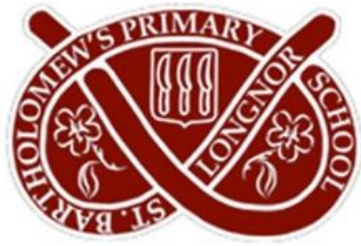


# Attendance Policy

St Bartholomew's CE Primary School



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**Prepared by:** LB

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**Approved by:** FGB

<b>Policy Updates</b>	
<b>Version Number</b>	<b>Changes</b>
1.0	New Policy
2.0	New policy following revised DfE guidance

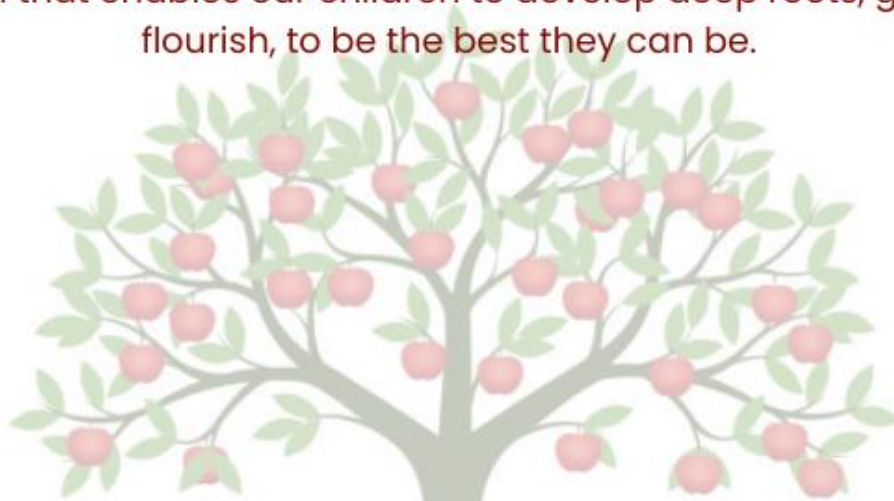
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## St Bartholomew's Vision

To be a loving and nurturing Christian school community, providing the rich soil that enables our children to develop deep roots, grow and flourish, to be the best they can be.



### Our Motto

*Nurture, Grow, Flourish*

Keep your roots deep in Jesus and have your lives built on Him.  
Be strong in the faith, just as you were taught.

Always be thankful. Col 2:7

### Our Values

- Courage
- Creativity
- Joy
- Kindness
- Respect

## Principles

Regular and punctual attendance at school makes a positive difference to children. *'Improving attendance is everyone's business.'* (DfE, 2024). It is important that children attend school to benefit from the range of education on offer to them.

St. Bartholomew's C.E. Primary School places a high priority on pupils benefiting from a well-rounded education and firmly believes regular attendance and punctuality are essential contributors. It is our desire for all children to achieve a high level of attendance throughout the academic year. We believe that all children should arrive in school, every day that the school is open, and on time, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by parents/carers.

Should a child be reluctant to attend school, it is imperative that a 'productive dialogue' is embarked upon as early as possible. In the first instance, any problems with regular attendance are often rectified between the school, the parents/carers and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is always most productive to address the issue in an honest and open format.

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required. The correct code will be added to the 'Arbor' system.

*Authorised absences are: mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason such as illness or another unavoidable cause.*

*Unauthorised absences are: those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been granted. This includes:*

- *parents keeping children off school unnecessarily;*
- *truancy before or during the school day;*
- *absences which have not been properly explained.*

Parents/carers are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the Education Welfare Workers (EWW) from the Local Authority's Local Support Team (LST). They will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed, the LST can issue a Penalty Notice.

This policy is mindful of the DfE document, 'Working together to improve school attendance 2024'.

### 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;
- Building strong relationships with families to make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school.

