types of absence

- Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning.
- Any pupil's absence or late arrival disrupts teaching routines and so may affect the learning of others in the same class.
- Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parental responsibility and allowing absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.
- Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parent), as either **authorised** or **unauthorised**. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required. Each half-day is known as a 'session'.
- **Authorised absences** are morning or afternoon sessions away from school for a genuine reason such as illness (although you may be asked to provide medical evidence for your child before this can be authorised), medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.
- **Unauthorised absences** are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been granted. This type of absence can lead to the school referring to the Local Authority for penalty notices and/or legal proceedings.
- **Unauthorised absence includes:** nb. this is not an exhaustive list
 - Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily e.g. because they had a late night or for non-infectious illness or injury that would not affect their ability to learn
 - Absences which have never been properly explained
 - Children who arrive at school after the close of registration are marked using a L This indicates that they are in school for safeguarding purposes and time of arrival is noted and reason for lateness.
 - Shopping trips
 - looking after other children or children accompanying siblings or parents to medical appointments
 - Their own or family birthdays
 - Holidays taken during term time without leave, not deemed 'for exceptional purposes' by the Headteacher
 - Day trips
 - Other leave of absence in term time which has not been agreed
 - Parent or carer unwell

Persistent and Severe Absenteeism (PA and SA)

- A pupil is defined by the Government as '**persistently absent**' when their attendance is 90% or below and '**severely absent**' when attendance is 50% or below, this can be authorised or unauthorised absence.
- Absence at these levels will cause considerable damage to any pupil's education and we need the full support and co-operation of parents to resolve this. For children who are **severely absent** we are likely to involve outside agencies to support the school and family to overcome barriers.

Absence procedures

If a child is absent from school the parent/carer must follow the following procedures:

- Contact the school on the first day of absence before the beginning of the school day, or as soon as possible thereafter.
- Contact the school on every further day of absence.
- Ensure that your child returns to school as soon as possible and you provide any medical evidence, if requested, to support the absence.

If your child is absent we will:

- Telephone you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you, however it is your responsibility to contact us
- Refer the matter to the Local Authority if attendance does not improve.
 - We monitor all absence, and the reasons that are given, thoroughly.

If absence continues we will:

- Invite you into school to discuss the situation with the Attendance Team
- Meet the family to agree actions to address any barriers to attendance
- Offer signposting support to other agencies or services if appropriate
- Refer the matter to the Local Authority if attendance does not improve – issue a warning for a FPN and if it continues to be a concern parents will be issued with a FPN.

Lateness

- Poor punctuality is not acceptable and can contribute to further absence. Good timekeeping is a vital life skill which will help children as they progress through their school life and out into the wider world.
- Pupils who arrive late disrupt lessons and, if a child misses the start of the day, they can feel unsettled and embarrassed, miss vital work and important messages from their class teacher.

See Annex A for summary tables of responsibilities for school attendance.

Tower Hamlets Behaviour & Attendance Support Service (BASS)

- Local Authority Attendance Welfare Advisors (AWAs) work strategically by offering support to schools, families, and other professionals to reduce persistent and severe absence and improve overall attendance for all pupils.
- Parents are expected to work with the school and Local Authority to address any attendance concerns. Parents should proactively engage with the support offered, aiming to resolve any problems together. This is nearly always successful.
- If difficulties cannot be resolved in this way, the school may consider more formal support and/or refer the child to the Local Authority.
- If attendance does not improve, legal action may be taken in the form of a Penalty Notice (see Annex B for the Tower Hamlets Code of Conduct for Penalty Notice Scheme) or prosecution in the Magistrates Court. Legal proceedings are designed to strengthen parental responsibilities and ensure improved attendance.

School attendance and the law

- By law all children of compulsory school age must receive an appropriate full-time education (Education Act 1996).
- Parents have a legal duty to ensure their child attends school regularly at the school at which they are registered.
- Parents may be recognised differently under education law, than under family law.
- Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 states that a 'parent', in relation to a child or young person, includes any person who is not a parent (from which can be inferred 'biological parent') but who has parental responsibility, or who has care of the child.
- A person typically has care of a child or young person if they are the person with whom the child lives, either full or part time and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their biological or legal relationship is with the child.
- Unauthorised absence may result in the school referring to the Local Authority for sanctions and/or legal proceedings.
- This may include issuing each parent with a Penalty Notice for £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days or referring the matter to the Magistrates Court whereby each parent may receive a fine up to £1000.
- Repeated or 'aggravated offences' could result in a fine of £2500 or up to 3 months in prison. If a parent is found guilty in court, they will receive a criminal conviction.

Holidays in term time

- **There is no entitlement in law for pupils to take time off during the term to go on holiday.**
- In addition, the Supreme Court has ruled that the definition of regular school attendance is "in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school".
- In LBTH the LA considers 96% attendance or above as regular school attendance.
- Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are "exceptional circumstances".
- [It is a rule of this school that a leave of absence shall not be granted in term time unless there are reasons considered to be exceptional by the headteacher.](#) It is a

rule of this school that a leave of absence shall not be granted in term time unless there are reasons considered to be exceptional by the headteacher.

- Only the headteacher or her designate (**not the local authority**) may authorise such a request. All applications for a leave of absence must be made in writing on the prescribed form provided by the school.
- Where a parent removes a child when the application for leave was refused or where no application was made to the school, a penalty notice may be requested by this school to the Local Authority.
- A Penalty Notice may be issued where there have been at least 10 consecutive sessions of unauthorised absence for the purpose of a holiday.

At Woolmore Primary School 'exceptional circumstances' will be interpreted as:

- Being of unique and significant emotional, educational or spiritual value to the child which outweighs the loss of teaching time (as determined by the headteacher).
- The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are events that are "rare, significant, unavoidable and short".
- By 'unavoidable' we mean an event that could not reasonably be scheduled at another time, outside of school term time.
- The headteacher will take into account the child's overall attendance figure when making a decision regarding the application for leave of absence.
- If leave of absence is authorised, the school will not provide work for children to do during their absence. Parents are advised to read with their children and encourage them to write a diary while they are away.

Deletion from roll

- Parents of pupils leaving Woolmore Primary School other than at the end of Year 6 are required to complete an 'In-year Admission/School transfer' form which can be obtained from the school office or TH Pupil Services.
- This provides the school and the LA with the following information: Child's name, class, current address, date of leaving, new home address, name of new school, address of new school.
- The school will need to complete a 'School History' section and sign the form before this can be submitted to Local Authority.
- This information is essential to ensure that we know the whereabouts and appropriately safeguard all of our pupils, even those who leave us.
- It is crucial that parents keep school updated with current addresses and contact details for key family members in case of emergency.
- **Every removal** from the school register must be notified to the Local Authority, as soon as the ground for removal has been met in relation to that pupil, and in any event no later than the time at which the pupil's name is removed from the register.

Absence data

- We use data to monitor, identify and support individual pupils or groups of pupils when their attendance needs to improve.
- Persistently and severely absent pupils are tracked and monitored carefully.
- We combine this with attainment data as good attendance leads to achieving well.
- We share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities, and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.

Using data to target attendance improvement efforts to the pupils or pupil cohorts who need it most

- We understand that poor attendance is habitual and so prevention and early intervention is crucial.
- The key to this is regular data analysis to identify and provide immediate additional support to pupils or cohorts that need it.
- In addition to this, we look at historic and emerging patterns across the school which enables us to develop strategies to address them.
- We monitor and analyse weekly attendance trends and deliver interventions in a targeted way to pupils and families.
- We go beyond headline attendance percentages and look at individual pupils, cohorts and groups (including punctuality) across the school to help us achieve our responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- We use the DFE VYED tool to enable data analysis for targeted groups including;
 - Children who are subject to a CIN or CP Plan
 - Historically vulnerable children
 - LAC and PLAC
 - Children with an EHCPs
 - Children on the SEND register
- This analysis enables us to provide regular attendance reports to class teachers which enables and informs discussions between pupils, families, teachers and leaders.
- We can identify pupils who need support and focus staff efforts on developing targeted actions for those cases.
- Our analysis of half-termly, termly and full year data enables us to identify trends. We look for patterns of certain codes, days of good and poor attendance.
- We monitor the impact of school wide attendance efforts and use the findings to inform future approaches.
- We are also able to provide data and reports to the governing body in supporting our challenging our approach.
- We communicate attendance percentages to parents/carers at Learning review meetings in the autumn term and on Annual Reports in July. T

Pupils with medical conditions and/or special educational needs/ disabilities

- We aim to be sensitive and avoid stigmatising pupils and parents and will talk to pupils and parents to understand how they feel and what they think would help improve their attendance as we develop individual approaches that meet individual pupil's specific needs.
- We understand that some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. This can include pupils who suffer from long term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities. We understand their right to an education is the same as any other pupil and therefore the attendance ambition for these pupils should be the same as they are for all our pupils. We are mindful of these specific barriers and are ready to put additional support in place to help all children access their full-time educational entitlement. This could include;
 - Having sensitive conversations and developing good support for pupils with physical or mental health conditions.
 - Making reasonable adjustments where a pupil has a disability or putting place an individual healthcare plan where needed.
 - We would always consider additional support form external partners including the local authority and or health services and in discussion with parents decide which is the most appropriate.
 - We work with parents to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND including where applicable ensuring the provision outlined in the pupil's EHCP is accessed.
 - We work to establish strategies to remove in-school barriers these pupils face, including support or reasonable adjustments for uniform, transport, routines, access to support in school and at lunchtimes.
 - Where appropriate we ensure joined up pastoral care is in place where needed – for example those affected by anxiety about school attendance, or those who are starting a new school following a permanent exclusion.
 - We ensure data is regularly monitored for these groups in Targeted Support Meetings with the LA so that additional support from other partners is accessed where necessary.
 - We understand that pupils with long term illnesses or other health needs may need additional support to continue their education, such as alternative provision provided by the local authority. In this instance we follow guidance in the document *Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions at School*.

Criteria for a formal referral to Tower Hamlets Attendance and Welfare Service (THAWS) – see Annex B Penalty Notice Scheme Protocol

Summary

- The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend school, on time, every day.
- All school staff and the Governing Board are committed to working with parents and pupils to promote good attendance as this is the best way to ensure the best outcomes for all our pupils.

Annex A: DfE guidance Summary table of responsibilities

All pupils

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Ensure their child attends every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies.</p> <p>Notify the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent (e.g. sickness).</p> <p>Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance.</p> <p>Book any medical appointments around the school day where possible.</p>	<p>Have a clear school attendance policy on the school website which all staff, pupils and parents understand.</p> <p>Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance.</p> <p>Accurately complete admission and attendance registers.</p> <p>Have robust daily processes to follow up absence.</p> <p>Regularly monitor data to identify patterns and trends and understand which pupils and pupil cohorts to focus on.</p> <p>Have a dedicated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance.</p>	<p>Take an active role in attendance improvement, support their school(s) to prioritise attendance, and work together with leaders to set whole school cultures.</p> <p>Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.</p> <p>Use data to understand patterns of attendance, compare with other local schools, identify areas of progress and where greater focus is needed.</p> <p>Ensure school staff receive training on attendance.</p>	<p>Have a strategic approach to improving attendance for the whole area and make it a key focus of all frontline council services.</p> <p>Have a School Attendance Support Team that works with all schools in their area to remove area-wide barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Provide each school with a named point of contact in the School Attendance Support Team who can support with queries and advice.</p> <p>Offer opportunities for all schools in the area to share effective practice</p>

Pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered to prevent the need for more formal support.</p>	<p>Proactively use data to identify pupils at risk of persistent absence.</p> <p>Work with each identified pupil and their parents to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-school barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Where out of school barriers are identified, signpost and support access to any required services in the first instance and act as lead practitioner if attendance is the only issue and/or the local threshold for formal early help is not met.</p> <p>If the issue persists, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the local authority and other partners. If a case meets the local threshold for formal early help/family support, this includes conducting the early help assessment and acting as the lead practitioner where all partners agree that the school is the best placed lead service. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the school, continue to work with the local authority and partners.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Hold a regular conversation with every school to identify, discuss and signpost or provide access to services for pupils who are persistently or severely absent or at risk of becoming so.</p> <p>Where there are out of school barriers, provide each identified pupil and their family with access to services they need in the first instance.</p> <p>If the issue persists, and there are multiple needs consider whether the threshold for early help is met and facilitate access where it is. Regardless, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the school and other partners. Provide the lead practitioner in cases where threshold is met and all partners agree that a local authority service is best placed to lead. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the local authority, continue to work with the school and partners.</p>

Severely absent pupils

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.</p>	<p>Continue support as for persistently absent pupils and:</p> <p>Agree a joint approach for all severely absent pupils with the local authority.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Continue support as for persistently absent pupils and: All services should make this group the top priority for support. This may include a whole family plan, consideration for an education, health and care plan, or alternative form of educational provision.</p> <p>Be especially conscious of any potential safeguarding issues, ensuring joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners. Where appropriate, this could include conducting a full children's social care assessment and building attendance into children in need and child protection plans</p>

Support for cohorts of pupils with lower attendance than their peers

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
Not applicable.	<p>Proactively use data to identify cohorts with, or at risk of, low attendance and develop strategies to support them.</p> <p>Work with other schools in the local area and the local authority to share effective practice where there are common barriers to attendance.</p>	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	Track local attendance data to prioritise support and unblock area wide attendance barriers where they impact numerous schools.

