



# St Aidan's

Church of England Primary Academy

A member of **CTDARI**

**'Fulfilling potential, growing in God.'**



**Acceptance, Love, Wisdom, Accountability, Youthfulness, Service**

## Our Vision

*At St. Aidan's, not only do we want our children to become happy and well-rounded individuals; we aim to nurture and equip children to be resilient, enthusiastic and effective communicators and learners who are able to use their experiences and technology skills to achieve their fullest potential allowing them to excel in the careers of the future and grow in God.*

**'I came that they may have life and live it to the full' John 10.10**

# Attendance and Punctuality Policy 2026-2027



## Statement of Intent

At St Aidan's Church of England Primary Academy, our vision is that we are 'Fulfilling potential, growing in God.' We want children to realise their potential and to make the most of the learning experiences available to them, to do this we recognise that they must be in school and on time every day.

**Our vision is based on John 10:10, *'I came that they may have life and live it to the full.'***

St Aidan's Church of England Primary Academy, seeks to ensure that all of our pupils receive their entitlement of a full-time education in order for each pupil to achieve their true potential. We recognise that poor attendance can cause lower attainment, and can impact on the personal, social and emotional development of pupils. Therefore, we strive to provide a welcoming and caring environment in which each member of the school community feels wanted and safe. All staff at St Aidan's work relentlessly alongside family members, and their children, to ensure that pupils at our school want to come to school every day and on time.

## Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school
- We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

## Legislation and guidance

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

[Part 6 of the Education Act](#)

[1996 Part 3 of the](#)

[Education Act 2002](#)

[Part 7 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)

[The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments\)](#)

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

It also refers to:

[School census guidance](#)

[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)

## **The Attendance Team at St Aidan's**

Mrs Kelly Harrison – Headteacher

Mrs Nadia Jones - Pupil and Family Support Worker

Mrs Suzy Hart Admin Manager

## **Roles and responsibilities**

### **The governing committee**

The governing committee is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy
- The school attendance officer meets with the headteacher to inform governors on a termly basis to review attendance throughout the school.

### **The headteacher**

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed penalty notices, if necessary

### **The Attendance Lead /Pupil and Family Support Worker**

The school Attendance officer and Pupil and Family Support Worker is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement

- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Working with the BwD Inclusion Team to advise them of individual pupil's poor attendance.
- Discussing attendance concerns with the Inclusion officer linked to the school during a termly meeting.
- Ensuring all parents are aware of the school's attendance expectations and procedures
- Making referrals to the Inclusion Team when all attempts of promoting attendance has not been successful.
- Completing paperwork relevant to the role such as: Child Missing in Education (CME), in year transfers, deletion from role etc.
- Arranging meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the headteacher
- Working with the Blackburn with Darwen Inclusion team to tackle persistent absence
  
- Advising the headteacher (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- Work with external agencies e.g. Family Support Workers, Social Workers, Lead Professionals to inform them of the child's attendance and work together to improve this

The attendance Lead/ Pupil and Family Support Worker is Nadia Jones and can be contacted via [nadia.jones@cidari.co.uk](mailto:nadia.jones@cidari.co.uk) / School office Tel: 01254 53148

## **The Admin Manager**

The Admin Manager is responsible for:

- To work closely with the Attendance lead to monitor and analyse our school attendance data
- Working with the Inclusion Officer, and Attendance Officer/Pupil and Family Support Worker to tackle persistent absence
- Supporting the designated senior leader in leading attendance across school

The Admin Manager is Suzy Hart and can be contacted via email [staoffice@cidari.co.uk](mailto:staoffice@cidari.co.uk) School office Tel:01254 53148

## **Class teachers**

Class teachers are responsible for:

- Recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office. The register for the morning session opens at 8:50am and closes at 9:00am. The register for the afternoon session opens at 1pm and closes at 1:10pm.

- Following this policy by modelling their own good attendance and ensuring pupils do too.
- Work with the Attendance Lead to monitor individual attendance concerns.
- Promoting a positive culture of good attendance throughout the school and as part of their lessons/daily Worship.
- Emphasising with their class the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- Discussing attendance concerns at parents' evenings where necessary.
- Discuss any concerns with the school Attendance Lead.
- Reporting any patterns/ absence concerns to the Attendance Officer/Pupil and Family Support Worker and where appropriate as safeguarding concerns.

