



# Attendance and punctuality policy

**Approved by:** Local Governing Body **Date:** September 2025

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### 1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Developing and maintaining a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance.
- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence.
- Regularly monitoring data to identify patterns and trends and understand which students and student cohorts to focus on.
- Ensuring every student has access to full-time education to which they are entitled.

### 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance>) from the Department for Education (DfE) and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/parental-responsibility-measures-for-behaviour-and-attendance>). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of The Education Act 1996  
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/part/VI/chapter/II>)
- Part 3 of The Education Act 2002  
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/part/3/chapter/3>)
- Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006  
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/part/7/chapter/2/crossheading/school-attendance>)
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006  
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/1751/contents/made>) and amendments for 2010 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/1725/regulation/2/made>)  
2011 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2011/1625/made>)  
2013 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/756/made>)

2016 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2016/792/made/data.html>)

- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2013/757/regulation/2/made>)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/complete-the-school-census>), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

### **3. Roles and responsibilities**

#### **3.1 The Governing body**

The Governing body:

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

#### **3.2 The Principal**

The Principal is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school.
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual students.
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.
- Deciding on the appropriate intervention to impose following the Education Welfare Officer's casework.

#### **3.3 SLT with responsibility for attendance (Senior Attendance champion)**

The SLT with responsibility for attendance:

- Takes responsibility for improving overall attendance %.
- Ensures all school based staff complete their attendance responsibilities in line with the school's policies and procedures.
- Line manages the Attendance Officer to ensure completion of responsibilities.
- Line manages the Education Welfare Officer to ensure completion of responsibilities.
- Meets with Heads of Year weekly to allocate attendance contracts to be completed.

#### **3.3 The Attendance Officer**

The school attendance officer:

- Monitors attendance data across the school and at an individual student level.
- Reports concerns about attendance to the headteacher.
- Works with the Education Welfare Officer to tackle persistent absence.
- Takes calls/texts/emails from parents about absence and record it on the school system.
- Monitors completion of all registers.
- Provides information to be checked regarding absent students.
- Logs registers that are not taken.
- Updates attendance using information from the 'Late Signing In Book' / Register Checks.
- Sends text message to parents of students who are UA and then send any replies to the text which are of concern or need investigating to the appropriate SLT and Student Manager.
- Authorises absence of students with evidence.
- Checks attendance for inconsistencies in data and alert appropriate SLT/Student Manager if any exist.
- Provides daily Year group attendance figures and names of students to Pastoral SLT.

- Provides weekly Year group attendance figures and names of students to Pastoral SLT.
- Alerts appropriate SLT/Education Welfare Officer to students who have been absent for 5 days and 10 days.

### **3.4 Parents**

Parents:

- Ensure their child attends every day and on time.
- Inform the school on any issues that are preventing regular attendance.
- Contact the school on the first day of absence and daily until their child returns to school.
- Provide medical evidence where appropriate.
- Attend a school-based meeting with a school member of staff if attendance is identified as a problem.
- Avoid taking child out of school for any leave during term time.

### **3.5 Heads of Year/SLT**

Heads of Year/SLT:

- Take responsibility for improving attendance % of allocated year group.
- Monitor attendance of year group daily using data provided by the Attendance Officer.
- Identify students/parents or carers who should be placed on an Attendance Contract weekly.
- Meet with students/parents or carers to place on an attendance contract.
- Provide support to students/parents or carers to improve attendance.
- Maintain accurate meeting notes of meetings with students/parents or carers regarding attendance.
- Support Student Managers to place students/parents or carers on an Attendance Contract weekly.
- Support the process of escalating failed Attendance Contracts to the Education Welfare Officer including support at meetings.
- Investigate inconsistencies in attendance data.

### **3.6 Student Managers**

Student Managers:

- Liaise with relevant Heads of Year to ensure that allocated students/parents or carers are met to be placed on an attendance contract.
- Meet with students/parents or carers to place on an attendance contract.
- Provide support to students/parents or carers to improve attendance including recognition of improvement.
- Maintain accurate meeting notes of meetings with students/parents or carers regarding attendance.
- Investigate inconsistencies in attendance data.

### **3.7 The Education Welfare Officer**

The Education Welfare Officer:

- Collaborates with the attendance officer to ensure accurate records of attendance are maintained.
- Monitors completion of DAS and undertakes analysis daily.
- Maintains an accurate record students/parents or carers who are placed on an Attendance Contract.
- Monitors the attendance of students who have been placed on an Attendance Contract daily.
- Provides support to students/parents or carers to improve attendance.

- Meets with students/parents or carers who have failed an attendance contract and agrees review period.
- Supports students directly to improve their attendance including preventative support measures.
- Arranges Court assessment meetings where review periods have not been successful.
- Liaises with the Attendance Officer and Pastoral SLT to plan and undertake Home Visits for students whose attendance is of concern.
- Liaises with local authority for completion of CMS/CME documentation.
- Collate evidence of absences for headteacher to be able to consider when to issue fixed-penalty notices or refer to the Local Authority for prosecution.

### **3.8 Class teachers / Form Tutors should**

- Arrive promptly for registration and take their register.
- Prepare interesting and stimulating lessons which motivate all their students to attend and participate.
- Record attendance each lesson using the correct codes and submitting this information.
- Check absences against absentees and report any discrepancies to the Attendance Officer.
- Adopt a welcoming and encouraging approach to children returning from absence with ideas for catching up missed work.

The member of SLT with responsibility (Attendance Champion) for attendance is responsible for updating workflows for colleagues responsible for attendance and these are available on request (an overview of this is in Appendix 2).

## **4. Recording Attendance**

### **4.1 Attendance Register**

We will keep an attendance register and place all students onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every student is:

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

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

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

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Students in Years 7-9 must arrive in school by 08.15 on each school day. Students in Years 10 and 11 must arrive in school by 08.45 on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 08:45 and will be kept open until 09:15. The register for the second session will be taken at 13:55 and will be kept open until 14:10.

#### **4.2 Unplanned absence**

The student's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 08.45 on 020 8238 1102 or as soon as practically possible (see also section 7).

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness or if the student is of a attendance concern thus on a intervention.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the student's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

If a student has not attended school for 2 days then a home visit will be undertaken by the Education Welfare Officer.

#### **4.3 Planned absence**

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the student's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the student should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The student's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorised.

#### **4.4 Lateness and punctuality**

A student who arrives late to school or to a lesson, after the beginning of a lesson but before the register is closed, will be marked as late. If a student arrives after the closure of the register, they will receive a U Code. Students who are late to lesson will receive a 1-hour detention. Please see appendix 3 for U-Code Workflow.

#### **4.5 Following up absence**

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, the school will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason, through daily absence calls.
- Ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary.
- Complete home visits on day 3 of any unauthorised absence.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not.
- Identify the correct attendance code to use.

#### **4.6 Reporting to parents**

- The school reports to parents/carers on their child's attendance record termly.

## 5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

### 5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to students during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion and an application is available from the school's website.

If the absence is approved the students will be expected to return on the date specified on the form. Failure to do so will result in any extra time being classified as unauthorised absence. This could result in the issuing of a Fixed Penalty Notice.

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

Valid reasons for authorised absence e.g:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the student's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Exceptional circumstances – a leave of absence for exceptional circumstances can be granted at the headteachers discretion. The request must be made in advance by a parent who the student normally lives with.
- The DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance. Leave of absence should not be granted for a student to take part in a protest activity during school hours.

### 5.2 Reducing persistent absence

The school has systems in place for monitoring daily the attendance of students – these processes are set out in workflows that are available from the member of SLT with responsibility for attendance.

### 5.3 Legal sanctions

Legal Sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

Parents can be issued a maximum of 2 penalty notices each in three academic years, the threshold for a fixed penalty notice to be issued for unauthorised absence is a minimum of 10 sessions (5 days) in a 10-week period.

The first penalty notice is £80 if paid within the early-payment period, up to the 21<sup>st</sup> day after issue, rising to £160 up to the 28<sup>th</sup> day.

**Where a penalty notice has been issued to the parent in respect of the same child in the preceding three-year period from the first fixed penalty notice, the amount of the penalty is £160.**

On payment of a penalty notice, the parent cannot be pursued legally for the same period of evidence.

As with prosecution in a magistrates' court, penalty notices can only apply to offences relating to a child of statutory school age enrolled at a maintained school, academy, independent school or a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU).

If a parent fails to improve his or her child's school attendance following casework carried out by an Education Welfare Officer or equivalent member of staff appointed by the principal of an academy, a penalty notice may be used as a disposal by the Chair of a Court Assessment Meeting in place of prosecution or the use of an Education Supervision Order.

The trigger point for a penalty notice for lateness is 10 unauthorised lates in any 10-week period.

Parents must be informed individually of this possibility. Schools should remind **all** parents of the time registers are closed, after which the U code becomes effective.

The request for the penalty notice must contain the original warning letter sent to parents and the attendance register for the review period with the trigger number of U codes.

## **6. Strategies for promoting attendance**

Attendance is recognized in termly celebration assemblies (including certificates and badges) and through regular communication with parents.

## **7. Attendance monitoring**

The attendance officer at our school monitors student absence on a daily basis.

A student's parent/carer is expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health.

If a student's absence continues to rise after contacting their parent/carer, we will consider involving the education welfare officer.

The school collects and stores attendance data and uses it to improve the individual attendance of students, for example, to:

- Track the attendance of individual students
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern
- Monitor and evaluate those children identified as being in need of intervention and support.

## **8. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

## **9. Links with other policies**

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

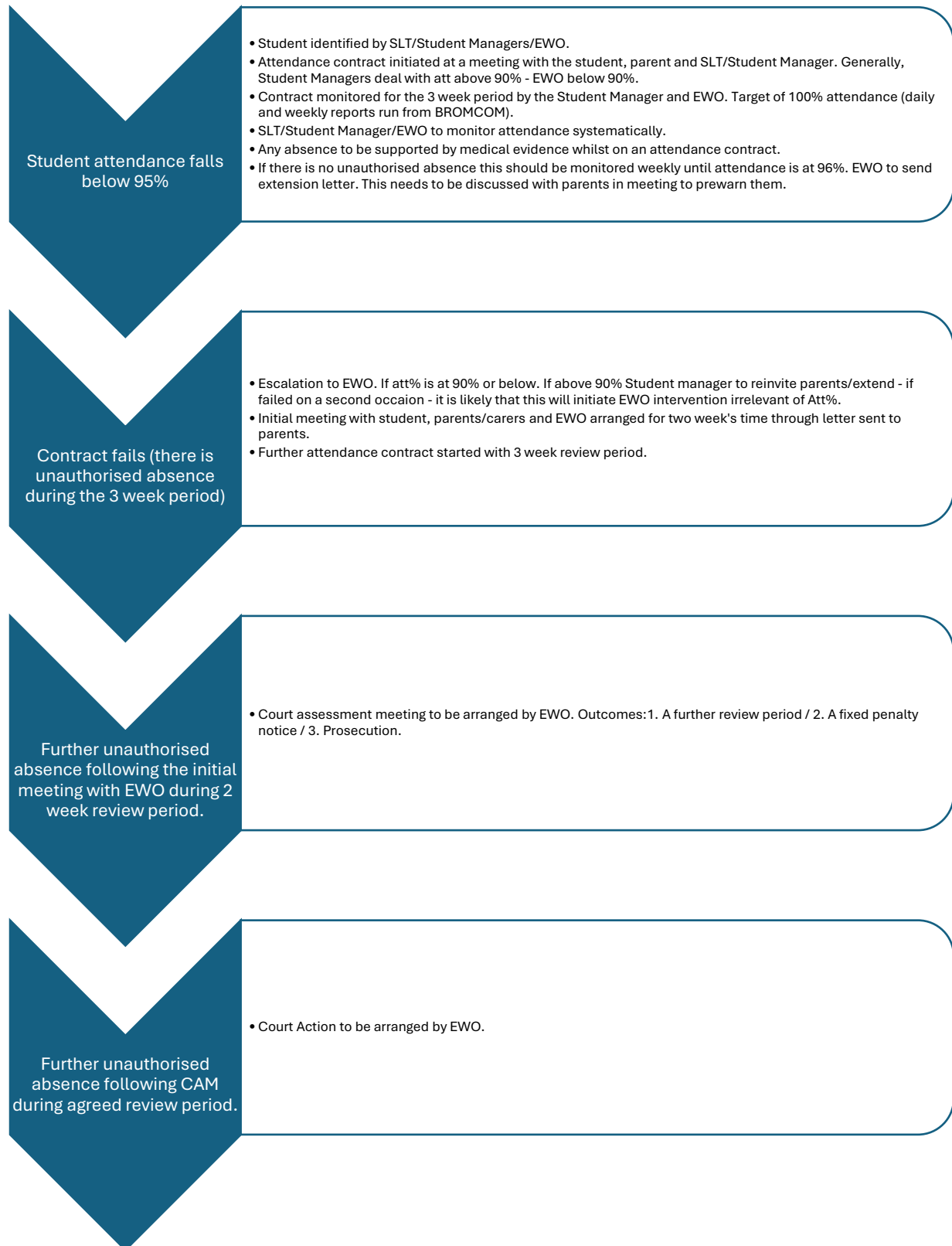
## Appendix 1 – Attendance Codes

### Attendance Codes – September 2024

Attending the school	
/\	Present at the school / = morning session \ = afternoon session
L	Late arrival before the register is closed
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip
P	Participating in a sporting activity
W	Attending work experience
B	Attending any other approved educational activity
D	Dual registered at another school
Absent – Leave of absence	
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.
M	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance
Absent – other authorised reasons	
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)
E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable causes	
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause
Absent – unauthorised absence	
G	Holiday not granted by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances
U	Arrived in school after registration closed
Administrative Codes	
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register
#	Planned whole school closure

## Appendix 2 – Attendance Workflows

# Long Term Attendance Workflow



# Student Absence Workflow

Student is absent Day 1 without a reason provided by their parent/carer

- Text message sent from attendance officer by 9.30am.
- If the student is vulnerable or has an attendance concern they will be called as a priority by Student Managers (priority identified on DAS list sent by the attendance officer) by 11.30am.
- All DAS calls complete by 11.30am. Student Manager to ascertain reason for absence. DAS information recorded in the DAS folder and emailed to Att Officer/EWO/Head of Year by Student Manager. EWO completes DAS calls for students on their caseload.
- Day 1 procedures happen each day that a student is absent without a reason provided.

Student is absent day 2

- Students will receive a home visit by EWO on the 3rd day if the reason for absence remains unknown. This is decided on a case-by-case basis.

Student is missing from the academy for 5 days following agreed leave or 10 consecutive days

- CMS form completed and sent to Barnet by SLT/Student Manager/EWO.

# Daily Attendance Workflow



- 9.00am: Att. Officer – EWO visits classrooms to ensure that registers are complete by teachers.
- 9.15am: Att. Officer – Runs a list of absent students with classroom details and gives to EWO. EWO to physically check the students are not in the class and feedback to Att. Officer in person.
- 9.20am: Att. Officer – Logs registers not taken in the Excel file.
- 9.20am: Att. Officer – Updates attendance using information from the ‘Late Signing In Book’.
- 9.25am: Att. Officer – Updates attendance for students who are present from the data provided by EWO from checking classrooms.
- 9.30am: Att. Officer – Sends daily text.
- 9.30am-11.30am - Student managers call all absent Priority students and complete DAS calls and feedback to Att. Officer/EWO/Head of Year by email (also saving in DAS Folder) – checking that absence of students on an Attendance Contract is not authorised (please inform the attendance officer/EWO if this happens).
- 9.30am: Att. Officer – Send any replies to the text which are of concern or need investigating to the appropriate SLT and Student Manager.
- 9.30am: EWO confirms with Heads of Year the planned Home Visits for the day.
- Att. Officer ONLY authorises the absence of those with evidence/reasonable explanation and who are NOT on an Attendance Contract.
- 10.15am: Att. Officer – Checks P1 & P2 Y7-11 attendance for inconsistencies in data and alerts SLT/Student Manager if any exist.
- 10.20am: Att. Officer – Logs registers not taken in the Excel file.
- 11.30am: Student managers have completed all DAS calls and email feedback to Att. Officer/EWO (calls continue to be made during the day and updates made in DAS Log on R:Drive).
- 12.00pm: Att. Officer – Check P1-P3 Y7-11 attendance for inconsistencies in data and alerts SLT/Student Manager if any exist.
- 12.05pm: Att. Officer – Logs registers not taken in the Excel file.
- 2.10pm: Att. Officer – Check P1-P4 Y7-11 attendance for inconsistencies in data and alerts SLT/Student Manager if any exist.
- 2.15pm: Att. Officer – Logs registers not taken in the Excel file.
- 2.20pm: Att. Officer – Email daily year group attendance figures and names of students to Pastoral SLT.
- 2.30pm Att. Officer – sends SLT Responsible for Attendance/EWO a list of student who are absent for 5 days and 10 days.
- 2.45pm – EWO checks attendance for students who are on an attendance contract - if contract is failed - EWO alerts SLT with responsibility for attendance and next steps agreed.
- 2.50pm – EWO checks the list of students for whom a Home Visit may be required the following day.

### Appendix 3 - U Code Work Flows

Student arrives late but before the close of the register at 09:15

- Student will receive a L mark and a 1-hour detention.

Student arrives later after the register is closed at 09:15

- Student's name confirmed by ID card or by SLT at the gate.
- Student will receive a U code for appropriate sessions.
- Student will receive a 1-hour detention.
- Parent notified which includes the warning.
- Parent will be notified for the 1st, 3rd and 5th U Code in a 4 week period.

6 unauthorised lates in any 4 week period

- Request to the Local Authority to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice.
- The first penalty notice is £80 if paid within the early-payment period, up to the 21<sup>st</sup> day after issue, rising to £160 up to the 28<sup>th</sup> day.
- Where a penalty notice has been issued to the parent in respect of the same child in the preceding three-year period from the first fixed penalty notice, the amount of the penalty is £160.