Support for pupils with medical conditions or SEND with poor attendance

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance. Proactively engage with the support offered.</p>	<p>Maintain the same ambition for attendance and work with pupils and parents to maximise attendance.</p> <p>Ensure join up with pastoral support and where required, put in place additional support and adjustments, such as an individual healthcare plan and if applicable, ensuring the provision outlined in the pupil's EHCP is accessed.</p> <p>Consider additional support from wider services and external partners, making timely referrals.</p> <p>Regularly monitor data for such groups, including at board and governing body meetings and with local authorities.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Work closely with relevant services and partners, for example special educational needs, educational psychologists, and mental health services, to ensure joined up support for families.</p> <p>Ensure suitable education, such as alternative provision, is arranged for children of compulsory school age who because of health reasons would not otherwise receive a suitable education.</p>

Support for pupils with a social worker

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance. Proactively engage with the support offered.</p>	<p>Know who the pupils who have, or who have had, a social worker are.</p> <p>Understand how the welfare, safeguarding, and child protection issues that they are experiencing, or have experienced, can have an impact on attendance – whilst maintaining a culture of high aspiration for the cohort.</p> <p>Provide additional academic support and make reasonable adjustments to help them, recognising that even when statutory social care intervention has ended, there can be a lasting impact on children's educational outcomes.</p> <p>Work in partnership with the local authority at a strategic and individual level, sharing data on attendance including, at an individual level, informing the pupil's social worker if there are any unexplained absences and if their name is to be deleted from the register.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Ensure that all Children's Social Care practitioners, understand the importance of good attendance for pupil's educational progress, for their welfare and their wider development – and understand their role in improving it.</p> <p>Through the work of Virtual School Heads, they should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake systemic monitoring and data sharing of the attendance of children with a social worker in their area: developing and implementing targeted cohort level interventions to improve attendance. • Provide advice, challenge and training to schools on how to promote and secure good attendance for children with a social worker. • Develop whole system approaches, with social care, to support the attendance of children in need.

Looked after and previously looked after children

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand the child's barriers to attendance – including the development of Personal Education Plans.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered.</p>	<p>Have high expectations for the cohort – with expert support and leadership provided by the designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after pupils.</p> <p>Work in partnership with the local authority Virtual School Head to develop and deliver high quality Personal Education Plans for looked-after children that support good attendance.</p> <p>Work directly with parents to develop good home-school links that support good attendance. For previously looked-after pupils this could include discussion on use of the Pupil Premium Plus funding managed by the school.</p>	<p>Designate a member of staff to have responsibility for the promotion of the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after pupils.</p> <p>Monitor and review attendance of the cohort and consider how school policies, including behaviour policies, are sensitive to their needs and support good attendance.</p>	<p>Promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children – doing everything possible to minimise disruption to education when a pupil enters care.</p> <p>(LA that looks after the child:) Appoint an expert Virtual School Head (VSH) – will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor, report on, and evaluate the education outcomes of looked after children, including their attendance, as if they attended a single school- whenever they live or are educated. • Ensure schools know when they have a pupil looked after by the authority on their role and that information is shared with the school on issues that may impact on their attendance. • Ensure that all looked-after pupils have high quality, up to date, effective Personal Education Plans developed in partnership with schools, social workers and carers – including, where necessary, clear interventions and use of pupil premium plus funding to support good attendance. • Provide expert advice and information on the education of previously looked-after pupils to schools and parents – including their attendance.