## Admin Assistant

The school Admin Assistant will:

- Recording details of children who arrive late for school
- Take calls from parents/ listen to voicemails from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents to the school Attendance officer and Pupil and Family Support Worker in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance
- Work with the school Attendance officer and Pupil and Family Support Worker to conduct first-day call-backs/ send appropriate communication to ascertain the whereabouts of a child who is absent
- Report any absence concerns to the school Attendance officer and Pupil and Family Support Worker

The Admin Assistant is Leah Pemberton and can be contacted via email [staoffice@cidari.co.uk](mailto:staoffice@cidari.co.uk)  
School office Tel:01254 53148

## Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day, and on time.
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9:00 am on the day of the absence, and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- Talking to the school as soon as possible about any child's reluctance to come to school so that problems can be quickly identified and dealt with.
- 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
- Provide school with medical evidence of any appointments that have not been able to be made out of school hours.
- Ensuring that family holidays are not taken within term time
- Keep school updated with changes to contact details.

## Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Be an attendance H.E.R.O (Here Everyday Ready and On-



time

## **The Inclusion Officer (Blackburn with Darwen)**

The role of the inclusion officer is to work in partnership with school through a termly meetings to monitor impact of attendance strategies. When the final stage of the attendance escalation plan has been reached, it is the responsibility of the inclusion officer to utilise legal powers to enforce school attendance.

### **Definitions**

#### **Authorised absence**

- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or carer. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent telephones the school to explain the absence.
- Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised.

#### **Unauthorised absence**

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without a reason for absence provided.
- A child's absence will be unauthorised if the reason provided does not provide a good reason to be absent from school.

#### **Persistent Absences**

A child's attendance is classed as persistently absent when it falls below 90%. Please note that the Local Authority may take legal action, please see the section 'Penalty Notices'

#### **Severely Absent**

A child's attendance is classed as severely absent when it is at or below 50%. Please note that the Local Authority may take legal action, please see the section 'Penalty Notices'

Children who are persistently late or absent soon fall behind with their learning. Children who are absent from school frequently develop large gaps in their learning which will impact on their progress and their ability to meet age related learning expectations. A child whose attendance drops to 90% each year will, over their time at primary school, have missed two whole terms of learning.

#### **Penalty Notices**

Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 introduced additional powers under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 authorising the Council to issue penalty notices where parents and/or carers are considered capable of, but unwilling to ensure their child's school attendance.

Penalty notices are part of a range of enforcement measures to tackle poor school attendance.

Under current legislation, parents/carers commit an offence if their child fails to attend school regularly and the absences are unauthorised.

Depending on the circumstances, parents/carers may be prosecuted in the local Magistrates Court, in accordance with the provisions of Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

A penalty notice aims to quickly improve a child's attendance at school and is an alternative to prosecution. Parents/carers do not need to go to court unless they do not pay the penalty within 28 days.

Full payment of the penalty means parents/ carers are no longer liable to conviction i.e. it should be the end of the matter. It also prevents them from acquiring a criminal record, unless further offences are committed.

Penalty notices may be used in a range of situations where unauthorised absence occurs, such as:

- inappropriate absences that parents have allowed
- unapproved leave of absence taken in term-time or delayed return from an authorised leave of absence without obtaining advance permission from the school
- persistent late arrival at school after closure of registers
- when the parents of a formally excluded pupil fail in their duty to ensure that he/ she is not in a public place during school hours (without reasonable justification).

### **10 day Absence Procedure**

Schools are now required to submit 10 days (20 sessions) unauthorised absence data to the LA, in accordance with the Working Together guidance. These 10 days do not have to be continuous. We do not need to gain consent from parent's to do this.

### **15 day illness Procedure**

It is schools statutory duty to report any child that has had 15 days (30 sessions) of illness to the LA, in accordance with the Working Together guidance. This information will be shared with the panel who will meet to ensure the child is in receipt of a suitable education during their period of illness as appropriate. We do not need to gain consent from parent's to report this absence.

### **Warning of a penalty notice**

### **See Appendix 1 for Flow Chart of Penalty Notices**

A parent/carer may sometimes receive a written warning of the possibility of a penalty notice being issued. This will give you a period of time to improve his/ her attendance.

During this period, the child must have no further unauthorised absences from school. If he/she is ill during that time, medical evidence must be provided.

There is no limit to the number of times a formal warning of a possible penalty notice can be issued in any particular case, but it's highly unlikely that a parent/carer will receive more than three warnings per child in any one year before further action is taken.

There is no statutory right of appeal once a notice has been issued, but if you receive a formal written warning, you can write or speak to the Local Authority about your situation should you wish.

### **Costs**

Penalty notices are issued at £160 per child per parent and should be paid within 28 days. They can be paid at £80 if paid within 21 days.

Any second penalty notice issued to the same parent for the same child within a rolling 3-year period will be issued at a higher rate of £160 to be paid within 28 days with no option for a discounted rate.

### **Payments**

Details of payment arrangements will be included with the penalty notice. You cannot pay part of a penalty notice or pay it in instalments. The Government say it must be paid in full and your ability to pay is not something which the law allows us to consider.

You have up to 28 days from receiving the penalty notice to pay it in full. If you don't, the Local Authority is required to start legal proceedings against you in the local Magistrates Court. These proceedings will be for the original offence of failing to ensure your child attends school regularly.

If the case against you is proven, the Magistrates can fine you up to a maximum of £2,500 and/or jail you for up to 51 weeks. Magistrates can also make Parenting Orders, Community Orders and Education Supervision Orders, depending upon individual circumstances.

### **Following payment of the penalty notice**

Parents/carers are not liable for prosecution for their child's school attendance once the penalty notice is paid. However, prosecution may be considered for further periods of poor attendance not covered by the notice, depending upon the circumstances. If this is an ongoing issue, it is vital that parents/carers work closely with their child's school and the inclusion team.

## **Registration**

The gates to the playground open at 8.40am and close at 8.50am. This time is sufficient for all pupils to come into their classroom and be ready to learn.

Each class teacher has the responsibility for keeping an accurate record of attendance and the register will be completed by 9am daily.

## **Punctuality**

Any children that arrive after 8.50am will need to access school through the school office. For children arriving between 8.50am and 9.30am will receive a late mark using code 'L'.

For children that arrive to school after 9.30am their attendance will be unauthorised for the AM session using code 'U'. Please note that code U affects a child's overall attendance and will be flagged up in the three weekly attendance monitoring reports completed by the Attendance Lead.

Punctuality is also monitored, parents will receive communication if their child is late more than 3 times during a half term. If the child is late 5 times in a half term, parents will be called by Pupil and Family Support Worker to see if any support is necessary.

Children who are persistently late miss a significant amount of learning, often the most important aspect, as the beginning of the day is where the teacher explains the learning and what each child is expected to achieve.

## **Appointments**

We would like to politely ask that all medical appointments are booked out of school hours. However, we do appreciate that at times this cannot be avoided and would request that we have been provided medical evidence of this appointment. Medical appointments will be recorded using code 'M'. Without this evidence, we are unable to authorise this absence from school.

## **Absence Procedure**

For information regarding absences please refer to the guidance from the NHS "Is my child too ill for school" Please also refer to our 'One Page Profile to attendance'

Parents/carers are required to report absences by 9am each day of their child's absence. If children are absent for more than one day we ask that parents contact school on a daily basis to report their child's absence and to update school.

Absences can be reported by calling the school office on 01254 53148

It is important that we receive accurate information from parents/carers with reasons for the child's absence. This information is used to determine whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. The Attendance Lead has the responsibility to determine whether absences are authorised or unauthorised ensuring that the child is safeguarded at all times.

If a child is absent from school and parents have failed to report this to school, the Attendance Lead will contact parents in order of priority contacts to gain a reason for absence. If we are unable to contact parents the absence will be recorded as unauthorised using code 'U' and where necessary and deemed appropriate a home visit may be conducted.

## **Parental Request for Absence from School for Holiday**

In line with the local and government guidance head teachers are unable to authorise any holiday or leave of absence during term time. Head teachers can only authorise any leave of absence if the circumstances are deemed as exceptional. We would like to ask parents/carers that they do not take their child out of education by requesting holidays during term time.

Legal action can be taken and parents/carers can be fined for taking their child out of school during term time.

As a school, we are obliged to inform you that you may be subject to a Penalty Notice under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. This is in line with the Blackburn with Darwen Code of Conduct.

The Penalty Notice fine would be;

- £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days, rising to
- £160 per parent, per child if paid between 21-28 days.

This penalty notice will be issued to each parent or anyone with parental responsibility even if they do not also attend the holiday with the child.

## **Children Missing In Education (CME)**

Children missing in education are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Children missing in education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life.

At St Aidan's our Attendance Lead contacts our Inclusion Officer if we are unable to establish a reason for a child's absence following three school days with no contact. This can be sooner if we feel the child could be at risk. If a child has been absent from school for ten school days, the Attendance Lead will complete a child missing in education referral to the Local Authority.

Children are not removed from the school register until notification is received from the receiving school or a formal written letter is presented from parent stating the reason the child has been withdrawn from school.

## **Addressing attendance concerns**

The school expects attendance of at least 96%.

When a child's attendance begins to cause concern, the following process will be followed:

1. Letter 1 – Informing parents that their child's attendance has fallen below our 96% expectation and is a cause for concern. Attendance will be monitored for a three-week period for improvement to be made.
2. Letter 2 – Informing parents that after the three-week monitoring period, their child's attendance has not improved. Parents will then be invited into school for a meeting with the Attendance Lead/Pupil and Family Support Worker to discuss attendance and implement a support plan.
3. Letter 3 – Informing parents that their child's attendance will be referred to the BwD Inclusion Team as their child's attendance has continued to decline. This letter will outline that a fixed penalty notice may be issued by the Local Authority.

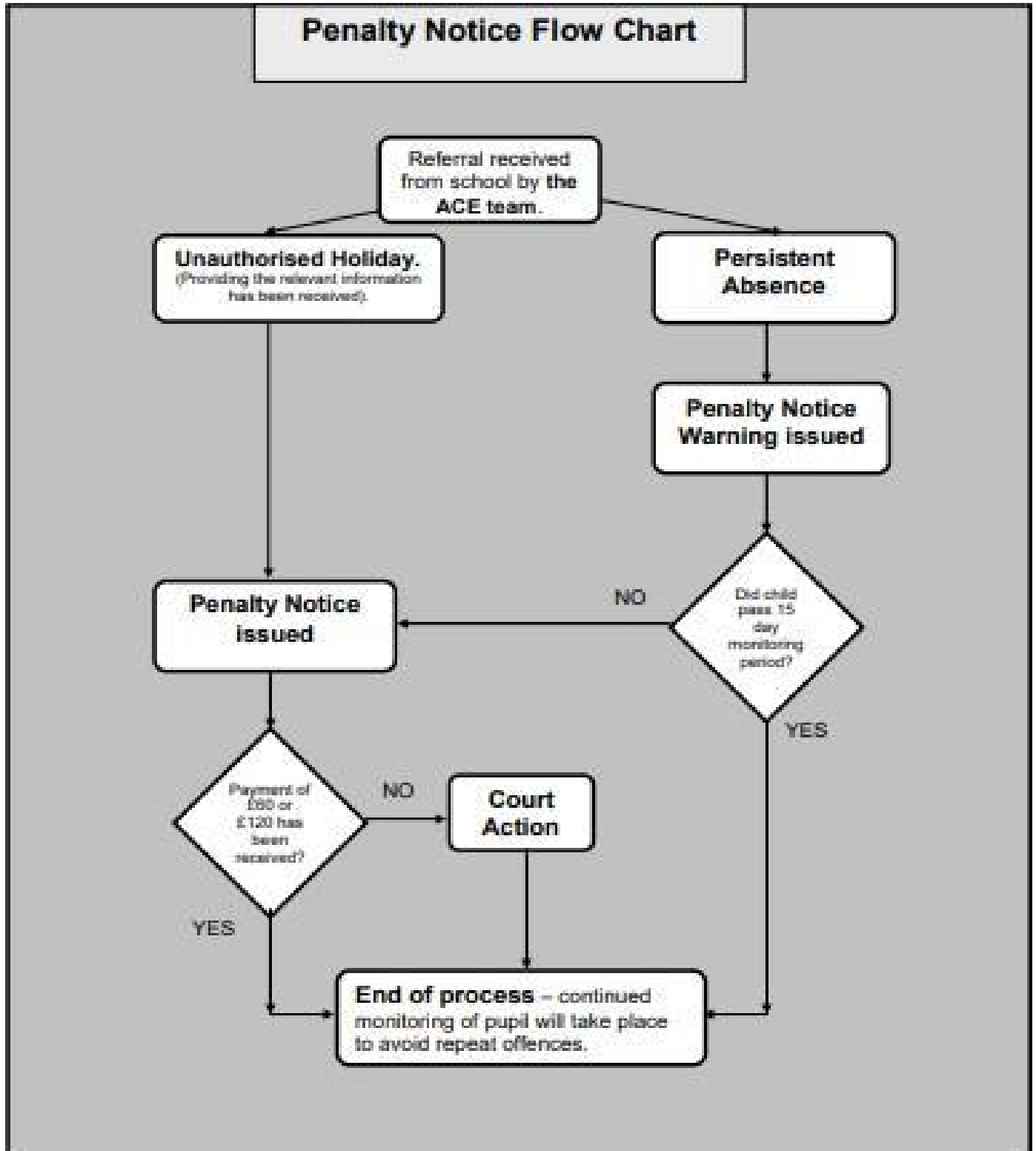
## **Promoting Regular Attendance**

We actively encourage and promote good attendance throughout school. We treat attendance as everyone's responsibility. Some of the strategies we use for improving and rewarding attendance include:

- Attendance is discussed with parents when children are new to school, meeting new parents of reception classes and during meet the teacher meetings and parents evenings of there are any concerns
- Attendance board is visibly displayed in the school hall.
- Celebrating class weekly attendance winners during celebration worship. The winners receive a trophy for the week displayed on their door and an extra playtime
- Sharing weekly attendance on the school newsletter
- Sharing positive news on our social media sites and Class Dojo e.g. 100% attendance days and weekly winners
- Leaders meet and greet children in the yard at the start of the day. Teachers meet and greet children at classroom doors. We do this to ensure that all children get positive interaction early in the day.
- Planning engaging lessons, linked to an enriching curriculum, that ensures there are many wider opportunities planned for the children such as a range of trips and visits, special themed days in school and visitors from outside agencies
- Termly Gold/ Silver and Bronze certificates are given out to all children (Gold-100%-96%, Silver 96%-95%, Bronze 95%-94%)
- Half termly class winners will be rewarded with an ice cream/hot chocolate party
- Sending well done messages/letters/ calls when attendance improves.
- Early morning calls daily for targeted families
- The buying of alarm clocks for targeted families

<b>Attending the school</b>	
/\	Present at the school / = morning session \ = afternoon session
L	Late arrival before the register is closed
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip
P	Participating in a sporting activity
W	Attending work experience
B	Attending any other approved educational activity
D	Dual registered at another school
<b>Absent – Leave of absence</b>	
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.
M	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance
<b>Absent – other authorised reasons</b>	
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)
E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made
<b>Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable causes</b>	
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause
<b>Absent – unauthorised absence</b>	
G	Holiday not granted by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances
U	Arrived in school after registration closed
<b>Administrative Codes</b>	
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register
#	Planned whole school closure 1

Appendix 1





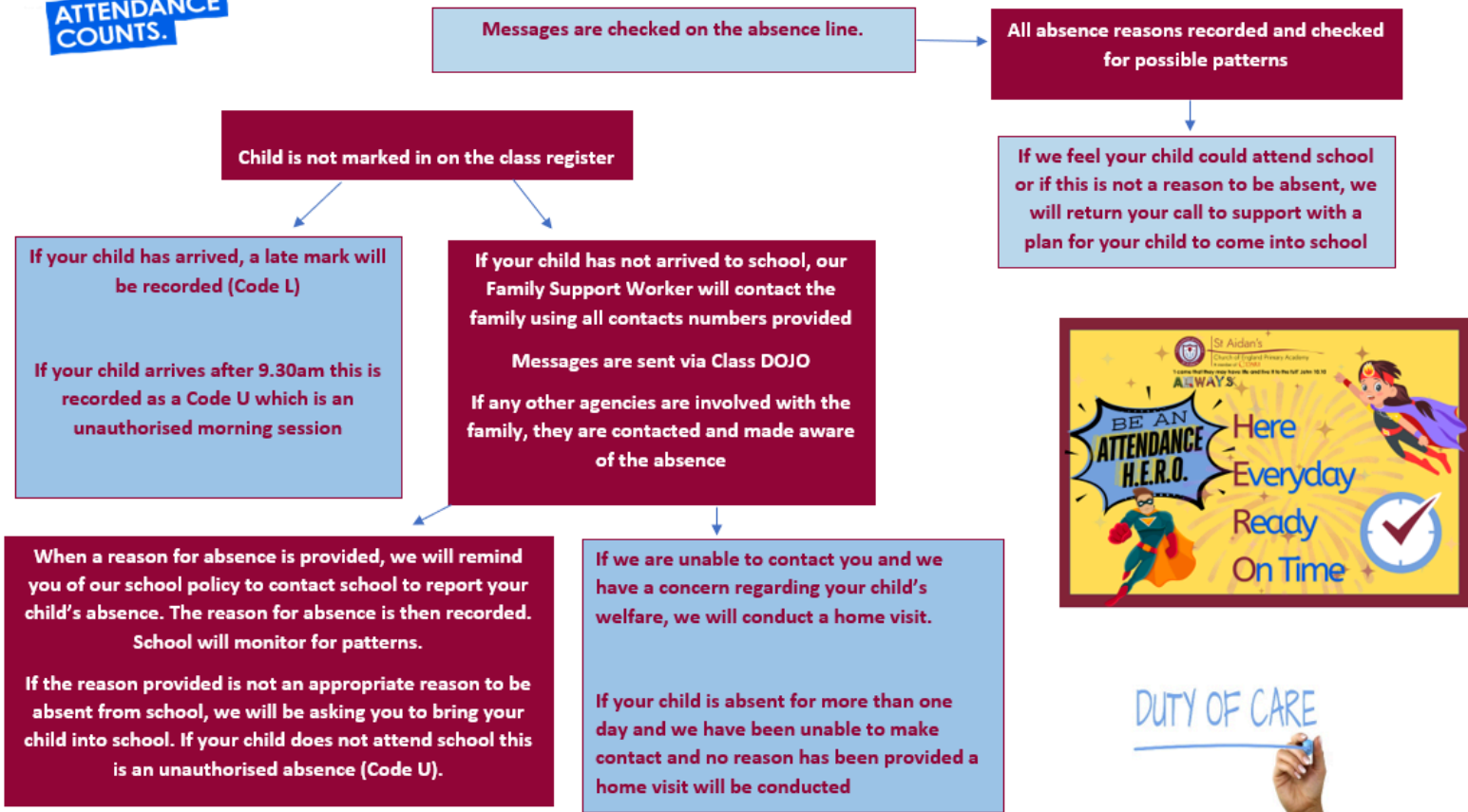
# SCHOOL ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

ALWAYS



**MOMENTS  
MATTER,  
ATTENDANCE  
COUNTS.**

The following procedure is followed daily following absence



DUTY OF CARE



Letter 1



If your child's attendance falls below 96% (school target) you will receive Attendance Concern Letter 1. This will inform you that your child's attendance has dropped below our school target and will enter a monitoring period.

Letter 2



If, after the monitoring period, your child's attendance does not improve; you will receive Attendance Concern Letter 2 to invite you into school for an Attendance Support Meeting to discuss the barriers to your child's attendance.

Meeting



This meeting will allow open communication between school and families to understand what is affecting your child's attending school regularly. An attendance Agreement will be created to highlight parents and schools responsibilities to ensure your child is attending school. This will be signed by both school and parents. Your child's attendance will continue to be monitored.

Letter 3



If no improvement has been made to your child's attendance percentage and we still have concerns for your child's attendance, a referral to the Local Authority Inclusion Team will be made.





