

# Attendance Policy

Reviewed in September 2024

Date Adopted by Governing Body: 23/09/2024

Review date: September 2025 or sooner if required

## **Intent**

At St Paul's Church of England (A) Primary School, we believe that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school. As an inclusive Christian school, St Paul's Church of England Primary School values everyone as a child of God and rejoices in its diversity. We provide a broad and balanced education in which every child and family can flourish.

*I have come that you might have life in all its fullness' (John 10:10)*

## **We are committed to:**

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 which states that: 'the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him / her to receive efficient full time education suitable: (a) to age, ability and aptitude and (b) to any special educational needs he/ she may have. Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise'.

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## **1. Aims**

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance 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 ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

- Ensuring equality and fairness of treatment for all.
- Providing early intervention and support and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.
- Rewarding regular attendance.

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

## 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

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

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

## 3. Roles and responsibilities

### 3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents
- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- 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
- 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
- Making sure 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
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

Our Attendance Governor is **Mrs Leanne Clarke**. Attendance will be monitored and discussed by the Full Governing Body or, delegated to the Premises, Health and Safety and Safeguarding committee.

### 3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising the School Business Manager 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 is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement and maintenance
- 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 tackle poor attendance identified through data and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Building relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention 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 **Mrs Jennifer Ferretti** and can be contacted via 01902 558621 or [stpaulsprimaryschool@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:stpaulsprimaryschool@wolverhampton.gov.uk)

### 3.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- 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 / the headteacher
- Working with Education Welfare Officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is **Beu Westwood / Carly Evans (IWS)** and can be contacted via 01902 558621 or [stpaulsprimaryschool@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:stpaulsprimaryschool@wolverhampton.gov.uk)

### 3.5 Class teachers

On a daily basis, class teachers are responsible for recording attendance at the start of the morning and afternoon session, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1). They will;

- Open doors to their classrooms at 8:40am to receive pupils into their classrooms.
- Close doors for pupils at 8:50am and take the register.
- Use the correct codes when marking the register - present or absent. (Absences that are marked 'N' will be completed by the admin staff.)
- submit the register to the school office by 9am for the morning session and 1.00pm (Rec/KS1) or 1:15pm (KS2) for the afternoon session.

### 3.6 School admin staff

School admin staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Contact parents of children who are absent from school
- Share a daily absence list with the Headteacher, via Teams.
- Notify the Headteacher if;
  - a child is absent from school for 3 or more days
  - a child is absent from school and no contact has been made with the parents
  - a child classed as Persistently Absent is absent from school
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the Headteacher / Deputy Headteacher in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance
- Log attendance concerns on CPOMS
- Share a weekly attendance report with class teachers
- Update the weekly PA tracker, sharing with the Headteacher

### 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)

It is the parents/carers responsibility to inform school of absence and, subsequently, reasons for absence.

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time (8.50am)
- Call the school to report their child's absence and reason for absence by 9am on the day of the absence, and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return.
- Parents/ carers are able to report absence to school by leaving a message or by speaking to a member of staff from 8:30am onwards. Absence can also be reported vis the School Comms Gateway app.
- 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
- 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 **Miss Dani Woods (Family Support / Pastoral Assistant)**, who can be contacted via the school office.

NOTE: Parents and carers who regularly fail to contact the school will have all absences unauthorised and may be contacted by the Education Welfare Service.

### 3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time

## 4. Recording attendance

### 4.1 Attendance 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 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:

- (For pupils of compulsory school age) Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if 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.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.50am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 9am and will be kept open until 9.30am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1pm and will be kept open until 1.15pm.

## 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 9.30am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office or via the Gateway app (see also section 7).

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 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.

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

Re-occurring absences will lead to parents being invited into school to address the concern with the Education Welfare Officer or Headteacher.

## 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. However, we do 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 school may ask for proof of a medical appointment such as an appointment card or letter.

Parents should inform school of any appointments via the office either in person or telephone or, via the Gateway app.

Children attending appointments during the school day will need to be signed out at the school office using our electronic system and signed back in on return.

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

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed (9.30am) will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed (9.30am) will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code
- Parents are asked to sign the child into school and provide a reason for being late



If a pupil is persistently late, staff will discuss this with the parent/carer and this may be referred to the Education Welfare Officer.

#### 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 parent/carer 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 will send a text and/or email requesting the parent contacts the office urgently to confirm the child's safety and wellbeing. They may also request that the Education Welfare Officer carry out a safe and well check or contact the Police, seek advice from MASH or Kelly Jones, LA Safeguarding Advisor.
- 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
- If contact is not made via phonecall, a text message will be sent asking the parent to contact the school office urgently
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an Education Welfare Officer
- After 2/3 days of absence for illness, proof of medication is required to authorise the absence. This can be medication from a pharmacy or GP.
- In cases where the child has a Social Worker, they will be informed if the child is absent from school.
- 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 as appropriate

#### 4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents/carers about their child's attendance and absence levels.

- Our Education Welfare Officer attends school fortnightly and identifies any children for whom attendance is a concern, sending a letter to inform parents.
- If absences continue, a further letter is sent, informing that absence will only be authorised if medical proof is provided.
- Further absence will lead to the parents/carers being invited to meet with the Education Welfare Officer to discuss / open an Early Help Assessment.

- Where attendance improves, parents receive a text message.
- Each term, parents receive a traffic light letter to inform them of their child's attendance.
  - Green - >97%
  - Amber - 93-96.9%
  - Pink - 90-92.9%
  - Red - <90%
- / pupil attendance reports are shared at Autumn and Spring Parents' Evenings (copies sent home if any families do not attend).
- Children with attendance above 97% are entered into a prize draw.
- An attendance report is included within children's end of year report.
- Whole school attendance is shared weekly in worship and shared on the weekly noticeboard and monthly attendance is shared via the school newsletter.

## 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.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' (and so valid reasons for authorised absence) to be:

- Bereavement
- Illness (including mental-health illness)
- Medical/dental appointments where it has not been possible to arrange outside of the school day
- Occasions where the child is taking part in an examination or similar for an extra-curricular activity (for example, a music exam)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart

- Traveller pupils 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
- Significant events such as a family wedding.
- Absence due to a family emergency
- 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
- Attending work experience
- 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

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

The following are examples that would not be deemed 'exceptional circumstances' (and therefore absence would be unauthorised):

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Truancy
- Unexplained absences
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Day trips and holidays
- Leaving school for no reason during the day
- Taking part in protest activity during school hours.

The government and schools realise that it is more expensive to go on holiday during the school holiday period than at other times of the year. However, it is the view of the DfE that a child should be in school for the 39 weeks of the academic year and that holidays in term time, in whatever form, **are not considered to be 'exceptional' circumstances.**

Holidays are **not** a good enough reason for taking a child or young person out of school and are not deemed as 'exceptional' circumstances.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 2 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with the leave of absence request form, available via the school office. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

## 5.2 Requesting Leave of Absence

The school follows the local authority procedures when parents and carers apply for leave of absence.

How to Apply for a Leave of Absence

- The Parent/ carer collects leave of absence form from school reception.
- The Parent/ carer returns completed application form at least four weeks before the date of absence.
- The office forward the application form to the Headteacher.
- The Headteacher applies approval criteria.
- A letter is written informing parent/carers of the outcome of the request (authorised / unauthorised / unauthorised with referral for legal action)

If an absence request is unauthorised and will be referred to the local authority for legal action, parents/carers are required to sign on receipt of the letter.

Applications are processed within seven working days.

- Leave of absence requests for children under 5 years of age will be approved as children are of non-statutory age.

Leave of absence that is approved = authorised absence.

Leave of absence that is not approved = unauthorised absence.

## 5.3 Non-return from leave of absence (authorised or unauthorised)

It may occur that a child does not return at the end of the stated period of leave of absence. Initially, normal school absence procedure are followed. If the child has not returned within five days, after the stated period of leave of absence, the following procedure is followed:

- Case referred to the Education Welfare Officer.
- Home visit is carried out by the Education Welfare Officer and/ or the Headteacher.
- Letter is sent by post to parents/ carers by the Education Welfare Officer on behalf of the Headteacher.
- If the child does not return to school for ten days after an authorised absence, the matter will be referred to the Local Authority who will follow the procedures for 'missing pupils'. The pupil will not be removed from roll until the Local Authority has ascertained the pupil's whereabouts and safety or has made reasonable enquiries to this end.

## 5.4 Children Missing from Education (CME)

Guidance has been issued by the Department of Education (DfE) for Children Missing from Education (Sept 2016) If a child fails to attend school regularly or has missed ten school days without permission and no contact has been made by the parents/carers to inform of the child's whereabouts and reason for absence, the school will complete a referral to the Local Authority following procedures for 'missing pupils'.

The pupil will not be removed from roll until the Local Authority has ascertained the pupil's whereabouts and safety and has confirmed that the pupil is registered at another school, is being educated otherwise or at the very minimum has made reasonable enquiries as to the missing child's whereabouts.

Other reasons for when a CME form will be completed by the School:

- If the school has been informed that a child is moving out of area but the details of the new school are not provided.
- The school has been informed that the child is moving out of area, details of the new school are provided but after 15 days, no confirmation has been received.
- If at any point there is reason to believe a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, a referral should be made to children's social care (and the police if appropriate).

Where a parent notifies our school that a pupil will live at another address, our school will record in the admission register:

- the full name of the parent with whom the pupil will live;
- the new address; and
- the date from when it is expected the pupil will live at this address.

Where a parent of a pupil notifies our school that the pupil is registered at another school or will be attending a different school in future, our school will record in the admission register:

- the name of the new school; and
- the date on which the pupil first attended or is due to start attending that school.

Our school will notify the local authority within five days when a pupil's name is added to the admission register. We will provide the local authority with all the information held within the admission register about the pupil. Our school will also notify the local authority when a pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register under any of the fifteen grounds set out in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended as soon as the ground for deletion is met and no later than the time at which the pupil's name is deleted from the register.

Our school will only delete a pupil's name from the admission if our school and the local authority have failed to establish the pupil's whereabouts after jointly making reasonable enquiries.

When our school notifies the local authority that a pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register, our school will provide the local authority with:

- the full name of the pupil;
- the full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil lives;
- at least one telephone number of the parent with whom the pupil lives;
- the full name and address of the parent with whom the pupil is going to live, and the date the pupil is expected to start living there, if applicable;
- the name of pupil's destination school and the pupil's expected start date there, if applicable; and
- the ground in regulation 8 under which the pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register.

Our school will work with the local authority to agree on methods of making returns. When making returns, we will highlight to the local authority where we have been unable to obtain the necessary information from the parent, for example in cases where the child's destination school or address is unknown. We will also consider whether it is appropriate to highlight any contextual information of a vulnerable child who is missing education, such as any safeguarding concerns. It is essential that schools comply with these duties, so that local authorities can, as part of their duty to identify children of compulsory school age who are missing education, follow up with any child who might be at risk of not receiving an education and who might be at risk of being harmed, exploited or radicalised.

### **5.5 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.

The headteacher (or someone 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 it a copy of any penalty notice issued.

### **5.6 Penalty notices**

The headteacher (or someone 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 it a copy of any penalty notice issued.

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

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).

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.

## 5.7 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

Attendance is tracked by the office and Headteacher daily on the school's SIMS data tracking system and rewards are given as follows:

- The children who have 100% attendance each term will receive a certificate and a badge: Bronze for the Autumn term, Silver for maintaining 100% attendance throughout the Spring Term and Gold for maintaining 100% attendance throughout the Summer Term.
- Each week, the highest attending class is presented with the Attendance trophy and receives story with SLT.
- Classes achieving over 95% receive a class token for their jar.
- Pupils who have achieved 100% at the end of July will receive a £5 gift card and a pencil.
- Each term, parents of children with attendance above 97% are entered into a prize draw to win a voucher.

Parents/ carers are kept informed about attendance through the school's website, Facebook page, weekly noticeboard, pupil reports, parents' evening termly letters and the monthly newsletter.

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

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

Through discussion with the pupil and/or parents, strategies will be offered such as a short term adapted / reduced timetable, staggered starts/finishes, alternative entrances, Start of the Day Club (Sparks) through The Lighthouse. Check ins and support will also be offered to the pupil during the day. We will work with families to identify strategies to remove in-school barriers.

Where children are displaying signs of anxiety around school attendance, the EBSNA (Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance) pathway will be started by Mrs Laura Evans (SENCo) and/or Miss Dani Woods (Pastoral Support Assistant).

Talking and Drawing therapy may be offered and/or a referral to Reflexions may be made.



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

As above, the school will support pupils who are absent from school due to medical or physical ill health and/or their SEND, drawing on advice from health professionals.

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

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

A meeting will be held to discuss the child's return to school and what strategies would be supportive in their return to school. Once returned, scheduled check ins will be carried out as required.

## 8. Attendance monitoring

The Headteacher will regularly update the governors with an overview of attendance and formally report to the governing body termly.

For parents/ carers of children whose attendance is identified as a cause for concern, they will be informed that attendance will be monitored and targets for attendance will be set. Parents/ carers of pupils must provide medical evidence when their child returns to school. Where pupil attendance is below 95% and falling, parents/carers will receive a letter stating current attendance and next required steps. This letter is posted and will be monitored by the admin staff and the Education Welfare Officer.

### 8.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school, at an individual pupil and cohort level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-level absence 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 compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

Specific pupil information will be shared with the DfE on request. 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 where available to identify areas of focus for improvement, and share this with the governing board.

## 8.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils 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 severed absence, and their families (see section 8.4 below)
- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers, and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families and to the governing board and school leaders (including the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator, Designated Safeguarding Leads and Pupil Premium Lead)
- 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

#### 7.4 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 the school's strategy 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 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
- Liaise with the School Nurse if absences are due to medical reasons.
- 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)

If there is no further improvement in attendance, an Early Help Assessment will be offered to provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance. If the Early Help Assessment is refused, or has no response, a DNA letter (did not attend) is sent to parents/ carers and if unauthorised absences continue; legal proceedings may take place.

#### 9. Monitoring arrangements

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

## 10. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection policy
- Behaviour policy

### Appendix 1: Attendance Codes

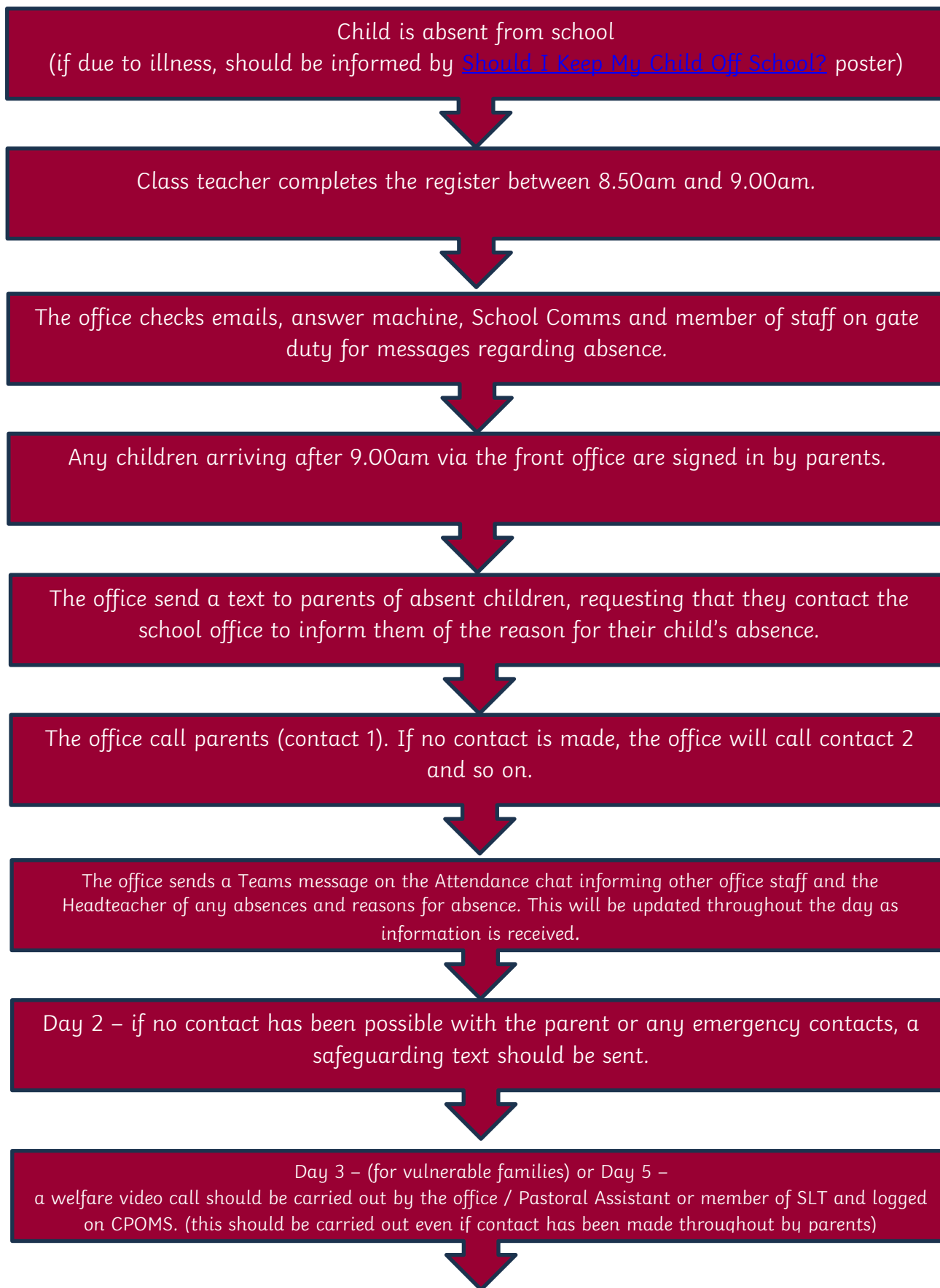
The following codes are taken from the DfE's [guidance on school attendance](#).

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
<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
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
<b>Absent – other authorised reasons</b>		
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
<b>Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause</b>		
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	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>

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
<b>Absent – unauthorised absence</b>		
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
<b>Administrative codes</b>		
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

## Appendix 2: Absence Procedure Flow Chart



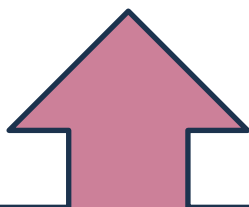
Where appropriate, the child's Social Worker, the LA attendance officer, and/or school's Education Welfare Officer will be contacted and a home visit carried out. If it is believed the family are on holiday, a reason to suspect absence due to holiday letter will be left.



If still no contact is made, the police will be informed.



After 10 days of absence, if the school are unaware of the child's whereabouts, a CME referral will be completed.



Afternoon Procedure

The office checks SIMS to ensure all classes have completed their registers by 1.15pm. A message alert will be sent to any classes who have not submitted their register. (Where this happens frequently, the Headteacher should be informed)