

St Augustine's Federated CofE Schools: Primary



Attendance Policy

We want all of our community to have equal opportunities to experience life in all its fullness (John 10:10). We encourage all community members to “be the best we can be” in every aspect of their lives as we grow in, and reflect on, the Christian virtues of Faith, Hope and Love (1 Corinthians 13)

Approved by the Governing Body	
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Introduction

At St Augustine's CE Primary School, we recognise that regular school attendance and punctuality are the key to enabling children to maximise the educational opportunities available to them. Regular attendance and punctuality are not only legal requirements, but are essential for children to achieve their full potential and derive maximum benefit from school life, both academically and socially. There is a clear link between levels of attainment and levels of attendance. Pupils who attend school regularly also find it easier to form positive relationships and develop effective social skills. We therefore aim to encourage all pupils to achieve their full potential through regular attendance.

We recognise that attendance is a matter for the whole school community and encourage staff, parents/carers and pupils work together to achieve high levels of attendance and punctuality through our inclusive, caring, and nurturing environment. We will work with pupils and their families to identify the reasons for poor attendance and to try to resolve any difficulties in order to ensure consistent attendance and punctuality. As a school community we are committed to enabling all of our pupils to 'be the best they can be as we grow in the Christian virtues of Faith, Hope and Love'.

1. Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#), through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

St Augustine's CE Primary School aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Ensuring that pupils, parents/carers and members of staff have a clear understanding of their responsibilities with regard to pupil registration, attendance and punctuality
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure that children of compulsory school age attend regularly and we will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) and [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of the [Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of the [Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment](#)

It also refers to:

- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)
- The DfE's guidance on the [School census guidance](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold. The guidance states; *schools are judged against a persistent absence rate of 10 per cent and pupils are identified as persistently absent based upon their individual absence level. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10 per cent they will be classified as a persistent absentee.*

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The Governing Body

The governing body is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:

- Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
 - Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils needs
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
 - The importance of good attendance
 - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
 - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
 - The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

3.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies

- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary and/or authorising an Assistant Head teacher to be able to do so
- Working with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader (also known as the 'senior attendance champion') is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance, and the headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Reporting concerns about attendance to the Headteacher (where the designated senior leader for attendance is not the Headteacher)
- Advising the Headteacher/Assistant Headteacher (authorised by the Headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices (where the designated senior leader for attendance is not the Headteacher)
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies (e.g., the Early Help Service) to tackle persistent absence where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers

- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is the Headteacher and can be contacted via telephone: 020 7328 0221 and/or email: office@stapprimary.org

3.4 Class Teachers

Class teachers are responsible for:

- Recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office on the same day
- Regularly reminding pupils and parents/carers about the importance of good attendance
- Discussing initial attendance and punctuality concerns with parents/carers
- Informing the designated senior leader for attendance if they have concerns regarding attendance and punctuality

3.5 Office staff

Office staff are expected to:

- Take calls/messages from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the designated senior leader for attendance and/or the Well-being lead where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance
- Carry out first day calling and record the outcome when a pupil does not arrive at school and no reason has been provided
- Monitor daily and weekly attendance and punctuality data and report to the designated senior leader for attendance/Headteacher
- Inform the designated senior leader for attendance/Headteacher promptly if there are any concerns relating to attendance/punctuality
- Record reasons for absence and update class registers
- Maintain SIMS attendance records in line with this policy

3.6 Parents

Where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult the school and/or local authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e., lives with and looks after them)

Parents are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9:25 am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Ensuring that their child does not miss school because of the illness of another family member e.g., a parent/carer, brother or sister etc
- Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or local authority
- Inform the school of any known absence (e.g., hospital appointments, religious observance) at least one day in advance and bringing appointment letters to the school office, where a photocopy will be taken and kept on file
- Completing the school's 'Request for absence in exceptional circumstances' form, giving it to the Office Manager as soon as possible before absence is required and accepting the judgement of the Headteacher regarding whether the special absence will be approved. This means that parents/carers must not book tickets before gaining the approval of the Headteacher

3.7 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day, on time

3.7 The Local Authority

The Local Authority, through the Early Help service and Attendance Officer, is expected to:

- Support the school in improving attendance, through whole school initiatives and individual pupil interventions
- Work with families and other agencies to remove barriers to good attendance
- Ensure that parents are informed of their responsibilities in relation to attendance
- Uphold and enforce the law in respect of attendance

4. Recording Attendance

4.1 Attendance register

By law, all schools are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register. We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils 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, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
- Any amendment to the attendance register will include:
 - The original entry
 - The amended entry
 - The reason for the amendment
 - The date on which the amendment was made
 - The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not (for pupils of compulsory school age)
- The nature of the activity, where a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances, where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

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

The school day starts at 8:45am (Soft Start) and ends at 3:30pm. Pupils must arrive in school by 9:00am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 9:00am and will be kept open until 9:30am. The register for the afternoon session will be taken at 12:30pm (Reception)/1:00pm (KS1)/1:30pm (KS2) and will be kept open until 12:45/1:15/1:45pm

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9:25am, or as soon as practically possible, by calling the school office staff, who can be contacted via telephone: 020 7328 0221 and/or email: office@stapprimary.org (see section 7).

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

Where the absence is longer than 5 days, or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for 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.

When pupils are persistently absent with under 90% attendance, the school may request medical evidence of illness, consult with health professionals and refer to the school nurse before authorising further absence.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence, as long as the pupil's parent has notified the school at least one day in advance of the appointment and has provided an appointment letter/card which can be copied and kept on file

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

The pupil's parent 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 authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

Class registers will be open between 9:00am and 9:30am.

Any pupil arriving at school after 9.00 am is late and the child's name will be written into the 'Late Book' at the gate or in the office. If the child is in EYFS or Y1, their parent/carer should accompany them to the classroom. If the child is in Year 2-Year 6, they should collect a late slip from the office before going to class.

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- A pupil who arrives after the register has closed must, by law, be marked as absent, using the appropriate code (see Appendix 1).

Arriving late after registers close will impact on pupil attendance records and, where children repeatedly arrive late, the school will work with families to discuss and tackle punctuality issues.

The same applies to punctual collection of children after school. Where parents fail to pick up their children at the allotted time, this can become a safeguarding concern. The school may have to consider contacting the Local Authority Children's Services. If there are unexplained or frequent occasions when parents/carers fail to collect their child on time after school, the designated member of SLT responsible for attendance and the DSL will meet with the family to discuss ways to resolve the issue, provide support where possible and in some cases, the parent/carer may be reported to the M.A.S.H team or Education Welfare officer.

4.41 Alternative arrangements

Each parent/carer must complete a form with contact telephone numbers and address details of anybody who is designated to pick up their child from school. Should parents wish to change this list of names, the school will need written consent from the parent in advance.

Any adult other than the child's parent will only be allowed to collect the pupil if the school has received permission from the child's parent/carer.

Children in Year 6 are allowed to walk home alone with written permission from their parent/carer.

Children in Year 5 *may* be allowed to walk home alone by negotiation with the Headteacher and with written permission from their parent/carer.

Nursery and Reception children may not be collected by anyone under 16 years of age.

Parents/carers who are unable to collect their children on time should telephone the school office before 3.30 p.m. to inform the school of who they are authorising to collect their children. Any persons authorised over the phone by the parent/carer to collect his/her children must also have been previously listed on the school's consent form. In an emergency, and where no-one previously listed on the consent form is available to collect a child, the decision to hand over any child to a previously unknown adult will be at the Headteacher's discretion. Parents may be required to send an email to confirm that they are authorising a person who is not named on the school's consent form to collect their child.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

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

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. From 9:30am each morning, the office staff will phone the homes of all pupils who are missing from school, and whose parents/carers have not informed the school, to enquire why the pupil is absent. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may contact the police
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session(s) for which the pupil was absent
- Call the parent on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer
- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the pupil's youth offending team officer
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with: issue a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention (see section 5.2 below), as appropriate

- If the parent or carer cannot be contacted, then the school will seek to carry out a visit to the pupil's home on the second day of absence. If, by the third day, the school still cannot contact the pupil's parent, then Social Services will be notified.

4.6 Reporting to parents

The school gives high priority to conveying to parents, carers and pupils the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognise that parents have a vital role in ensuring regular and punctual attendance and there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems.

The school will:

- Inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels on a termly basis through parent meetings and parents will be informed of their child's overall attendance each year in their end of school year report. Whole school attendance performance is provided in every school newsletter
- Inform parents/carers if their child's attendance is below 95%, or there are concerns over punctuality, through discussions/phone calls and a letter. If attendance or punctuality does not improve following a letter, parents are invited in to school to discuss the concerns with the designated senior leader for attendance and/or Headteacher and plan for a way forward. If attendance or lateness does not improve following the meeting, then the family will be required to complete an attendance contract with the designated senior leader for attendance and/or Headteacher. They may also be referred to the local authority Attendance Officer who will offer support and challenge to parents. This service will make any subsequent decisions failing an improvement in a child's school attendance. (See section 7.4)

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The Headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings.

The Headteacher will only grant a **leave of absence** to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the [2024 school attendance regulations](#). These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances

A leave of absence is granted at the Headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for. The Headteacher may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless the request meets the specific circumstances stated above, or they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. We define 'exceptional circumstances' as any event or crisis that cannot be resolved or addressed at a later date.

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, a leave of absence will not be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

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

Any request for leave during term time must be made in writing to the Head teacher using the leave of absence request form which can be requested from the school office. This form should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least two weeks before the absence. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

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

Other valid reasons for authorised absence include (but are not limited to):

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Up to **two** days for religious observance per year – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

Other reasons the school may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
- Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority
- Visits to secondary schools by Year 6 pupils during the secondary transfer period
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

5.12 Term time holidays or visits to relatives

Taking family holidays or visiting relatives during term time has a negative impact on a child's education and we do not expect parents/carers to take term-time leave. There is **no** automatic

entitlement in law to time off in term time. Holiday dates are published in school and on the website.

The school recognises that taking pupils out of school may constitute a safeguarding risk and will make necessary enquiries in order to be satisfied that the pupil is not at risk.

The Head teacher cannot give authorisation for absence during term time for a family holiday, as the Education Act states that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. A family holiday does not qualify as an exceptional circumstance. It is expected that parents/carers will organise all family holidays and visits to relatives during the school holidays.

In very exceptional circumstances, it may be necessary for a parent/carer to request absence leave for their child. In this case, parents/carers must make an application to the Headteacher **in advance** and complete the Application for Time Off During Term Time form, which can be requested from the school office. The Head Teacher will then make a decision, on whether or not the leave can be lawfully authorised and will do so only if there is a genuine, exceptional and urgent reason for a pupil to be absent during term time. The school must receive appropriate evidence and documentation that the leave is **unavoidable**: for example, death certificates, medical evidence of any hospitalisation and proof of any visa applications.

Family emergencies need careful consideration. It is not always in the best interest of the pupil, nor appropriate for them, to miss school for family emergencies that are being dealt with by adult family members. Being at school, with friends and support from staff, can provide pupils with stability and care during difficult times. The routine of school can provide a safe and familiar background during times of uncertainty.

Parents/carers should not make any bookings or buy any tickets until they receive a reply from the Headteacher. Each application will be considered individually, but parents must accept that the school is not obliged to agree to time off and will only do so in **exceptional circumstances**. The outcome of an application for a pupil to be absent during term time may be that the Headteacher will refuse the whole period requested; authorise part of the period and refuse the remainder; or authorise the whole period.

5.2 Legal sanctions

Our school will make use of the full range of potential sanctions – including, but not limited to, those listed below – to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

5.21 Penalty notices

The Headteacher (or a member of staff authorised by them), local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

If the school issues a penalty notice, it will check with the local authority before doing so and send a copy of any penalty notice issued to the local authority.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks)
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil

- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

Each parent who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

If a **second** penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days.

A **third** penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day). These penalty notices are not included in the National Framework, not subject to the same considerations about support being provided and do not count towards the limit as part of the escalation process.

In these cases, the parent must pay £60 within 21 days, or £120.

5.22 Notices to improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

They will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under section 7 of the Education Act 1996
- Details of the support provided so far
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with

- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

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

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

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

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

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

6. Strategies for promoting good attendance

We want all of our pupils to have high levels of attendance, because absence from school negatively impacts upon children's learning and attainment.

We aim to achieve high levels of attendance and punctuality by rewarding good attendance and punctuality through:

- Weekly Celebrations collective worship: The class with the highest attendance for the week receives the Attendance cup and 10 minutes extra playtime. Classes with the best also attendance accrue weekly points and receive a class prize when they reach 50 points.
- Half-termly attendance rewards: At the end of each half term, there is a special reward for pupils who have achieved 100% attendance. The designated member of SLT responsible for attendance and/or Headteacher present a certificate to all pupils with 100% attendance during a special assembly and organise and lead on an attendance celebration event for all pupils with 100% attendance.
- End of Year attendance assembly: Pupils with 98%+ levels of attendance over the whole year are awarded with gold Attendance badges and certificates by the designated senior leader

responsible for attendance and/or Headteacher and are invited to a special event (e.g. picnic or popcorn party).

- School Newsletter: The school newsletters are used to highlight the importance of good attendance and punctuality and whole school attendance figures are published, along with the classes who have won the attendance cup over the previous two weeks.
- Staff promoting good attendance: Teachers regularly promote good attendance with their classes and have conversations with parents where attendance is beginning to fall below the school's expectations of 96% and above.
- Breakfast club: Support for parents is provided by opening the school at 8.00am and offering children a breakfast and structured play time, ensuring they are on time for school.
- Timing of special events: Whole school events, such as school discos and the International Evening, along with will be planned to take place at the start and end of term.
- Parent/teacher consultation evenings: Termly parent meetings provide an opportunity for teachers to praise and recognise excellent attendance or to share attendance concerns and discuss barriers to good attendance. Where necessary, a target for improving attendance may be set.

7. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

7.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

The school will work with the parents of pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance to identify and remove these barriers

The school will:

- Analyse attendance data to identify patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and address these in line with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Arrange an initial phone call and/or letter to the parent/s from the designated senior leader responsible for attendance to try to identify reasons for the absence and ascertain whether there is a particular need that needs intervention.
- Set targets set and/or complete an attendance contract with the parent (and the child where appropriate)
- Make a referral to Early Help if there is no improvement in attendance.
- Make a referral to Social Services and any other external services such as CAHMS/MASH, if required.
- Arrange TAF Meetings, CIN, CP Core Group Meetings if absence is a Safeguarding concern.
- Create action plans in partnership with families and other agencies that may be supporting families, for example, children's social care and early help services. Commission or deliver interventions to improve attendance.

- Monitor the impact of any intervention, adjusting if necessary and using findings to inform future strategy. Where interventions fail to address attendance issues, identify the reasons why and, where appropriate, change
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider any reasons for absence
- Implement sanctions, where necessary

8. Attendance monitoring and school procedures

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance monitors and analyses the attendance data for individuals, classes, year groups, SEND (Special Education Needs) and disadvantaged (PPG) pupils. Patterns and trends in absence and punctuality, including persistent absence, are recorded. Systems and procedures are then followed to improve attendance for these individuals or groups. Parents/carers of pupils whose attendance is a cause for concern will receive a letter and parents will be invited to work in partnership with the school.

8.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) weekly, half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

The school has granted the DfE access to its management information system so the data can be accessed regularly and securely.

Data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics.

The school will benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement, and share this with the governing body.

8.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence

- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

8.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
- Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence, and their families (see section 8.4 below)
- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing body and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinators, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads)
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

8.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence - school procedures

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's strategy for improving attendance.

The school will:

- Monitor pupil absence and punctuality on a daily basis and weekly basis and office staff will provide a weekly report for to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and/or Headteacher
- Use attendance data to identify patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
 - Discuss attendance and engagement at school
 - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
 - Explain the help that is available
 - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence

- Review any existing actions or interventions
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
- Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 5.2, above)

The office staff will inform the designated member of SLT responsible for attendance and/or Headteacher of any unexplained absence (including children in the EYFS for whom attendance is not statutory) and, where there are concerns for the welfare of a child or family, a home visit may be made.

The school sends out letters/emails to communicate with parents about poor attendance (below 95%) and punctuality. If attendance or punctuality does not improve following a letter, parents are invited in to school, to discuss the concerns with the designated member of SLT responsible for attendance and/or Headteacher and plan for a way forward. If attendance or lateness does not improve following the meeting and implementation of an Attendance Action Plan (AAP), the family may be referred to the local authority Early Help Service/children's services who will offer support to parents.

Thresholds/Procedure for monitoring attendance

	Attendance %	Action	Monitoring period	Actions
Stage 1	Under 95%	Initial discussion/phone call with parent/carer or letter	6 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement demonstrated - no further action taken • No improvement or attendance continues to decrease - progress to stage 2
Stage2	Under 90% (persistent absentee)	Letter and meeting with the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and/or Headteacher – attendance contract (AC) agreed and implemented	6 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement shown - review AC and continue to monitor for a further 6 weeks • No improvement – progress to stage 3
Stage 3	No further improvements	Meeting with designated member of SLT responsible for attendance and/or Headteacher to discuss barriers to attendance and review AC	3 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet for review of AC, if improvements shown revert back to stage 2 and set new targets • No improvement- progress to stage 4

Stage 4	Under 85% or no improvement from stage 3	Referral to Early Help (EH)/ local authority Attendance Officer		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement/referral with EH to help improve attendance
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9. Staff Responsible for Attendance

Head of Primary and Designated Senior Leader responsible for attendance – Ruth Vince

Office Manager – Linda Wiggins

10. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every 2 years, by the Headteacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing body.

11. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and Safeguarding policy 2024
- Behaviour policy 2023

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's [guidance on school attendance](#).

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school

M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a ‘mobile child’ who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access

		arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	<p>Pupil is unable to attend as they are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes

O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays