



ST PAUL'S ACADEMY

Attendance Policy 2025



*'You are God's work of art'
Ephesians 2:10*

Approved by: Principal and
Governors

Date: January 29th 2025

Last reviewed on:

January 2025

Next review due by:

September 2026

Statement of Intent

The governors and staff of St Paul's Academy have high expectations for all students. St Paul's Academy is an inclusive Catholic Academy which welcomes students regardless of their level of need, ability or disability, ethnicity and socio-economic background. We work to the premise that every child is 'God's work of art'. It is a privilege for us, as a community, to have such a formative role in nurturing a young person to be full of ambition and hope in the future. St Paul's is a place of welcome and a haven for all who spend time here.

1. Aims

At St Paul's Academy, we aim to encourage every student to achieve the highest possible levels of attendance in order to take full advantage of the learning experiences available to them. We understand the strong connection that exists between a student's level of attendance and their educational achievement. Poor attendance affects a student's learning, and poor punctuality affects the whole class' learning.

Our attendance target for all students is 100% and our minimum is 97%. Any student whose attendance drops below 90% will be regarded as a persistent absentee.

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 students;
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance;
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence;
- Ensuring every student 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 students have the support in place to attend school.

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](#) from the DfE, 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:

DfE's statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance (from 19 August 2024) and the statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures.

- 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 School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment](#)

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

A student is required by law (under Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act and Regulations of 2006 and 2010) to attend regularly at the school where they are registered. The school is required to differentiate between authorised and unauthorised absence. It is expected that the parent/carer will inform school regarding absence. However, it is for the school to ascertain whether the explanation given is satisfactory justification for the absence.

Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 and Section 105 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 empowers Local Authority officers, principals and the police to issue penalty notices in cases of unauthorised absence from school, and for parental failure to ensure that their child is not in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first five days of an exclusion.

This policy should be read alongside the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, The Home Visits Policy and the SEND & Inclusion Policy.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

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

3.2 The principal

The principal 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 students
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising the Senior Attendance Champion to be able to do so
- Working with the parents/carers of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for students with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where students with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a student with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the student's needs
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents/carers through all available channels
- Sharing information from the school register with the local authority, including:
 - Notifying the local authority when a student's name is added to or deleted from the school admission register outside of standard transition times
 - Providing the local authority with the details of students who fail to attend school regularly, or who have been marked with an unauthorised absence for a continuous period of 10 school days

- Providing the local authority with the details of students who the school believes will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

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

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- 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
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaising with students, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with students and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Michelle Hepburn (Vice Principal) and can be contacted via email: michelle.hepburn@stpauls.greenwich.sch.uk

3.4 The attendance officer

- The 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, and the principal
- Monitor late students
- Contacting parents at the first point of absence
- Sending out daily non-attendance alerts to parents
- Working with the Attendance Advisory Officer and education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence

The attendance officer is Egle Kirdeikyte and can be contacted via email: attendance@stpauls.greenwich.sch.uk

The attendance team are also responsible for:

- Monitoring persistent absentees and poor attendance (see section 8)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Carrying out parent/carer meetings where poor attendance is identified
- Reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance, and the headteacher
- Liaising with Pastoral Year Groups to highlight poor attendance.
- Working alongside the Safeguarding Team, identifying those who require intervention and referral

3.5 Form Tutors and Class Teachers

Form Tutors and Class Teachers are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1), and submitting this information on SIMS / Edulink to the school office within 10 minutes of a lesson starting.

3.6 School office staff

School office staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Take messages from parents/carers for the head of year in order to provide them with information which can help devise specific support on attendance
- Relay any relevant information to the attendance team

3.7 Parents

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

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

Parents are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 8am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting your child's HOY or the attendance team, who can be contacted via 0208 311 3868 or attendance@stpauls.greenwich.sch.uk

3.8 Students

All students are expected to attend all of their timetabled lessons regularly and punctually. Where there are situations that require great effort in ensuring regular attendance, support will be offered from Form Tutors, Heads of Year, Pastoral Managers, Learning Mentors and the Attendance Team. Attendance figures are monitored and reported to key personnel. Good attendance is rewarded appropriately by pastoral teams across the Academy. Poor attendance will be monitored closely and parents/carers will be contacted.

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

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

Registration takes place at 8.25am and will be kept open until 8.55am. The register for the afternoon session will be taken at 1.30pm and will be kept open until 2.00pm.

If a student fails to arrive before the school gate closes at 8.21am he/she should report to the Reception Office and sign in using the electronic signing in system, InVentry. The register will read 'late'. If a student is regularly late, parents/carers are contacted. Arrival more than 40 minutes after the registers have closed without an acceptable reason can result in the student being marked as unauthorised.

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:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a student is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a student 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.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The student's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office staff. The Academy must be notified EVERY DAY the student is absent. This can be done by:

- Phoning the school absence line 020 8311 3868 ext 131
- Reporting via Edulink app
- Emailing the Attendance Officer: attendance@stpauls.greenwich.sch.uk

For an absence of 3 or more days, or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the parent or carer must supply medical evidence in the form of a doctor's note / copy of the prescription or medical appointment card to show that your child has been to see a health professional. 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.

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.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the student's parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment. The parent/carer should send in a copy of the paperwork for the appointment e.g. letter or appointment card in advance of the appointment. This should be marked for the attention of the school Attendance Officer. The documents can also be brought to Reception where a copy will be taken for school attendance records.

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

The student's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A student who arrives late:

- 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

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

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

- Call the student'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 student's emergency contacts, the school may conduct a home visit or contact the police
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- 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
- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the student's youth offending team officer
- Where appropriate, offer support to the student and/or their parents to improve attendance
- Identify whether the student 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

- When a student's attendance falls below the DFE's expected figure, parents will receive phone calls or letters informing them of our concern: Stage 1, Stage 2 and Stage 3
- The school will also ring home if there has been no communication or reason provided for absence
- The school reports to parents on their child's attendance record via reports and it is readily available on Edulink

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

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

The principal will only grant a **leave of absence** to a student 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 principal's discretion, including the length of time the student is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as one off events that are unavoidable.

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

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 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 4 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school office. The principal may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

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 student'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 student is attending educational provision
- If the student is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

Other reasons the school may allow a student 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 student is also registered (dual registration)
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority
- Attending work experience
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the student 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

It is essential that staff follow the same criteria when deciding whether or not to authorise an absence.

The role of the Attendance Officer is key in this issue and ensures consistency of practice. The Attendance Team decides on how absence is recorded, following the latest guidance from the DfE. They will look at the reason provided for absence by the parent or carer, and decide whether the reason is genuine [authorised].

Examples of authorised absences:

- Illness, medical and dental appointments
- Interviews with prospective colleges or 6th forms
- Religious observance
- Dual registration
- Approved education off site activities
- Representation in sport and other areas
- Public performance
- Special situations – funerals, caring for relatives

Examples of unauthorised absences

- Known truancy
- Absent with no explanation from parent
- Working
- Birthdays or family celebrations
- Holidays (see below)
- Looking after siblings (this must be reported to the Principal)
- Errands for parents (e.g. dropping younger siblings to school – this must be reported to the Principal)
- Persistent absenteeism without medical evidence

Parents/carers who persist in taking their children out of school may receive a fixed penalty notice. The school or local authority can fine parents/carers for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

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

Penalty notices can be issued by a principal, local authority officer or the police. The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

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

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

Holidays / Exceptional Leave

Parents/carers are required to complete a 'leave of absence' form if they wish to take their child out of school during term time. The principal will consider the request and will notify the parent in writing of the Academy's decision. If the leave of absence is deemed to not be of an 'exceptional circumstance', the principal may refuse to grant permission and will code the absence as unauthorised on the child's attendance record.

The following are considered exceptional circumstances

1. When an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue.
2. The death or terminal illness of a person close to the family
3. To attend the wedding or funeral of a person close to the family
4. Service personnel returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced that the individual will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that will coincide with school holidays
5. Where there are exceptional and unforeseen circumstances that fall outside of the situations described above, the Principal may then consult with the Attendance Advisory Service (AAS), prior to any authority given to the parent or carer. The AAS will then make a recommendation to the school.

N.B. Please note that evidence will be required in each of the cases described above.

- In the case of a holiday, if the parent or carer goes ahead with a planned holiday during term time, then the period of absence (of 5 days or more) must be clearly recorded as 'G' on the official attendance register (thus ensuring that it is recorded as an unauthorised family holiday)
- Once the student has returned to school, the Attendance Team may complete a Penalty Notice referral form to the Attendance Advisory Service and attach:
 - The letter sent to the parent(s)/carer(s) notifying them that the absence would not be authorised and warning them that the matter would now be passed on to the Local Authority
 - A copy of the student's registration certificate which clearly shows the period of absence which has
 - been coded 'G' (unauthorised family holiday)

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 principal (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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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 student'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

Strategies for promoting good attendance

- St Paul's Academy provides an environment in which our students feel safe, valued and welcome. Our ethos demonstrates that students feel their presence is important and that it is vital for their achievement and progress. Students need to know that they will be missed and any absence will be followed up.
- Students who feel vulnerable and experience difficulties attending class or have friendship problems will be supported and given strategies to help them cope. The Heads of Year and Learning Mentors will be the key members of staff involved liaising closely with the Form Tutors

and the Attendance Team.

- A varied and flexible curriculum will be offered to all students. Teachers are made aware of students' additional needs and given strategies to support their access to the curriculum through quality first teaching via individual provision maps. Special provision will be made for identified students including students who may need specific emotional wellbeing support.
- A clearly defined and consistent approach to positive behaviour management exists to provide a fair system and support for all St Paul's Academy students especially those who have difficulties; focusing on rewards and positive encouragement.
- Attendance data (such as the weekly winning tutor group document) will be produced and monitored regularly and analysed in order to identify patterns, set targets, correlate attendance with achievements and support and inform policy/practice.
- Heads of Year recognise high attendance and students are awarded within their year group. Reports for students who obtain 100% attendance and punctuality and most improved attendance and punctuality are displayed and sent out to staff. Families receive regular communication via In Touch e.g. letters of congratulations on a half termly basis for those students with 100% attendance or those whose attendance is most improved. Students whose attendance is a cause for concern will be monitored closely. Students are discussed with the Greenwich Attendance Advisory Service, where next steps are agreed.
- Parents will be reminded regularly (via letters home, InTouch, emails etc.) of the importance of regular school attendance.
- Parents and carers of students whose attendance falls in the 90 – 95% range will receive letters to alert them to the importance of improving this number and reminding them of the school expectation of at least 97% attendance.
- Students who have been absent for an extended period of time, or who are experiencing serious attendance issues will have individually tailored packages of support which may include a reduced timetable or phased return via our in-house alternative provision.
- School staff will liaise with other services/agencies who may assist students who are experiencing difficulties.
- The Principal reports to the Governing Body six times a year on attendance and punctuality matters. The Attendance Team produces reports in advance to be reviewed and analysed by the governors.

Communication with the Local Authority / Persistent Absenteeism

Students whose attendance falls below 90% is defined as a persistent absentee. All absences must be supported by documentation proving appointments, illnesses or medical conditions. Without evidence, absences are recorded as unauthorised and will remain so until documentation is received by the Attendance Team. Students whose attendance falls below 90% will be monitored by the Attendance Team and Safeguarding colleagues. Families will be sent letters, offered meetings and/or home visits. Documentary evidence will be requested and parents / carers will be informed that the school may need to request a Fixed Penalty Notice from Greenwich Local Authority if there is no improvement or documentary evidence is not produced. Students who have 10% unauthorised absence or more may be referred to the Local Authority and a penalty notice could be issued to the parent/carer. This is normally the last resort as St Paul's would work with the student/family putting in place various interventions before a decision is made to refer to the Local Authority.

Prosecution by the Local Authority

If a child of compulsory school age fails to attend school (or alternative provision) regularly, their parents or carers may be guilty of an offence and can be prosecuted by the Local Authority. Only local authorities can prosecute and they must fund all associated costs.

Punctuality

Persistent lateness counts towards a student's attendance record and affects whole class learning. All students are expected to arrive at school on time and to arrive at each lesson on time.

School Gate Closes at 8.21am

The bell is rung [8.19am] at the Student Gate to signal to any students in the immediate vicinity that the gate will close imminently.

Late Gate: 8.21-8.55am

Members of staff will be located in the Reception area from 8.25am to 8.55am as per the Late Gate Supervision arrangements. One member of staff will oversee the signing in of students at the screen and ask to see their school planner for confirmation of their identity. Their identity must then be confirmed using their swipe card. If the student has neither item and is unknown to the member of staff supervising the signing in (or other in the Reception area), the Reception Team can confirm the student's name from their photo on SIMS.

The other members of staff overseeing the Late Gate supervision should enquire as to the reasons behind the student's lateness discussing solutions/revised times to leave home etc. Students must be reminded that they need to aim to be on the premises by 8.15am at the very latest. Whilst queuing, students should be getting themselves ready for learning by ensuring their uniform is worn correctly just as they would be expected to do during the morning line up.

Sanction for Lateness

The Attendance Team will distribute the list of students who signed in late each morning from InVentry. Form Tutors will use this information to check if any of the students in their tutor group were late to school. Any students who presented at the Late Gate before 8.55am will be automatically issued with a Centralised Detention which should be completed on the same day as the lateness where possible.

Lateness after 8.55am

At 8.55am the InVentry screen and printer will be repositioned so that it faces the Reception Team. This will allow one of the Reception Team colleagues to monitor the signing in and check the printed sticker before handing it over to the student. It is important that the name on the printed sticker is the correct name to prevent students signing in late as another student. This printed sticker is the student's entry ticket to the lesson and the student should stick it into their planner for record keeping.

Persistent Lateness

Heads of Year will monitor student lateness across their year group and action the necessary interventions and sanctions to those students with persistent lateness to school (see below). Students with persistent lateness of 6 or more lates over a half term period will be issued with a Principal's Detention [PD] which takes place after school (for 2 hours) every Wednesday and Friday.

Interventions / Sanctions for morning lateness

First Late	Centralised Detention
Second late	Centralised Detention
Third Late and beyond before reset	PD on Wednesday or Friday

Following a PD for the 3rd late in a week, students go back to stage one of the sanction cycle outlined above.

Lateness to Lessons

Late to lesson means the automatic issuing of a Centralised Detention.

7. Supporting students who are absent or returning to school

7.1 Students absent due to complex barriers to attendance

We always work with students and their families to explore strategies for removing in-school barriers. A meeting with a member of the Attendance Team and a Pastoral colleague is always the starting point.

7.2 Students absent due to mental or physical ill health or SEND

We always work with students and their families to explore strategies for students who are absent due to mental or physical ill health or SEND. A meeting with a member of the Attendance Team, a Pastoral colleague and a SENDCo is always the starting point to explore what adjustments can be made.

Where a student has an education health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that are related to the student's needs, the school will inform the local authority.

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

We always meet with students and their families. This meeting will include a member of the Attendance Team and a Pastoral colleague.

8. Attendance monitoring

8.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual student, year group and cohort level.

Specific student 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 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 students, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and
- Identify students 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 students, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
- Provide targeted support to the students 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 SLT and relevant members of staff, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinators, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads)
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a student's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific students, where appropriate

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 student 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 of students who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
 - Discuss attendance and engagement at school
 - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
 - Explain the help that is available
 - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
 - Review any existing actions or interventions

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

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated, and as a minimum, annually by Michelle Hepburn, Vice Principal. 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:

- Child protection and safeguarding 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
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment

S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In police detention

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays