



# **GOVERNORS OF STAR PRIMARY SCHOOL**

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

### **School Mission Statement:**

*At Star Primary School we believe that everyone is equally loved and accepted.*

*Acknowledging the diversity of our community, we...*

- *Provide a broad and balance curriculum encouraging every child to take the opportunity to achieve their full potential;*
- *Nurture positive home, school and community relationships;*
- *Promote tolerance and respect for all people and the world we live in.*

By order of the Governing Body of Star Primary School

(Signed) \_\_\_\_\_ Dated \_\_\_\_\_  
(Head Teacher)

(Signed) \_\_\_\_\_ Dated \_\_\_\_\_  
(Governor of Safeguarding Group)

**Policy Date: December 2016    Review Date: December 2017**

## **Attendance Policy**

*Star Primary School is committed to providing each pupil with a full and effective education. For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children in the school. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents/ carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.*

*School attendance is subject to various Education laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education. Star Primary follows the general guidance outlined by Newham council regarding and relevant publications by the DfE such as the DfE School Attendance guidance November 2016.*

*Each year the school will examine its attendance figures and set attendance/absence targets. The school will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals. This policy will contain within it the procedures that the school will use to meet its attendance targets*

*Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring your child's regular and punctual attendance at school is **your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.** The school monitors attendance and punctuality on a weekly basis. All absence other than sickness has to be authorised by the Headteacher or Governing Body.*

### **Aim**

*This policy aims to improve pupils' attendance at school and to ensure that absence from school only occurs when pupils have a genuine reason.*

*This policy aims to help parents understand the importance of regular school attendance to pupil's educational success and seeks to gain the support of parents in its implementation.*

### **Legislative Framework**

*Parent/guardian, schools and the Local Authority have legal responsibilities in ensuring that children attend school.*

*Parent/guardians of children of compulsory school age must ensure that their children receive an efficient and full-time education, either at school or otherwise (Education Act 1944 S.36).*

*Schools must maintain an attendance register in which each pupil is marked present or absent at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session (Pupils' Registration Regulation 1956).*

*Schools must publish attendance data showing the number of unauthorised absences in each term of the preceding school year, expressed a percentage of the total number of possible attendances that term (The Education (Pupils' Attendance Records) Regulations 1991).*

### **Attendance Procedure**

*Procedures in this policy take in to consideration statutory and non-statutory guidance from the Department for Education, (DfE) and LA.*

#### **Daily/Weekly Attendance Procedure**

- If your child is going to be absent from school, the parent/guardian must ring school before 9:30am to inform school of the reason for the absence.*
- At 9.30am school registers are checked for any absences for which we have no information. Children on our vulnerable list will be checked first as priority and any concerns reported to the Child Safeguarding Officer and teacher as appropriate.*

- If the school has not heard from the parent/ guardian regarding reasons for absence a phone call will be made. A text message will be sent if there is no reply.
- If a pupil has been absent and school have not been able to find out any reason for absence from the parent/ guardian, a home visit will be made, at least within three days, sooner if there are concerns.
- If your child's attendance falls below 95%, you will be required to bring in medical proof of any absence, eg: photocopy of any prescription or any other form of medication.

### **Monitoring Attendance**

As a school we monitor all areas of attendance and are required to provide the DfE and Education Social Work Service with our attendance data.

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/ 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 given. This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Children who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend, it is not appropriate to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually make things worse.

### **First Day Absence**

If children are absent you should contact the school using the automated service, before 9.30am to report their absence. It helps greatly if the school is informed by telephone why your child is absent if they are going to be off for more than one or two days.

If we have not received a telephone call by 9.30am the school will call parents/ guardians to find out the reason for absence. If parents cannot be contacted, a text message will be sent asking them to contact the school.

Whenever possible hospital/ doctors appointments should be arranged outside school hours. If this is impossible, children should be collected and returned to the School Office. We need to know in advance if your child is attending an appointment of any kind.

Appointment cards must be brought to the school office and a copy will be retained and placed in the school's medical file.

If your child's attendance falls below 95%, you will be required to bring in medical proof of any absence, e.g.: photocopy of any prescription or any other form of medication.

### **Medicines**

If your child is well enough to attend school, but is still taking medication, the school will administer the

medication with your written consent. You need to come and speak to the school's registered First Aider and fill in a consent form.

### **Third Day Absence**

If your children remain absent after 3 days without an explanation the school will attempt to contact you by telephone. If we cannot contact you the school will telephone other family members listed on the contact sheet to establish the reason for absence. If contact still hasn't been made, a home visit will be made by the Attendance Officer. If no one is home, a note will be left asking that you contact the school.

### **Continuing Absence**

The school will also post a letter to your home address requesting that you contact us immediately.

### **Ten Day's Absence**

Any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days will be notified to the Local Authority, by submitting a referral to the school's locality Early Intervention Attendance Advisory Team or the Children Missing in Education Officer. This is a legal requirement. The school will include details of the action that they have taken.

### **Leave of absence in term time**

Absence for anything other than through illness or medical reasons during term time is actively discouraged.

**There is no automatic entitlement in law to time off in school time to go on holiday. Star Primary School follows Newham guideline's in this respect and any holidays taken in term time are potentially subject to a Penalty Notice.**

Parents requesting time out of school for their child during term time should obtain a 'Leave of absence' request form from the school office before booking a family holiday.

The DfE has published amendments to the Pupil Registration Regulations which came into force from September 2013 and relate to Holidays in Term Time, Penalty Notices and Deletions from the school register. Schools no longer have the freedom to allow parents to take their children out of school for up to ten days in term time. Only in exceptional circumstances can you write to the headteacher and ask to take your child out of school.

The Head Teacher will define 'exceptional circumstances' and also determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted. The head will consider any application carefully and look at:

- The reasons why you need to take your child out of school
- The effect on your child's education
- The number of days your child will be away
- Your child's attendance record.

If he or she agrees, the head will tell you when your child must be back in school.

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised. Periods of unauthorised absence are required to be reported to the Governors and Department for Education. In addition an Attendance Lead, from the Early Intervention Team will investigate very low attendance or repeated unauthorised absence which may result in sanctions such as warning letters, attendance at a School Attendance Consultative Group and prosecution in Magistrates Court resulting in a fine or imprisonment and the loss of your child's place in school after a certain period.

## **Penalty Notices**

### **Penalty Notice: Newham Council will fine parents for the following reasons:**

*If your child's attendance falls below 90% in any half term period without acceptable explanation for absence.*

*If you take your child on holiday during term-time without authorisation by the school.*

*If your child is absent during SAT's examination periods.*

*If you delay your return from an extended term-time holiday without school agreement.*

*If your child arrives at school after the registers have been closed more than 10 times.*

*If you fail to make arrangements to ensure that your child is not in a public place during the first five days of an exclusion from school, without a justifiable reason.*

*Failure to return your child on the agreed date could result in a penalty fine of £60 (per parent, per child) being issued and your child losing their place at school. Parents must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days.*

## **Lateness**

*Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons, can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage absence.*

*The school day starts at **8.55am** and we expect your child to be in the playground **before 8.50am** to ensure they are on time. In the Nursery if children attend for a three hour session they will start at 8.25am. If your child is late, they will not be able to enter their class via the playground as the gates are locked for security reasons at **9.00am** promptly. Your child will need to enter the school using the main entrance in Hilda Road and will be given a late mark.*

*If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with the school's Attendance Officer to resolve the problem, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.*

## **Late collection after school**

*School finishes at **3.05pm (Reception and KS1)**, **3.10pm (KS2)** and children should be collected promptly. Children in the Morning Nursery go home at 11:25am or at 3.10pm/ 3.40pm if attending a three hour session in the afternoon. Children in KS2 remain in the playground until **3.20pm**. Nursery and KS1 children are kept in their classrooms awaiting collection by parents/carers. If children have not been collected, they are then brought to the late desk in front of the office where a member of staff is on duty. We will telephone you to ascertain why your child has not been collected on time. A record of children collected late after school is maintained. If your child is not collected from the Late Desk by **3.45pm** (or by 12pm for morning Nursery/ 3:45pm/ 4:15pm for afternoon Nursery) then they will attend 6 O'Clock Club (or be returned to the Nursery), and you will be charged the daily fee of £8 for this service when you collect your child.*

*We recognise that sometimes there are genuine reasons for late collection, however if your child is collected late on a regular basis the following action will be taken:*

- *After five late collections a letter will be sent by the Attendance Officer*
- *After ten late collections a letter will be sent by the Head Teacher*
- *Any further late collection will result in an appointment with the Headteacher*
- *Persistent, continued late collection may result in a referral to Social Services*
- *Children not collected by **5.30pm** may be taken to the police station/ Social Services*

## **Late collection following after school clubs**

*After school clubs finish at **4.15pm** and children should be collected promptly. Children will be supervised until **4.45pm**. The gates are locked for security reasons. Children will attend 6 O'Clock Club and you will be charged the daily fee of £8 for this service when you collect your child. We will telephone you to ascertain why your child has not been collected on time. A record of children collected late after*

school is maintained. We recognise that sometimes there are genuine reasons for late collection, however if your child is collected late on a regular basis the following action will be taken:

- After five late collections a letter will be sent by the Club Leader, and your child will lose his or her place.
- Children not collected by **5.30pm** may be taken to the police station/ Social Services

**Those people responsible for attendance matters in this school are:**

*Mrs Lisle Von Burchenroder – Head Teacher*

*Mrs Michele Spencer/Laura Matthews – Attendance Lead*

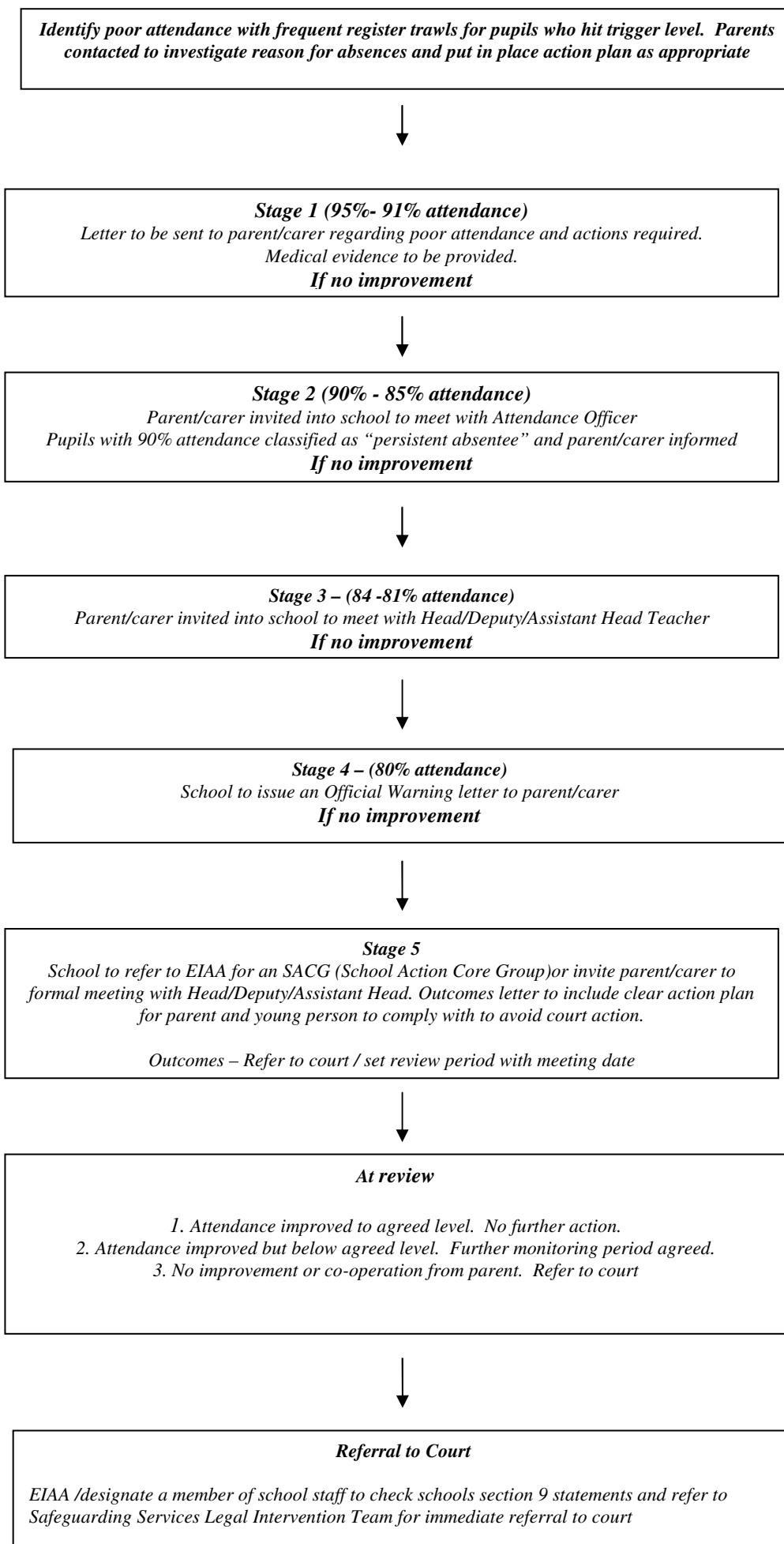
*Ms Marie Tovey & Baneen Abbas – Attendance Officers*

*Maherra Hussain - Attendance Management Service (for advice & referrals)*

*Mr Patrick Ackerson – Attendance Lead, Early Intervention Team*

*(Canning Town Early Intervention Service: contact 020 3373 2037)*

## Attendance Flowchart



## **APPENDIX B**

### **Absence and Attendance Codes**

(Taken from DfE School Attendance Guidance November 2016)

The national codes enable schools to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with the regulations. They are also used for collecting statistics through the School Census System. The data helps schools, local authorities and the Government to gain a greater understanding of the level of, and the reasons for, absence. The codes are:

#### **Present at School**

Pupils must not be marked present if they were not in school during registration. If a pupil were to leave the school premises after registration they would still be counted as present for statistical purposes.

#### **Registration Code / \: Present in school / = am \ = pm**

Present in school during registration.

#### **Code L: Late arrival before the register has closed**

Schools should have a policy on how long registers should be kept open; this should be for a reasonable length of time but not that registers are to be kept open for the whole session. A pupil arriving after the register has closed should be marked absent with code U, or with another absence code if that is more appropriate.

#### **Present at an Approved Off-Site Educational Activity**

An approved educational activity is where a pupil is taking part in supervised educational activity such as field trips, educational visits, work experience or alternative provision. Pupils can only be recorded as receiving off-site educational activity if the activity meets the requirements prescribed in regulation 6(4) of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. The activity must be of an educational nature approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school. The activity must take place during the session for which the mark is recorded.

#### **Attendance codes for when pupils are present at approved off-site educational activity are as follows:**

##### **Code B: Off-site educational activity**

This code should be used when pupils are present at an off-site educational activity that has been approved by the school. Ultimately schools are responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils educated off-site. Therefore by using code B, schools are certifying that the education is supervised and measures have been taken to safeguard pupils. This code should not be used for any unsupervised educational activity or where a pupil is at home doing school work. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the alternative activity notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils. The school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

##### **Consortia Schools**

Pupils attending consortia schools as part of their course only need to be placed on the registers of their 'main' school rather than on all of the schools they attend. They should be treated as guest pupils at the other consortia schools. The consortia schools however, must ensure they have suitable systems in place for monitoring and reporting the attendance and absence of the pupils involved, which must be shared with the 'main' school.

##### **Code D: Dual Registered - at another educational establishment**

This code is not counted as a possible attendance in the School Census. The law allows for dual registration of pupils at more than one school. This code is used to indicate that the pupil was not expected to attend the session in question because they were scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered.

The main examples of dual registration are pupils who are attending a pupil referral unit, a hospital school or a special school on a temporary basis. It can also be used when the pupil is known to be registered at another school during the session in question.

Each school should only record the pupil's attendance and absence for those sessions that the pupil is scheduled to attend their school. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby all unexplained and unexpected absence is followed up in a timely manner.

##### **Code J: At an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment**

This code should be used to record time spent in interviews with prospective employers or another educational establishment. Schools should be satisfied that the interview is linked to employment prospects, further education or transfer to another educational establishment.

##### **Code P: Participating in a supervised sporting activity**

This code should be used to record the sessions when a pupil is taking part in a sporting activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school.



### **Code V: Educational visit or trip**

This code should be used for attendance at an organised trip or visit, including residential trips organised by the school, or attendance at a supervised trip of a strictly educational nature arranged by an organisation approved by the school.

### **Authorised Absence from School**

Authorised absence' means that the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence.

### **Absence codes when pupils are not present in school are as follows:**

#### **Code C: Leave of absence authorised by the school**

Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. Schools should consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

#### **Code E: Excluded but no alternative provision made**

If no alternative provision is made for a pupil to continue their education whilst they are excluded but still on the admission register, they should be marked absent in the attendance register using Code E. Alternative provision must be arranged for each excluded pupil from the sixth consecutive day of any fixed period or permanent exclusion. Where alternative provision is made they should be marked using the appropriate attendance code.

#### **Code H: Holiday authorised by the school**

Head teachers should not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. The application must be made in advance and the head teacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case which warrant the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the head teacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the head teacher's discretion.

#### **Code I: Illness (not medical or dental appointments)**

Schools should advise parents to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness. Schools should authorise absences due to illness unless they have genuine cause for concern about the veracity of an illness. If the authenticity of illness is in doubt, schools can request parents to provide medical evidence to support illness. Schools can record the absence as unauthorised if not satisfied of the authenticity of the illness but should advise parents of their intention. Schools are advised not to request medical evidence unnecessarily. Medical evidence can take the form of prescriptions, appointment cards, etc. rather than doctors' notes.

#### **Code M: Medical or dental appointments**

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence. Schools should, however, encourage parents to make appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.

#### **Code R: Religious observance**

Schools must treat absence as authorised when it is due to religious observance. The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong. Where necessary, schools should seek advice from the parents' religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance.

#### **Code T: Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence**

A number of different groups are covered by the generic term Traveller – Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers.

This code should be used when Traveller families are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision. It should not be used for any other types of absence by these groups.

To help ensure continuity of education for Traveller children it is expected that the child should attend school elsewhere when their family is travelling and be dual registered at that school and the main school. Children from these groups whose families do not travel are expected to register at a school and attend as normal. They are subject to the same rules as other children in terms of the requirement to attend school regularly once registered at a school.

### **Unauthorised Absence from School**

Unauthorised absence is where a school is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence. Absence codes are as follows:

#### **Code G: Holiday not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the head teacher.**

If a school does not authorise a leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday but the parents still take the child out of school, or the child is kept away for longer than was agreed, the absence is unauthorised. The regulations do not allow schools to give retrospective approval. If the parents did not apply for leave of absence in advance, the absence must be recorded as unauthorised.

**Code N: Reason for absence not yet provided**

Schools should follow up all unexplained and unexpected absences in a timely manner. Every effort should be made to establish the reason for a pupil's absence. When the reason for the pupil's absence has been established the register should be amended. This code should not be left on a pupil's attendance record indefinitely; if no reason for absence is provided after a reasonable amount of time it should be replaced with code O (absent from school without authorisation).

**Code O: Absent from school without authorisation**

If the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence they should record it as unauthorised.

**Code U: Arrived in school after registration closed**

Schools should actively discourage late arrival, be alert to patterns of late arrival and seek an explanation from the parent.

**Administrative Codes**

The following codes are not counted as a possible attendance in the School Census:

**Code X: Not required to be in school**

This code is used to record sessions that non-compulsory school age children are not expected to attend.

**Code Y: Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances**

This code can be used where a pupil is unable to attend because:

- The school site, or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause; or
- The transport provided by the school or a local authority is not available and where the pupil's home is not within walking distance; or
- A local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the pupil from attending school.

This code can also be used where a pupil is unable to attend because:

- The pupil is in custody; detained for a period of less than four months. If the school has evidence from the place of custody that the pupil is attending educational activities then they can record those sessions as code B (present at approved educational activity).

This code is collected in the School Census for statistical purposes.

**Code Z: Pupil not on admission register**

This code is available to enable schools to set up registers in advance of pupils joining the school to ease administration burdens. Schools must put pupils on the admission register from the first day that the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school.

**Code #: Planned whole or partial school closure**

This code should be used for whole or partial school closures that are known or planned in advance such as: between terms; half terms; occasional days (for example, bank holidays); weekends (where it is required by the management information system); up to five non-educational days to be used for curriculum planning/training; and use of schools as polling stations.