Monitoring

Parents:	Schools:	Governing bodies:	Local authorities:
<p>Schools regularly update parents on their child's attendance.</p> <p>(If parents feel the school and or local authority have not delivered what they are expected to they should discuss the case with the school and/or local authority's attendance support team.)</p>	<p>The school's Senior Attendance Champion will ensure all school based staff complete their attendance responsibilities in line with the school's policies and procedures.</p> <p>The governing board or academy trust will hold the headteacher or executive leadership to account for their delegated responsibilities and for compliance with regulatory and statutory requirements. They will review progress and provide challenge when required. The board will help school leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most and ensure that school staff receive adequate training on attendance.</p> <p>Ofsted will expect schools to do all they reasonably can to achieve the highest possible attendance as part of the behaviour and attitudes judgement. This includes, where attendance is not consistently at or above what could reasonably be expected, that schools have a strong understanding of the causes of absence (particularly for persistent and severe absence) and a clear strategy in place that takes account of those causes to improve attendance for all pupils.</p> <p>Ultimately, in cases where a school has not met expectations or statutory duties the Secretary of State can consider a complaint.</p>	<p>DfE Regions Group considers multi academy trusts' efforts on attendance as part of decision making.</p> <p>Ofsted considers governing bodies' efforts as part of inspections.</p>	<p>DfE Regions Group monitors local authority efforts as part of regular interaction.</p> <p>Ofsted may consider the local area partnership's approach to improving attendance of children and young people with SEND as part of the SEND Area Inspection, and the local authority's approach to improving attendance for children with a social worker through inspecting local authority children's services.</p> <p>Ultimately, in cases where a local authority has not met expectations or statutory duties the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman or the Secretary of State can consider a complaint.</p>

Annex B Fixed Penalty Notice Scheme Protocol – Code of Conduct

Children Services Directorate



BEHAVIOUR & ATTENDANCE SUPPORT SERVICE

Penalty Notice Scheme Protocol

May 2024 (will be implemented from 19.8.24 as required by the DfE)

1. Introduction:

- 1.1 The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 came into force on 1st September 2007. The DfE updated its Guidance Working Together to improve attendance which will become statutory on 19th August 2024.
- 1.2 This legislation is governed by Section 23 of the Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003 and Section 105 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.
- 1.3 These pieces of legislation empower designated Local Authority Officers, Head Teachers (& Deputy and Assistant Headteachers, authorised by their Headteacher) and the Police to issue Penalty Notices in cases of unauthorised absence from school.
- 1.4 In addition, Section 103 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 placed a duty on parents from 1st September 2007 to ensure that their child is not present during school hours in a public place when they are excluded.
- 1.5 Section 105 of the Act enables a Penalty Notice to be issued where an offence is committed under section 103. Parents are allowed a defence of reasonable justification under section 103(4).
- 1.6 Statutory Guidance on Education-Related Parenting Contracts, Parenting Orders and Penalty Notices in relation to the use of these measures is contained in 'School attendance: Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities' (DfE, February 2024) and in 'School attendance parental responsibility measures - Statutory guidance for local authorities, school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and the police' (DfE, January 2017) which outlines the Government's approach to school attendance and the use of parental responsibility measures.
- 1.7 The issuing of Penalty Notices must conform to all requirements of the Human Rights Act and Equalities.
- 1.8 The LA has the prime responsibility for developing the protocol within which all partners named in the Acts will operate.
- 1.9 The purpose of this protocol is to ensure that powers are applied consistently and fairly in accordance with Tower Hamlets Inclusion and Equalities policies to support children and young people in mainstream education and ensure that no

individuals/groups within the community are either treated more favourably or unfairly discriminated against compared to any other individual/groups.

- 1.10 LBTH considers 96% or above as regular attendance. Hence will only consider administering the issuing of Penalty Notice if the overall attendance below 96%.

2. The Legal Requirements related to School Attendance:

- 2.1 It is required that the Penalty Notice Scheme Protocol is detailed to the School Governing Body so that they are fully aware of it. The use of Penalty Notices must also be detailed in the school prospectus or notification sent to all parents/carers so that they are fully informed and aware of it.
- 2.2 Regular and punctual attendance at school is both a legal requirement and essential for pupils to obtain the maximum benefit from their educational opportunities.
- 2.3 In law an offence occurs under section 444 (1) of the 1996 Education Act, if a parent/carer fails to secure a child's attendance at a school at which the child is a registered pupil and that absence is not authorised by the school.
- 2.4 When prosecution is undertaken in the Magistrates Court the sentencing options available to Magistrates upon conviction of a parent, are a fine, conditional discharge, absolute discharge, a parenting order, or in some cases a combination of the options listed.
- 2.5 Penalty Notices supplement the existing sanctions currently available under Section 444 (1) of the 1996 Education Act.
- 2.6 Penalty Notices are not meant to replace current practice but to add another option to Schools and the LA to secure regular and punctual attendance. The LA will only administer the issuing of FPN if the overall attendance is below 96%.
- 2.7 In Tower Hamlets, the Behaviour & Attendance & Support Service (THBASS) undertakes this responsibility on behalf of the LA.

3. Possible Benefits offered by Penalty Notices

There are a number of possible advantages and benefits offered by the use of Penalty Notices:

- 3.1 Speed and efficiency in dealing with emergent patterns of poor attendance and punctuality and lack of cooperation and engagement from the parent/carer(s);
- 3.2 Sending a very clear message to parents/carers regarding the importance of regular school attendance and punctuality and the immediacy with which action can be taken to address it.
- 3.3 Emphasising the need for schools to address (i) poor attendance and punctuality, and (ii) lack of cooperation and engagement from parents/carers.
- 3.4 Offering another stage of intervention as part of the tiered 'levels of intervention' approach to addressing school non-attendance and punctuality and leading to more effective use of the resources and powers available to schools and the THBASS;
- 3.5 Establishing greater parity and equality in terms of responses to challenging casework where parents/carers fail to cooperate and work in partnership to re-engage children with the education system.

4. Criteria where a Penalty Notice may be considered:

A Penalty Notice may only be issued in cases of unauthorised absence or lateness or where parents/carers fail to ensure that their child is not in a public place during the first five days of exclusion from school.

The issue of a Penalty Notice may be considered appropriate in any of the following circumstances:

- 4.1 In instances of the deliberate taking of unauthorised leave/holidays in term time, where it can be clearly demonstrated that the parent/carer understood that permission had not/would not be given and where this has created a period of unauthorised absence of 10 sessions or more.

- 4.2 Where parents/carers fail to attend without reasonable cause LA led In-School Attendance Panels, to which they have been invited to discuss their child's unauthorised absences and/or lateness.
- 4.3 In cases of pupils identified as having Persistent Absence i.e., attendance of 90% or less (as defined by DfE from 1.9.15 onwards) over a period of a school term with 10 or more unauthorised sessions (half-days) of absence and with substantial evidence of failure on the part of the parent/carer to work in cooperation and partnership to address and improve the situation.
- 4.4 In cases of persistent late arrival at school (10 minutes after the attendance register has closed) with 10 avoidable late marks or more over the period of 10 school week period and after normal school procedures and sanctions have been followed and applied. The journey involved and particular issues such as adverse weather conditions and disruptions to transport should be taken account of as necessary.
- 4.5 Where there is a combination of unauthorised absence and avoidable lateness (10 minutes after the attendance register has closed) amounting to 10 sessions or more over the period of 10 school week period.
- 4.6 Where parents/carers fail to ensure that their child is not in a public place during the first five days of exclusion from school without reasonable justification.

5. Circumstances for issuing Penalty Notices:

To ensure consistent and fair delivery of Penalty Notices, the following criteria for their use shall apply:

- 5.1 Penalty Notices are issued on an individual child per parent/carer basis. Where families have more than 1 child who fits the criteria, multiple issuing of Penalty Notices may occur – 2 parents/carers who have 3 children who fit the criteria will therefore be liable to receiving 3 Penalty Notices each. In these circumstances issuing should be subject to careful consideration and co-ordination.
- 5.2 Other than in those specific circumstances, detailed in point 4.1 related to (i) the taking of unauthorised leave/holidays in term time, and in point 4.6 (ii) where parents/carers fail to ensure that their child is not in a public place during the first five days of exclusion from school without reasonable justification, each liable parent/carer shall receive a formal Notice To Improve Letter of the possibility of a Penalty Notice being issued.

- 5.3 Schools and their Attendance & Welfare Advisor / Attendance Support Provider must scrutinise every aspect of a pupil's case in preparation for consideration for the issue of a Penalty Notice. This must include discussions with and any other agencies and professionals who have knowledge of or involvement with the family.
- 5.4 There shall be no restriction on the number of times a parent/carer may be issued with formal Notice to Improve letter of a possible Penalty Notice.
- 5.5 Reasonable justification for a pupil to be present during school hours in a public place during the first five days of exclusion includes: the pupil having a pre-arranged medical appointment or a medical emergency requiring immediate attention; and, there being a pressing need for the parent/carer to seek medical help and it being inappropriate to leave the pupil alone in the home unattended and it not being possible to make alternative arrangements for the pupil such as leaving him/her with a relative or friend .

6. Consideration of circumstances in which a Penalty Notice may be issued

- 6.1 When considering whether to issue a Penalty Notice attention should be given to the issues of whether it is likely to be effective in helping to re-engage and improve the attendance and punctuality of the child/young person at school, and whether there is substantive evidence of non-cooperation and/or collusion on the part of the parents/carers that justify its use.
- 6.2 Full consideration must be given to the circumstances affecting the child/young person and their family and the reasons given for the non- attendance and poor punctuality.
- 6.3 Recognition of the family's financial/material living conditions and whether serving a Penalty Notice would affect their safety and wellbeing and put them at risk of severe adversity and hardship.
- 6.4 Direct liaison must also be undertaken with the key worker where the child/young person is designated as vulnerable i.e., the subject of a Child Protection Plan, is a Child in Need, is a Child in Public Care, has a Statement of Special Educational Need, is a Young Carer, has been affected by Domestic Violence or is Privately Fostered.

7. Administration of the Penalty Notice Scheme:

The LA will administer the Penalty Notice Scheme and will issue all Penalty Notices to ensure:

- 7.1 Consistent and equitable delivery of the Penalty Notices.
- 7.2 Ensure consistent administration and monitoring of the system.
- 7.3 Avoid duplication.
- 7.4 Schools will not be burdened with excessive administration.
- 7.5 It will prevent relationships between schools and families being unnecessarily strained.
- 7.6 Penalty Notices will only be issued by post/email and never as an on-the-spot action.

8. Requirement on schools to notify parents/carers of the LBTH Children and Culture Directorate Penalty Notice Scheme Protocol

The Statutory Guidance related to Penalty Notices requires that a school's Governing Body formally notify all parents/carers of pupils at the school about the Penalty Notice Scheme.

- 8.1 A letter (**Appendix 2**) is sent to all parents/carers by the school signed by the Headteacher.
- 8.2 The Information Leaflet for Parents on the Penalty Notice Scheme (**Appendix 3**) should also be sent to all parents/carers together with the letter from the Headteacher.

9. Procedure

When a school is concerned about the unauthorised absence or lateness of a pupil then the normal procedures within school that would usually be followed should be initiated. If the concern continues, then the school can initiate the Penalty Notice procedures.

- 9.1 The school formally refers the pupil to Tower Hamlets Behaviour & Attendance Support Service (THBASS) and all relevant information must be supplied on the THAWS 1 Attendance Referral Form in the specified manner (**Appendix 4**)
- 9.2 The referral of a pupil with a view to a Penalty Notice being issued must not adversely affect any other ongoing strategies already in place to improve school attendance and punctuality.
- 9.3 In those specific circumstances related to (i) the taking of 10 sessions or more of unauthorised leave/holidays in term time where it can be clearly demonstrated that the parent/carer understood that permission had not/would not be given, and (ii) where parents fail to ensure that their child is not in a public place during the first five days of exclusion from school without reasonable justification, the pupil should be referred immediately to the Attendance & Welfare Service for issue of the Penalty Notice.

10. The Role of the LA/BASS in issuing Penalty Notices:

Upon receipt of an appropriately completed THAWS 1 Attendance Referral Form:

- 10.1 The THBASS will act upon all referrals within 10 school days of receipt of the referral and where all criteria are met.
- 10.2 Penalty Notices will be issued and sent by 1st class post/email where the criteria for doing so are met (**Appendix 6**).
- 10.3 Where a Penalty Notice is issued and attendance improves, the LA is still expected to prosecute the parent/carer if the Penalty Notice remains unpaid (**Appendix 7**).
- 10.4 When a Penalty Notice is issued and paid within the timescales identified earlier but attendance levels do not improve, the Penalty Notice cannot be used as evidence in any subsequent prosecution of parents/carers under S.444 of the Education Act 1996.

11. Criteria for withdrawing Penalty Notices:

- 11.1 The Penalty Notice was issued to the wrong person.
- 11.2 The Penalty Notice was issued outside the agreed criteria.
- 11.3 If parent/s provide evidence to the LA which confirms the unauthorised holiday was taken under emergency circumstances, for example a close relative has died, and tickets were booked thereafter, and relevant evidence provided. Or if the family is visiting a seriously ill and close relative who later died before the family return back to the UK and evidence is provided then the Local Authority will not proceed.

12. Payment of Penalty Notices:

- 12.1 Arrangements for payment will be included on the Penalty Notice.
- 12.2 Payment of a Penalty Notice within the established time period discharges the parent/carer of liability for the period of absence/lateness for which the Penalty Notice was issued.
- 12.3 Once the Penalty Notice has been paid the parent/carer cannot subsequently be prosecuted under other enforcement powers for the period covered by the Penalty Notice.
- 12.4 The cost of the Penalty Notice is £80 payable within 21 days.
- 12.5 If the Penalty Notice is not paid within 21 days, then the cost increases to £160 which must be paid within a further 7 days i.e., by 28 days after the original date of issue.
- 12.6 Where it is deemed appropriate to issue a second penalty notice to the same parent for the same pupil within 3 years of the first notice, the second notice is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.
- 12.7 A third penalty notice must not be issued within a 3-year period. Therefore, in cases where the threshold is met for a third (or subsequent) times within those 3 years, a penalty notice cannot be issued, and alternative action should be taken instead. This will often include considering prosecution but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions. In these cases, once 3 years has elapsed since the first penalty notice was issued to the parent a further penalty

notice can be issued if appropriate, but in most cases, it will not be the most effective tool for changing what may have now become an entrenched pattern of behaviour.

- 12.8 Local authorities must ensure their existing processes record where a penalty notice has been issued to an individual parent in respect of an individual pupils. They will also need to retain records for at least 3 years from the date of issuing any penalty notice in order for the escalation procedures to be followed.
- 12.9 If the Penalty Notice is not paid then the parent/carer will be summoned to appear before the Thames Magistrates Court, under section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996, 'failure of a child to attend school regularly'.
- 12.10 The THBASS retains any revenue from Penalty Notices to cover administration and enforcement costs (collection and prosecution in the event of non-payment).

13. Non-payment of Penalty Notices:

- 13.1 Non-payment of a Penalty Notice will result in the withdrawal of the Notice and will trigger the prosecution process under the provisions of Section 444(1) of the 1996 Education Act.

14. Policy and Publicity:

- 14.1 The LA will include information on the use of Penalty Notices and other initiatives to improve school attendance and punctuality in promotional/public information material.
- 14.2 When the Tower Hamlets Penalty Notice Scheme is adopted by school, the school should include details of the Scheme in their Attendance Policy, and this should be brought to the attention of all parents/carers.

15. Reporting and Reviewing:

15.1 Monitoring of the operation of the Penalty Notice Scheme will be reported to the Director for Education in the LA on a regular basis and an annual report produced at the end of each academic year detailing the development and progress of the scheme.

16. Appeals

16.1 There is no right of appeal identified within the guidance pertaining to 'School Attendance parental responsibility measures – statutory guidance for local authorities, school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and the police' (DfE, January 2017).

16.2 In those specific circumstances related to (i) the taking of 10 sessions or more of unauthorised leave/holidays in term time where it can be clearly demonstrated that the parent/carer understood that permission had not/would not be given, and (ii) where parents fail to ensure that their child is not in a public place during the first five days of exclusion from school without reasonable justification, the pupil should be referred immediately to the Tower Hamlets Behaviour & Attendance Support Service (THBASS) for issue of the Penalty Notice.

16.3 In relation to the other criteria no Penalty Notices can be issued until parents/carers have received a warning letter (Notice to Improve) from the school/allocated Attendance & Welfare Adviser (AWA) for the school warning of the possibility of such a Notice being issued unless parents/carers show improvements in their child's attendance levels and punctuality. If a parent/carer disagrees with the school over this matter, they should put their concerns and objections in writing to the school within 10 school days of the date of issue of the warning letter (Notice to Improve).

16.4 Similarly, if a parent/carer receives the Penalty Notice and does not agree with the conditions under which it has been issued, they may write to identify their concerns, and this must be received within 14 days of the issue of the Penalty Notice. No correspondence after this point will be entered into and the parent/carer must pay the Penalty Notice or face the possibility of proceedings for non-payment in the Magistrates Court for failure to ensure regular and punctual attendance at school.

16.5 All such correspondence should be addressed to the:

Attendance Legal Manager
Tower Hamlets Behaviour & Attendance Support Service
Tower Hamlets Town Hall
160 Whitechapel Road
London E1 1BJ