We will also 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](#)

## 3. Roles and responsibilities

### 3.1 The Governors

The Governors are responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of the School Lead, staff, staff, pupils and parents/carers.
- Making sure school lead fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
  - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and share the required information with the DfE and local authority;
  - Making sure all school work effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keep 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 attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most.
- 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 the school lead focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most, through half-termly attendance data shared at Governors meetings.
- Working with the school lead to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge.
- Monitoring attendance figures for the 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 the school lead to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance.
- Making sure staff receive training on attendance as part of the continued professional development, so that staff understand:
  - The importance of good attendance;
  - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues;
  - The 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.
- Sharing effective practice on attendance management and improvement across the school.
- Holding the School Lead to account for the implementation of this policy.
- Identifying and monitoring attendance patterns across the school to identify common issues and barriers, and share effective practice.
- A member of the Governing Body look at attendance data and emerging patterns for groups of children or individuals.

### 3.2 The School Lead

The School Lead is responsible for:

- The 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 pupils.
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies.
- Commencing the process of fixed-penalty notices, where necessary and/or authorising the administration team to be able to do so.
- Working with the parents/carers 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/carers through all available channels.

### **3.3 The designated staff member for attendance/ 'attendance champion'**

The designated staff member for attendance (also known as the 'attendance champion') will be appointed during the autumn term and is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school.
- Setting a vision for improving and maintaining good attendance.
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes (see section 7).
- Having a grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis.
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance.
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure staff are aware of these.
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed.
- Endeavouring to develop productive relationships with parents/carers 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.
- 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 School Leader/ Headteacher.
- Working with Education Welfare Officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the School Lead when to issue fixed-penalty notices.

Attendance Champion 24/25 – Lindsay Brayford

The member of staff fulfilling this role will undertake appropriate CPD.

### **3.4 Class teachers**

All class teachers are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix B), and submitting this information to the school office. Should another member of class be registering the class for that session, then they must ensure that this information is recorded appropriately. The class teacher or school lead will ensure that the colleague is aware of the necessity of this being undertaken.

*(See school-specific registration times in: section 4 – Recording Attendance)*

Class teachers should:

- Contribute to the continued development of the warm, welcoming, interesting and safe environment for all children.
- Promote and celebrate good attendance at regular intervals.
- Welcome children who have been absent with positivity upon their return.
- Be aware of patterns of absence within the class.
- Support children with attendance targets.
- Communicate with colleagues should there be any additional concerns resulting from absences.
- Be mindful of potential safeguarding issues linked to pupil absence.
- Notify the School Lead if aware of suggestion of leave being taken during term time.
- Complete registers in a timely manner.

### **3.6 Administration team**

Our Bursar will:

- Take calls/ receive messages from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on Arbor in a timely manner.
- Take messages from parents/carers to pass to the relevant staff member to facilitate the provision of additional support with attendance.
- Notify the DSL or DDSL if there are any safeguarding concerns regarding attendance or attendance patterns.

### **3.7 Parents/ carers**

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 scheduled day on time.
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 8:45am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, unless advising that the absence will be a period of several days e.g. following a bout of sickness/ diarrhoea (whereby an absence of 48hours since the last incident must be maintained) and advise when they are expected to return (this can be reviewed by the school lead based upon the nature of the absence).
- Provide the school with more than one emergency contact number for their child.
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day.
- Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or local authority.
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting the school leader or attendance champion.

### **3.7 Pupils**

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every scheduled day, on time.

## **4. Recording attendance**

### **4.1 Attendance register**

We will keep an electronic attendance register (Arbor), 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 (see Appendix B) 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.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not;
- 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.

**Timings of the start of the school day are as follows:**

- school opens at 08:45;
- registration 08:45 – 08:55;
- late' marks issued from 08:56 to 09:05;
- late after register closes after 9:05

The school will publish attendance figures and will share the individual pupil attendance on reports.

#### **4.2 Unplanned absence**

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 08:45, or as soon as practically possible, by calling the school office.

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where the absence is longer than five days; or school has identified existing concerns regarding persistent absence (regardless of the number of days); or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school may ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card/notification or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the explanation or the absence forms part of a persistent absence pattern, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this.

#### **4.3 Planned absence**

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. Parents/carers should notify the school office of the planned absence.

However, we encourage parents/carers 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/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence.

[Section 5 outlines how to apply for a leave of absence.](#)

#### 4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late (see section 4.1 for school-specific timings):

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.

Lateness will be monitored in school by the School Lead and/or the Attendance Champion. Patterns of lateness will be analysed and actions taken to address these by supporting the parent/carer to ensure children arrive at school promptly and regularly.

Lateness data will be shared with the Governors at least annually.

Arriving punctually

- Parents/carers of pupils who have patterns of, or persistent lateness will be contacted to discuss the importance of punctuality and how to achieve this.
- Parents/carers will be invited to a meeting to discuss how to improve punctuality and identify support.
- If a child has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence due to lateness recorded in any 10 week period, a penalty notice may be issued.

Departing punctually

- Parents/carers MUST collect their child/ren punctually at the end of the day/ after-school session.
- Where late collection is persistent and/or significantly after 15:35, the school may take the child to a place of safety and share concerns, as necessary, with other agencies. This could involve the child being placed in wraparound care and the parents issued with a bill (depending on specific-school guidelines and space availability).
- If a child is not collected by 17:00 (or a little later if attending some after-school clubs), the school may contact Children's Services as this could then represent a safeguarding concern.
- Parents/carers are asked to respect the timings of the school days and the right of staff to leave school at their planned time to undertake other responsibilities, be they work-related or personal. It is unfair to expect staff to be able to give their own time to supervise a child when unplanned or a persistent occurrence.

Pupil lateness and attendance will be discussed at Pupil Performance meetings as this will impact negatively on a child's readiness to learn and therefore attainment.

#### 4.5 Following up unexplained absence

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

- Call the pupil's parents/carers on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may follow a range of steps to identify the whereabouts of the pupil. Should this prove unsuccessful, the school may contact children's services or 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/carer 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/carers 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, school may issue a notice to improve, a penalty notice or other legal intervention (see section 5.2) as appropriate.
- Should the child or family be receiving support from social care, then the relevant contact or department will be made aware.
- Should the child be Looked After, school may contact the relevant social care team with responsibility for the child.

## 4.6 Reporting to parents

School will regularly inform parents (see definition of 'parent', as used in this policy, in section 3.8 above) about their child's attendance and absence levels through:

- A written report;
- Parent consultation sessions (Parents' evenings);
- Updates where attendance is becoming a concern.

### **Schools may choose to band pupil attendance in one of the following ways:**

- Red – persistent absence: 11% absence or more. Needs urgent improvement.
- Amber – absent being monitored as possible concern: 6-10% absence. Improvement needed.
- Green – good attendance: 5% or less absence. Maintain high standards.

When a child leaves school during the school day (other than at the end of the school day), the time, reason for the departure, and the name of the adult collected will be recorded. If the absence is unexpected or unexplained, the school lead (or in their absence class teacher or senior teacher) must be informed prior to the child leaving.

## 5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

### 5.1 Approval for term-time absence

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

The School Lead 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/activity;
- Attending an interview/ audition;
- A temporary, part-time timetable (as agreed by school prior to commencing);
- Exceptional circumstances.

A leave of absence is granted at the School Lead's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

### **'Request for leave of absence during term time' form can be found in Appendix C.**

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as unexpected, unavoidable and outside of reasonable control, including (but not limited to) hospitalisation, a serious illness/injury, a bereavement of close relative.

Leave of absence will not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

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 should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least two weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school office. The School Lead may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence. Leave of absence taken without a request being made with sufficient notice, or retrospectively will be rejected. Leave of absence can only be requested by a parent/carer with whom the child usually lives and/ or the social worker with parental responsibility.

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).

- Religious observance – 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.
- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision.
- 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.
- 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.

## 5.2 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.

### **Penalty notices**

The School Lead (or a colleague 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 commences a penalty notice, it will check with the local authority before doing so, and send it a copy of any penalty notice issued.

Before commencing 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 who allowed the absence.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority (note that school do not receive any payment). 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, are 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.

### **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.

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

It is important that school, parents/carers and the pupil work together to ensure good and punctual attendance in school. All staff play a role in supporting good and punctual attendance.

This may include:

- Attendance figures are published on the school website and through communications with parents/carers (paper-based or digital).
- School and/or class targets for attendance.
- Class attendance celebrated in assemblies/ at the conclusion of whole-school worship – praise and reward for the highest class attendance.
- Provide support for parents to encourage good and punctual attendance.
- Positive links with the education welfare team.
- Engagement with Attendance Hubs and the dissemination of information as appropriate.

## **7. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school**

### **7.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance**

- The School Lead, parents/carers, class teacher and SENDCo will meet to identify barriers to good school attendance. Where appropriate, the views of the concerned child will be sought.
- School will consider a bespoke approach which may include additional interventions/ programmes in school including (but not limited to) , pastoral sessions, regular start and end-of-day meetings, check-up processes, weekly meetings with parents/carers, home-school dialogue.
- An Attendance Contract may be implemented to support an improvement in school attendance.
- External interventions may be considered including (but not limited to) referrals to behaviour support, SEND team, Education Welfare, Early Help, Social Care.

## **7.2 Pupils absent due to mental or physical ill health or SEND**

- The School Lead, parents/carers, class teacher and SENDCo will meet to identify barriers to good school attendance. Where appropriate, the views of the concerned child will be sought.
- Where appropriate, the Attendance Policy will be implemented alongside other policies including the Supporting Children with Medical Conditions Policy.
- Identify a key adult to work with the child and establish meetings either face-to-face, virtually or via telephone.
- School will consider a bespoke approach which may include additional interventions/ programmes in school including (but not limited to) pastoral sessions, regular start and end-of-day meetings, check-up processes, weekly meetings with parents/carers, home-school dialogue.
- External interventions may be considered including (but not limited to) referrals to Education Psychology, CAMHS, behaviour support, SEND team, Education Welfare, Early Help.
- Home-school communication book to maintain clarity of communications.

Where a pupil has an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that related to the pupil's needs, the School Lead will inform the local authority.

## **7.3 Pupils returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence**

As soon as parents/carers have informed school of an expected date of return:

- The class teacher may organise a pack of information which could include relevant details, including a timetable, a reading book, messages from friends etc.
- The School Lead will meet with the parent/carer (and child if appropriate) in advance of the first day return to discuss expectations, reasonable adjustments and any proposed support plans.
- The child may have the option to arrive early and/or use a different entrance and also leave a little earlier to avoid larger groups.
- The child may be offered a point of contact throughout the day and 'wellbeing-checks' will take place with identified staff as appropriate.
- School will endeavour to contact parents/carers with an update within the first day.
- A Home-school book will be initiated.

## **8. Attendance monitoring**

### **8.1 Monitoring attendance**

Schools will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level. Attendance data will be shared on a half-termly basis with the Governors.

Specific pupil information will be shared with the Department for Education (DfE) on request, as the school have granted the DfE access to its management information system so 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.

Attendance data will be benchmarked against local, regional and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement, and shared with the Governors.

### **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.
- 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 develop strategies to address these patterns.
- Identify attendance patterns across the school to highlight common issues and barriers and share effective practice between schools.

### **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).
- Provide regular attendance reports to facilitate discussions with pupils and families.
- 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.
- Where additional need may be a contributing factor, school may seek advice from the appropriate SEND Inclusion Hub.

### **8.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence**

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 our approach for improving attendance.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find 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/carers 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 endeavour 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).

## **9. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated, and as a minimum once every two years.

## **10. School-specific arrangements**

Any school-specific arrangements can be found in Appendix A.



## 11. Issuing of penalty notices

Circumstances where a Penalty Notice may be issued:

- A Penalty Notice can only be issued in cases of unauthorised absence.
- The presence of an excluded child in a public place at any time during school hours in the first five days of exclusion.

Penalty Notices may be considered appropriate if one of the following criteria is met:

- There is unauthorised absence of least 10 sessions (each school day contains two sessions) this may comprise of any unauthorised absence or late arrival at school or alternative provision over a rolling period of 10 school weeks, excluding school holidays. These absences do not need to be consecutive.
- If in an individual case the Local Authority (LA) believes a penalty notice is appropriate, they retain the discretion to issue a penalty notice before the 10-session threshold is met. In such instances there must be at least 2 sessions of unauthorised absence in term time not authorised by the School Lead over a period of 10 rolling school weeks or any period of leave more than the period authorised by the School Leader.
- The presence of an excluded child in a public place at any time during school hours in that child's first five days of exclusion. An 'excluded child' is one who has been excluded/suspended from school for a given period under the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

A Penalty Notice will not be issued in respect of children in the care of the Local Authority with whom other interventions will be used.

### **A 10-session period of unauthorised absences/lateness**

The school must consider whether a penalty notice is appropriate in each individual case where one of their pupils reaches the national threshold of 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks.

Penalty notices are intended to prevent the need for court action and should only be used where it is deemed likely to change parental behaviour, and support to secure regular attendance has been provided and has not worked or been engaged with or would not have been appropriate in the circumstances of the offence.

The local authority's (LA) decision on whether sufficient support has been provided before issuing a penalty notice should be treated as final.

The period of 10 school weeks can span different terms or school years (e.g. 2 sessions of unauthorised absence in the Summer Term and a further 8 unauthorised late arrival within the Autumn Term).

### **Notice to Improve**

Where there are 10 sessions of unauthorised absence or late arrival in a rolling period of 10 school weeks the school may request the local authority to issue a Notice to Improve to a parent.

A Notice to Improve is a final opportunity for a parent to engage in support and improve attendance before a penalty notice is issued. A Notice to Improve does not need to be issued in cases where support is not appropriate and a school can choose not to use one in any case, including cases where support is appropriate, but they do not expect a Notice to Improve would have any behavioural impact.

## 12. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Safeguarding Policy;
- Behaviour Policy;
- SEND Policy;
- Supporting Children with Medical Conditions Policy.



## Appendix A – Attendance codes for the register

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

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
<b>Attending a place other than the school</b>		
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
<b>Absent – leave of absence</b>		
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

<b>C2</b>	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
<b>C</b>	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
<b>Absent – other authorised reasons</b>		
<b>T</b>	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>I</b>	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
<b>E</b>	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
<b>Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause</b>		
<b>Q</b>	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
<b>Y1</b>	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
<b>Y2</b>	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
<b>Y3</b>	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
<b>Y4</b>	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
<b>Y5</b>	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In police detention</li> <li>• Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or</li> <li>• Detained under a sentence of detention</li> </ul>

<b>Y6</b>	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
<b>Y7</b>	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
<b>Absent – unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
<b>O</b>	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
<b>U</b>	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
<b>Administrative codes</b>		
<b>Z</b>	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
<b>#</b>	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

## Appendix B – Request for leave during term time

### Request for leave during term time

*This form must be submitted at least two weeks prior to the requested leave of absence.*

Pupil Name: \_\_\_\_\_

First Date of Absence: \_\_\_\_\_

Last Date of Absence: \_\_\_\_\_

Please use this space to let us know what the EXCEPTIONAL circumstances for this request are (a family holiday is not considered by the DfE to be an exceptional circumstance):

If you have children at other schools, please enter details below:

Child's Full Name	School Attending

Signature of 1st parent/carer: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of 2nd parent/carer: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please return completed form to the school office. The school will write to you and inform you of the decision on whether the request is authorised or not.**

#### FOR OFFICE USE

Current Attendance:		Number of sessions taken as leave during term time:	
Leave Agreed:		Leave Not Agreed:	
Rationale:			

Signed: (School Lead) \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date decision letter sent to parent/carer: \_\_\_\_\_

Decision letter added to pupil file: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Exceptional circumstance that leave could be granted:**

(Please note, this is by no means an exhaustive list, merely a guide)

- Family bereavement;
- Immediate family wedding (i.e mother/father/sibling/grandparent);
- Sporting, artistic or musical participation or representation at notable level, such as playing a sport for the country/county/professional sports club; performance on stage/ TV/ film.
- To receive a prestigious award.