

Holy Family Catholic High School & 6th Form Centre



Whole School Attendance Policy

ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY POLICY

APPROVED BY GOVERNORS:

POLICY TO BE REVIEWED: September 2025

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This Attendance & Punctuality Policy is part of a broader suite of Safeguarding Policies, including the School's Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy.

The Governing Body believes that in order to enable effective teaching and learning to take place, good behaviour in all aspects of school life is necessary. It seeks to create a caring, learning environment in the school which derives from the injunction of Jesus to love our neighbours as ourselves. All pupils, teaching and non-teaching staff have a part to play in living and working according to the values of Christ.



Holy Family Catholic High School & Sixth Form Centre



Mission Statement

Inspired by the spirit of God:

Holy Family aspires to be a caring Catholic community,

Following the example of Jesus,

Celebrating our talents and achievements,

Having the ambition to be the best we can be,

Supporting each other in a secure and safe environment.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Regular and punctual school attendance is important. Pupils need to attend school regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them by law. Holy Family Catholic High School fully recognises its responsibilities to ensure pupils are in school and on time, therefore, having access to learning for the maximum number of days and hours.

Our Policy applies to all children registered at this school and this Policy is made available on our school website to all parents/carers of pupils who are registered at our school.

The DfE has produced guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities: **Working together to improve school attendance.** <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>

Our Attendance Policy reflects the key principles of that guidance.

This policy is written with the above guidance in mind and underpins our school ethos to:

- promote children's welfare and safeguarding
- ensure every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- ensure that pupils succeed whilst at school
- ensure that pupils have access to the widest possible range of opportunities at school, and when they leave school

Although parents/carers have the legal responsibility for ensuring their child's good attendance, the Head teacher and Governors at our school are committed to:

- Building strong relationships with families, listen to and understand barriers to attendance and work with families to remove them
- Working closely with other professionals and agencies to ensure that all pupils are encouraged and supported to develop good attendance habits.

***Definition of parent: Section 576 of the Education Act 1996** - A parent in relation to any child or young person, includes any person:

- all natural parents, whether they are married or not.
- who is not a parent but who has parental responsibility for a child; or
- who has care of a child i.e., lives with and looks after the child.

This also includes all parents who are absent. Parental partners can be included whether they are married or the natural parent of the child as they have 'care' of the child. If a pupil lives with a grandparent or older sibling as their main carer, they can also be included as they are the main care provider. It is also important to note that even though a parent may not live in the same home as the pupil, that parent is still

responsible for ensuring their child attends school every day.

At Holy Family Catholic High School, we understand the law requires:

- Our school to have an admission register and an attendance register.
- Our governors to have regard to the statutory guidance '[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)'.
- Our School to put in place appropriate safeguarding responses for children who go missing from school.
- Our school to notify the Local Authority (LA) when a pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register.
- Our school to inform the LA of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more.

2. PRINCIPLES OF THE HOLY FAMILY CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

The Governing Body of Holy Family Catholic High School places a high priority on achieving standards and feel that excellent pupil attendance and punctuality are essential. They undertake this role by

- Nominating a named Governor for Attendance.
- Monitoring what strategies the school has put into place to improve attendance and reduce persistent absence and take appropriate action should attendance levels impact significantly on attainment.
- Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.
- Take an active role in attendance improvement, support their school to prioritise attendance, and work together with leaders to set whole school cultures.
- Ensure school staff receive training on attendance.
- Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.

In order for children to achieve their potential, pupils must be highly motivated to learn and keen and eager to attend school. Regular, punctual attendance will establish good habits that will support them throughout their lives. To achieve this, the Governors and staff are committed to working in partnership with parents to ensure that the school achieves a MINIMUM of 97% attendance throughout the school.

The Government expects us to:

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence (less than 90%).
- Ensure every pupil has access to a suitable education, to which they are entitled.
- Act early to address patterns of absence.

This table illustrates the impact of attendance that is 95% or below

Attendance during one school year	Equals this number of days absent	Which is approximately this many weeks absent	Which means this number of lessons missed
95%	9.5 days	2 weeks	50 lessons
90%	19 days	4 weeks	100 lessons
85%	29 days	6 weeks	150 lessons
80%	38days	8 weeks	200 lessons

3. NATIONAL CONTEXT

The 1996 Education Act, (section 444) states that parents (including non-related adult carers in the child’s household) have a **legal responsibility** to ensure that those of compulsory school age are educated, either by ‘**regular**’ attendance at school or ‘otherwise’. The 2008 Education and Skills Act, (section 155) specifies the same requirement regarding regular attendance at alternative provision.

The duty on parents is to ensure that their children are educated, either at school or ‘otherwise’. Education is therefore compulsory. In terms of ‘otherwise’, children may be educated by their parents at home, by a private tutor or in establishments other than schools, i.e. – FE colleges from the age of 14, special units, hospitals or in alternative educational programmes or work experience.

The law allows parents to choose the alternative options, provided they can demonstrate to the Local Authority that the education is full-time and ‘suitable’ to the child’s education needs, up until the relevant leaving-date for all young people.

Schools must enter pupils on the admission register and attendance register from the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school.

For most pupils, the expected first day of attendance is the first day of the school year. Every amendment made to the admission register and the attendance register must include: the original entry; the amended entry; the reason for the amendment; the date on which the amendment was made; and the name and position of the person who made the amendment.

Legislation

This policy is based on the Department for Education’s (DfE’s) statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) and school attendance parental responsibility measures.

The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- The Education Acts 1996 and 2002.
- The Children Act 1989

- The Crime and Disorder Act 1998.
- The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Sentencing Act 2020.
- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.
- The Education (Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders) (England) Regulations 2007
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007, as amended The Education (Information about Individual Pupils) (England) Regulations 2013.
- The Children and Young Persons Acts 1933 and 1963.
- The Equality Act 2010.

4. DAILY PROCEDURES

Under the 2006 Education Regulations, the school is **legally** required to register students twice daily. Registers are marked in the morning between 8:45am and 9:15am and in the afternoon between 12:15pm and 1:30pm. It is essential that all students are registered on both occasions.

School starts at 8:45am when all pupils/students should be in their form/classroom, in preparation for the register being taken. At this time, they should collect items for the day and make sure that they are aware of any changes / arrangements to the day's activities. **It is a legal requirement that a register is taken at the start of the day.** Not only does the process allow us to monitor attendance but also to act as a student checklist in respect of health and safety issues – e.g., Fire Drill. Each year a school calendar is sent out and is also on the website which clearly indicates the days when your child is expected to be in school.

Roles and Responsibilities School Community

Role of Governors/Trustee Board

- To set high expectations of all leaders, staff, pupils, and parents so that children attend school every day and are safeguarded from harm.
- To Identify a member of the governing body to lead on attendance matters and ensuring that there is a named senior attendance champion.
- Ensuring school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties by rigorously evaluating the effectiveness of the school's attendance procedures so that consistent attendance support is provided for all pupils.
- Ensuring the school engages and works effectively with the local authority Attendance Team, and wider local partners and services to address barriers to school attendance.
- Regularly reviewing attendance data, discussing, challenging trends, and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most.
- Ensuring high aspirations are maintained for all pupils, and processes for support are adapted to the individual needs of pupils including those with long term illnesses, special educational needs and disabilities, pupils with a social worker or youth justice worker and pupils from cohorts with historically lower attendance such as those eligible for free school meals.

- Ensuring all school staff receive adequate training on attendance and that relevant staff have access to opportunities to share and learn from good practice in other schools.
- Ensuring that attendance data is shared with the Local Authority or Department for Education as required and on time.
- Reviewing the school's Attendance Policy on at least an annual basis, ensuring that the required resources are available to fully implement the policy.

Role - Senior Leadership:

- Promote the significance and benefits of regular attendance to both pupils and their parents.
- Establish and maintain positive relationships with pupils and parents.
- Ensure a school-wide commitment to promoting good attendance, supported by engaging teaching and learning experiences that motivate all pupils to attend regularly and achieve their full potential.
- Oversee the implementation of the Attendance Policy and ensure it undergoes an annual review.
- Ensure all staff are informed about the Attendance Policy and receive adequate training to address attendance-related issues.
- Ensure compliance with relevant regulations and legislation.
- Appoint a designated senior attendance leader to champion attendance, allocating sufficient time and resources to the role.
- Submit school attendance data to the Local Authority and the Department for Education as required and in a timely manner.
- Regularly report on the school's attendance and related issues to the Governors/Trustees, with termly updates to the governing board and half-termly updates to the nominated governor/trustee responsible for attendance.
- Implement and maintain systems to report, record, and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those educated off-site.
- Regularly collect and analyse attendance data to identify patterns and causes of absenteeism.
- Use the analysed data to develop solutions and evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.
- Develop a multi-agency response to enhance attendance and provide support to pupils and their families.
- Record all interventions, conversations precisely using factual evidence-based information that may be required should legal proceedings be initiated.

Role of All Staff

- Promote the importance and value of regular attendance to pupils and their parents.
- Build and maintain positive relationships with pupils and their parents.
- Contribute to a whole school approach that supports good attendance, reinforced by quality teaching and learning that encourages pupils to attend and succeed.
- Adhere to relevant regulations and legislation.
- Implement and uphold systems for reporting, recording, and monitoring the attendance of all pupils, including those educated off-site.
- Ensure accurate and timely recording of attendance registers.
- Participate in the evaluation of school strategies and interventions related to attendance.

- Work with external agencies to improve attendance and provide support to pupils and their families.

4.4 Role of Attendance Officer and Early Help Attendance Lead

- Monitor and analyse pupil attendance data.
- Conduct weekly attendance meetings with the Senior Attendance Champion, Designated Safeguarding Lead, SENCO, and other relevant staff members.
- Implement strategies to promote excellent whole-school attendance.
- Address unsatisfactory attendance by applying strategies agreed in partnership with parents.
- Keep accurate and factual information in relation to pupils and their families.
- Coordinate action plans for pupils of concern, including the initiation of an Early Help Assessment and Plan or the implementation of an attendance contract.
- Ensure adherence to first day calling procedures when a child is absent without parental contact.
- Lead school-wide initiatives such as awards assemblies and reward schemes.
- Refer cases to appropriate external agencies as needed.
- Refer severely absent pupils for support through the Team around the School initiative.

5. ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

If your child cannot come to school because of illness, you should advise the school on the first day of absence by telephone or via Class Charts. If no message is received, we will assume that your child is absent without your permission. We will then make every effort to contact you. The school requires at least two emergency contact numbers. It is essential that the school is kept informed of changes of contact details such as phone numbers and addresses. Parents are encouraged to ensure that their child brings in a letter, confirming the reasons for the absence when the child returns to school.

Once contact (verbal and/or written) has been made with the parent the school will determine if the absence is to be authorised or unauthorised.

The school will only authorise a medical absence if the circumstances are unavoidable. The school has the right to request medical evidence if a parent rings the school to confirm the student is unwell. This may include: a medical appointment card with one appointment entered, slip with date, pupils name and surgery stamp, signed by GP Receptionist, letter from a professional, doctor's note, medication prescribed by a doctor, copy of prescription, print screen of medical notes, as well as letters concerning hospital appointments or any other relevant evidence. The Head Teacher may not authorise medical absence without this evidence.

Parents are asked to make routine medical and dental appointments outside school hours wherever possible. Where such appointments in school time are unavoidable, parents should inform the school in advance so a decision can be made whether to authorise the absence or not.

The school **may** authorise absence under certain specific circumstances. However, the parent must contact the Headteacher in advance to secure authorisation. This

may include work related interviews and meetings with external agencies. The Headteacher **may** also authorise events where students are involved in any supervised sporting events or trials, theatre performances and participation in acts of religious worship.

Unauthorised absence includes;

- parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily e.g., because they had a late night or for non-infectious illness or injury that would not affect their ability to learn.
 - absences which have never been properly explained.
 - children who arrive at school after the close of registration are marked using a 'U.' This indicates that they are in school for safeguarding purposes, however, is counted as an absence for the session.
 - shopping trips.
 - looking after other children or children accompanying siblings or parents to medical appointments.
 - their own or family birthdays.
 - holidays taken during term time, not deemed 'for exceptional purposes' by the headteacher, including any arranged by other family members or friends.
 - day trips.
- other leave of absence in term time which has not been agreed

6. CHILDREN WITH A SOCIAL WORKER-FIRST DAY RESPONSE

If children who have a social worker are absent from school, we will contact the Local Authority. We may request a home visit as part of the first day response. We will also contact the child's social worker and the Virtual School where appropriate.

7. PERSISTENT ABSENCE

The school has a responsibility to reduce the number of students whose attendance is below 90% over the school year. **Students with attendance below 90% fall into the 'Persistent Absentee' category.**

When a student's attendance falls below 90% or punctuality is a concern (at any stage of the year) we will:

- Invite you into school to discuss the situation with a senior member of staff.
- Create a personalised support /action plan to address any barriers to attendance.
- Set a target with timescales to secure improvement in attendance.
- Offer support by sign posting to other agencies or services if appropriate. This may involve undertaking an early help assessment.
- Consider any interventions that have worked previously to bring about improvements in attendance.
- Consider any school age siblings in our school or other schools and work in partnership to deliver a joint approach
- Refer the matter to the Local Authority for relevant sanctions if attendance deteriorates following the above actions.

- Consult with our Local Authority point of contact from the School Support Services.
- Ask for medical evidence for further illnesses

If parents in our school fail to comply with the support plan and there is no improvement in their child's attendance a referral may be made to the Local Authority requesting legal intervention through the issuing of a penalty notice or the School Attendance Panel.

8. RELUCTANCE TO GO TO SCHOOL

Sometimes students seem anxious about leaving home to go to school. They may tell you that they feel unwell or give another reason to not attend. You may notice that they are worried from things that they say e.g. that they do not want to do any particular subjects, feel that they have no friends or are being bullied. If this is the case, please contact the school as soon as possible to speak to the relevant Progress Leader.

9. LEAVE OF ABSENCE IN TERM TIME

School Attendance and the Law

The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 introduced a National Framework in England. By law all children of compulsory school age must receive an appropriate full-time education (Education Act 1996). Parents have a legal duty to ensure their child attends school regularly at the school at which they are registered.

The definition of a parents may be recognised differently under education law, than family law. Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 states that a 'parent', in relation to a child or young person, includes any person who is not a parent (from which can be inferred 'biological parent') but who has parental responsibility, or who has care of the child. A person typically has care of a child or young person if they are the person with whom the child lives, either full or part time and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their biological or legal relationship is with the child.

National Framework for Penalty Notice - There is now a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England, of 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period. The 10 sessions of absence do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence (G, O and/or U coded within the school's registers). The 10-school week period can span different terms, school years or education settings.

Sanctions may include issuing each parent (for each child) with a Penalty Notice for £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days (for the first offence). A second Penalty Notice issued within a three-year period will result in a fine of £160 per parent, per child. If a third offence is committed the matter may be referred to the local authority for consideration of prosecution via the Magistrates Court. If prosecution is instigated for irregular school attendance, each parent may receive a fine of up to £2500 and/or up to 3 months in prison. If a parent is found guilty in court, they will receive a

criminal conviction.

Penalty Notice - Notice to improve. If the national threshold outlined above 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 Sefton 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 to date.
- 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.

"There is no entitlement in law for pupils to take time off during the term to go on holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure or recreation, or to take part in protest activity in school hours."

In addition, the Supreme Court has ruled that the definition of regular school attendance is "in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school."

The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 set out the statutory requirements for schools. All references to family holidays and extended leave have been removed. The amendments specify that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are "exceptional circumstances" and they do not have any discretion to authorise up to ten days of absence each academic year.

It is a rule of this school that a leave of absence shall not be granted in term time unless there are reasons considered to be exceptional by the headteacher, irrespective of the child's overall attendance. Only the headteacher or his/her designate (not the local authority) may authorise such a request and all applications for a leave of absence must be made in writing, in advance, on the prescribed form provided by the school. The school will usually consider that the parent who has made the application is therefore allowing the leave of absence, and also that all parents who are on the holiday are allowing the leave. Where a parent removes a child after their application for leave was refused or where no application was made to the school, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. It is likely that penalty notices will be requested, in line with the National Framework and Sefton Code of Conduct, in respect of each parent believed to have allowed the absence.

At Holy Family 'exceptional circumstances' will be interpreted as: being of unique

and significant emotional, educational or spiritual value to the child which outweighs the loss of teaching time (as determined by the headteacher). The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are events that are "rare, significant, unavoidable and short." By 'unavoidable' we mean an event that could not reasonably be scheduled at another time, outside of school term time, regardless of who has planned or paid for the holiday or absence (including grandparents or other family or friends).

The headteacher/school may discuss the leave of absence request with other education settings and/or the Local Authority to determine any exceptional circumstances.

UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

Unauthorised absence is where a school is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence. Such circumstances may include:

- A pupil not attending school to go shopping.
- A pupil not attending school as it is their birthday or the birthday of a family member.
- A pupil not attending school as the family have gone to the airport to meet a visiting relative.
- A pupil not attending school due to attending a hospital appointment for another family member.
- A pupil not attending school due to the fact the family returned late in the previous evening from a family holiday.
- A pupil not attending school as they are looking after younger siblings.
- A pupil attends a medical appointment in the morning but then fails to return to school for afternoon lessons.

Our school will always try to bring about an improvement in attendance through a support plan, however, we may request penalty charge notices to address unauthorised absence. A minimum evidential requirement of ten (10) school sessions lost to unauthorised absence by any pupil in the current term **and/or** eighteen (18) sessions lost to unauthorised absence over two consecutive terms will be required to trigger the process.

The Local Authority will:

- Issue a formal written warning to the parent/carer of the possibility of a penalty notice being issued.
- In the same letter, set a period of 15 school days within which the pupil must have no unauthorised absence.
- Issue a penalty charge notice through the post at the end of the 15-day period if the
- required level of improvement has not been achieved.

10. LOCAL AUTHORITY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE PANEL 15% unauthorised absence

Our school may refer pupils who have 15% unauthorised absence to the School Attendance Panel when there has been no improvement in attendance through interventions, we have put into place including an attendance support plan/early help plan. The Local Authority School Attendance Support Team (SAST) work both strategically and operationally by offering support to schools, to reduce persistent absence and improve overall attendance.

Parents are expected to work with the school and local authority to address any attendance concerns. Parents should proactively engage with the support offered, aiming to resolve any problems together. If difficulties cannot be resolved in this way, the school may consider more formal support and/or refer the child to the Local Authority/ Local authority School attendance panel.

Local Authority School Attendance Panel. The purpose of the School Attendance Panel meeting is for you and your child to meet with representatives from the Local Authority to identify the reasons for absence. The Local Authority Attendance Panel is chaired by a member of the school Attendance Support Service. At the beginning of the meeting introductions are made and the purpose of the panel is explained. Parents/carers are reminded of the legal consequences for them if the pattern of poor school attendance continues.

An action plan in the form of an attendance contract is put in place to try to support an improvement in attendance.

The reasons for absence will be identified and different strategies to improve attendance will be considered:

- A supportive action plan in the form of an attendance contract will be agreed
- An attendance target date for improvement will be set.
- The student's attendance will then be closely monitored for a period of 12 school weeks.
- A decision to apply for an Education Supervision Order

If attendance does not improve, legal action may be taken in the form of a Penalty Notice, an Education Supervision Order (ESO) or prosecution in the Magistrates Court.

First day response – children with a social worker. Our school works in partnership with the LA School Attendance Support Team in delivering a first day response system for children with a social worker. If children who have an allocated social worker are absent from school, we will contact the family to establish the reason why the child is absent from school.

We will complete the first day response form and submit it to Sefton Council, so information is shared in relation to why the child is absent from school. We will also request a home visit if we feel this is appropriate. We will also inform the child's social worker.

11. PUNCTUALITY

As you may be aware, the law treats some persistent lateness in the same way as irregular attendance and parents may be prosecuted by the Local Authority if late arrival is not resolved.

Poor punctuality can lead to your child:

- Feeling embarrassed in front of their friends.
- Missing the beginning of vital lessons.
- Missing important instructions for the rest of the school day.
- Learning bad habits which could affect their employability in the future.

Minutes late per day during the school year	Equal days' worth of teaching lost in a year
5 minutes	3.4 days
10 minutes	6.9 days
15 minutes	10.3 days
20 minutes	13.8 days
30 minutes	20.7 days

Late Procedures

Children, who arrive late must sign in with the member of staff on the gate or with the Attendance Officer. A reason for the lateness is also requested. The admin staff will:

- Update the system with their mark.
- A same day lunchtime detention of 20 minutes will be given.
- Children who frequently arrive late will be monitored; parents will be contacted and a referral to the Progress Leader will be considered.
- Children who arrive late after the registers have closed due to a medical appointment will be marked M.

Any child arriving after 9:15am for any reason other than medical will be marked U (late after registers closed).

Children who must leave for any reason throughout the day should be signed out at the main office by their parent/carer or appropriate adult. This is strongly discouraged. Parents are requested to make dental or medical appointments outside of school hours.

12. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

IMPROVING ATTENDANCE – WHAT PARENTS CAN DO

- Provide at least two emergency contact numbers to the school.
- Ensure their child attends every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies.

- Notify the school as soon as possible when their child must be unexpectedly absent (e.g., sickness).
- Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance.
- Book any medical appointments around the school day where possible. Obviously, this is not always possible but, in such cases, try to minimise the disruption to the day by getting an early morning appointment so that your child can attend afterwards OR a late afternoon appointment so that he/she can complete most of their timetable before leaving.
- Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barrier to attendance.
- Proactively engage with the support offered to prevent the need for more formal support.
- Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.
- Encourage your child to take responsibility for being on time for school, ensuring they have a realistic bedtime and will not be too tired to get up in the morning for school. Equipment should be prepared the night before. Regularly checking your child's planner and/or Class Charts can help you to do this.
- Discourage your child from staying overnight with friends during the week. This sometimes leads to them both being late (or not attending at all) the next day.
- Leave of absence during term time is not a parental right. If there are special or exceptional circumstances, please contact the Headteacher and a decision will be made if the absence can be authorised or not.
- Talk positively about going to school.
- Monitor your child's internet and social media use to ensure they are not experiencing any difficulties that may prevent them from wanting to attend school.
- Take any worries seriously but do not show that you are unduly concerned. Believe that they will be sorted out.
- Contact school before the concerns escalate.

IMPROVING ATTENDANCE – WHAT SCHOOL DOES:

- Encourage and expect pupils to gain an attendance figure of 97%+.
- Have a dedicated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance.
- Have a clear school attendance policy on the school website which all staff, pupils and parents understand.
- Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance.
- Accurately complete admission and attendance registers.
- Have robust daily processes to follow up absence.
- Proactively use data to identify cohorts with, or at risk of, low attendance and develop strategies to support them.
- Work with other schools in the local area and the local authority to share effective practice where there are common barriers to attendance.
- Support for pupils with medical conditions or SEND with poor attendance.

- Maintain the same ambition for attendance and work with pupils and parents to maximise attendance.
- Ensure join up with pastoral support and where required, put in place additional support and adjustments, such as an individual healthcare plan and if applicable, ensuring the provision outlined in the pupil's EHCP is accessed.
- Consider additional support from wider services and external partners, making timely referrals.
- Regularly monitor data for such groups, including at board and governing body meetings and with local authorities.
- Agree a joint approach for all severely absent pupils with the local authority.
- Marks the registers in accordance with the law twice a day.
- Informs any parents/carers who have not contacted the school, of the absence of their child on a particular day.
- Maintains records and monitors attendance of students on a regular basis.
- Authorises absences in accordance with the government guidelines. Please note that only the school can authorise absence.
- Contacts parents / carers when the attendance falls below acceptable levels and/or when patterns of absence are causing concerns.
- Undertake Early Help Assessment where it is deemed appropriate.
- Monitor pupils who are supported by the In Year Fair Access Panel and those who attend alternative provision including Complimentary Education (please add your attendance arrangements for this).
- Proactively use data to identify pupils at risk of poor attendance.
- Work with each identified pupil and their parents to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-school barriers to attendance.
- Where out of school barriers are identified, signpost and support access to any required services in the first instance.
- If the issue persists, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the local authority and other partners. Act as the lead practitioner where all partners agree that the school is the best placed lead service. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the school, continue to work with the local authority and partners.
- Works with external agencies to maintain good attendance and to support the student/family with any issues that may affect attendance and punctuality to school.
- Provides reintegration support for students returning from absence.
- Maintains a range of strategies to encourage good attendance by means of rewards.
- Inform parents of individual pupil's attendance record each term at Parents' Evening.
- Works with relevant external agencies if a students' attendance becomes a concern, i.e. – Social Care, Early Help Services, Police, YOT, SEND.
- Make referrals to the Local Authority School Attendance Panel where pupils' attendance levels are becoming a cause for concern.
- Make referrals to the School Nurse team where appropriate to seek advice to support the pupil.
- Works in partnership with the Local Authority to improve school attendance and reduce persistent absenteeism sometimes utilising legal interventions.
- Campaign as a means of working with parents to resolve issues affecting levels of attendance

- Continued support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent and:
- Where absence becomes persistent, put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers. Where necessary this includes working with partners.
- Where there is a lack of engagement, hold more formal conversations with parents and be clear about the potential need for legal intervention in future.
- Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, work with the local authority on legal intervention.
- Where there are safeguarding concerns, intensify support through statutory children's social care.

IMPROVING ATTENDANCE - ROLE OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY

- Hold a termly conversation with our school to identify, discuss and signpost or provide access to services for pupils who are persistently or severely absent or at risk of becoming so.
- Identified point of contact for our school who will assist us in signposting families for support including early help where appropriate.
- Provide a school attendance panel meeting for our pupils who have 15% unauthorised absence
- Work jointly with our school to provide formal support options including parenting contracts and Education Supervision Orders.
- Where there are safeguarding concerns, ensure joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners.
- Ensure improving school attendance and reducing persistent absence is a priority in all multi agency plans including child protection, child in need, cared for children (LAC) and Early Help.
- Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, enforce attendance through legal intervention (including prosecution as a last resort).
- Track local attendance data to prioritise support and unblock area wide attendance barriers where they impact numerous schools.
- Work closely with relevant services and partners, for example special educational needs, educational psychologists, and mental health services, to ensure joined up support for families.
- Ensure suitable education, such as alternative provision, is arranged for children of compulsory school age who because of health reasons would not otherwise receive a suitable education.
- Regularly monitor the attendance of children with a social worker by providing a first day response system.
- Attendance to be a priority in personal education plans for looked-after children.
- Secure regular attendance of looked-after children as their corporate parent and provide advice and guidance about the importance of attendance to those services supporting pupils previously looked after.

13. COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

- Report to parents at least three times a year in reports on their child's attendance.

- Provide daily access to their child's attendance via Class Charts.
- Provide regular updates to the parents of pupils whose attendance drops below 95%.

14. REWARDS AND INCENTIVE

- Celebrate excellent attendance by displaying and reporting individual and class achievements
- Reward individuals and groups of good or improving attendance through a variety of Class Charts merits and rewards.
- Encourage pupils on their return from absence to meet with the teachers that they have missed lessons of.

15. SCHOOL ATTENDANCE, SAFEGUARDING AND CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. School staff will follow the school's procedures for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

Notifying the Local Authority

Our school notify the Local Authority of any pupil/student who fails to attend school regularly after making reasonable enquiries or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more. (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 regulation 12.

The school (regardless of designation) must also notify the Local Authority of any pupil/student who is to be deleted from the admission register.

Our school will demonstrate that we have taken reasonable enquiries to ascertain the whereabouts of children that would be considered 'missing'.

Where a child leaves our school without a destination or another school is not identified our school follow Sefton Council Children Missing Education Procedures and they can be found at [https://www.sefton.gov.uk/schools-learning/attendance-and-welfare/children-missing-education-\(cme\).aspx](https://www.sefton.gov.uk/schools-learning/attendance-and-welfare/children-missing-education-(cme).aspx). The school will liaise with the Children Missing Education Co-ordinator who can be contacted on 0151 935 3181 or CME@sefton.gov.uk

16. ATTENDANCE DATA

We use data to monitor, identify and support individual pupils or groups of pupils when their attendance needs to improve. Persistently absent pupils are tracked and monitored carefully. We also combine this with academic tracking as increased absence affects attainment.

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents (always available via Class Charts) and to promote attendance.

17. ABSENCE CODES

According to the DfE guidance the following codes are used for authorised absence on the register. The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
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

Code	Definition	Scenario
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a ‘mobile child’ who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g., due to adverse weather)

Y5	Criminal justice detention	<p>Pupil is unable to attend as they are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention
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Code	Definition	Scenario
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 is not 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

Appendix 1 - School Attendance Support Plan

10% or more of sessions missed

(Based on each pupil's possible sessions)

Date of meeting:		
Pupil Name:		
DOB:	School:	Year Group:
Address:		
Overall Attendance % Persistent Absence %	Authorised Abs%	Unauthorised Abs%

Details of Parents / Carers (including Absent Parent(s), Private Fostering Arrangement) (Private fostering is when a child under the age of 16 (under 18 if disabled) is cared for by someone who is not their parent or a 'close relative'. This is a private arrangement made between a parent and a carer, for 28 days or more).	
Forename:	Surname:
Relationship to child:	
Address:	
Contact No.:	
Present at meeting:	
Forename:	Surname:
Relationship to child:	
Address:	
Contact No.:	
Present at meeting:	

Discussion: - Reason for absence

What is going well?

Views of Parent/Carer:

Views of the Child:

Views of the School:

What are we worried about?

Views of Parent/Carer:

Views of the Child:

Views of the School:

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What needs to happen?

Action Plan		
Action	By Whom	Date to be completed

Date attendance will be reviewed:
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Appendix 2 - Attendance Panel Referral Form – this form can only be used if the child has over 15% unauthorised absence and who have had an attendance support plan put in place that has not resulted in improved attendance.

<p>School: Phone No: Name of Pupil: M/F: First Name: Surname: Address: Post Code: Name of Parent(s)/Carer(s): Others with Parental Responsibility:</p> <p>Has the child got more than 15% Unauthorised absence? YES/NO</p> <p>Is the pupil on an EHC Plan? YES/NO</p> <p>Is pupil on SEN Register? YES/NO If yes, enter Code:</p> <p><u>IS THIS CHILD SUBJECT TO A PENALTY NOTICE? YES/NO</u></p> <p><u>IF YES, THE CHILD CANNOT BE REFERRED TO THE ATTENDANCE PANEL</u></p>	<p>DOB:</p> <p>Contact Numbers: Home: Work: Mobile:</p> <p>Yr. & Tutor Group:</p> <p>Ethnicity:</p> <p>Parental Language/Literacy Difficulty</p> <p>Is the pupil a Child in Care? (LAC) YES/NO</p> <p>Is the pupil eligible for Pupil Premium? YES/NO</p>
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<p>Reasons provided for absence (please attach a current attendance print out)</p>

Other agencies involved: e.g. Early Help, Children's Social Care, Police, CAMHS, YOT, School Health - Any other relevant information

Reason for referral – Please attach school support and attendance plan any other relevant information

SIGNED:

DATE:

PRINT NAME:

STATUS:

Date received by School Support Services: