St. John Vianney Catholic Primary School

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Please refer to school specific policy folder for the bespoke policy for each school

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Change Log	
Update:	This policy has been updated in line with the DfE's 'Working together to improve school attendance : Statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities', February 2024. The guidance was updated to: • Reflect changes to the law on keeping school attendance and admission registers including a revised set of codes, granting leaves of absence and access to, and sharing of, attendance information introduced through the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. • Set out the new National Framework for issuing penalty notices and reflect changes to the law introduced through the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024. The Policy applies from 19 August 2024.
Location:	**2. Legal Framework** **4. Roles & Responsibilities** **8. the Admission Register** **9. Children at Risk of Missing Education / Deletions of Names from the Admission Register** **10. Marking of Registers** **11. Medical or Dental Appointments** **12. Requests for Leave of Absence in term-time** **18. Parent travelling or occupational purposes** **22. Legal Intervention**
Summary Date:	**1/08/2024**
Completed by:	**Julian Kenshole**

ATTENDANCE POLICY

1. Statement of Intent

The School is committed to providing a full and effective education for all its students to ensure they achieve their potential in all that they do.

We recognise the importance of good school attendance and research clearly demonstrates the link between regular attendance and educational progress and attainment.

The School will support students to ensure they access the best education that we can offer and will work in partnership with parents/carers in ensuring they are aware of their legal responsibilities regarding their child's education and support their child to achieve their maximum possible attendance, ensuring any problems are identified and acted on promptly.

Regular attendance is a prerequisite to a good education and therefore a priority for the School.

We are committed to:

- Promoting and modelling high attendance and its benefits.
- Ensuring equality and fairness for all.
- Intervening early and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.
- Building strong relationships with families to overcome barriers to attendance.
- Working collaboratively with other schools in the area, as well as other agencies.
- Ensuring parents follow the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any SEND they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- Ensuring our attendance policy is clear and easily understood by all staff, parents and pupils.
- Regularly monitoring and analysing attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require more support.

The school's Attendance Officer is **John Hardy** and can be contacted via **jhardy@sjv.bhcet.org.uk**. Staff, parents and pupils will be expected to contact the Attendance Officer for queries or concerns about attendance.

2. Legal Framework

19. 1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended)

- <ins>The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024</ins>

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- DfE (2024) 'Working together to improve school attendance'
- DfE (2016) 'Children missing education'
- DfE (2024) 'Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE) 2024'
- DfE (2023) 'Providing remote education'
- DfE (2024) 'Sharing daily pupil attendance data'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Positive Emotional and Well-being Policy
- Children with Health Needs Who Cannot Attend School Policy

3. Expectations

A student's progress is severely hampered if they do not regularly attend school.

98-100%	Expected
95-97%	Satisfactory
95%-90%	A cause for concern – at risk of becoming persistently absent
Below 90%	Persistently absent
Below 50%	Severe

To illustrate:

- ➢ 90% attendance is an average of one day out of school per fortnight over a school year.
- ➢ 90% attendance over 5 years at secondary school is half a school year missed.
- ➢ 80% attendance over 5 years at secondary school is the same as one whole school year missed.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Directors will:

- Provide policy guidance to Local Governing Committees.
- Regularly review attendance data, discuss and challenge trends including benchmarking with comparator schools within the Trust, Local Authority area, region and nationwide.
- Identify common issues and barriers to good attendance

- Share effective practice and expertise on attendance management and improvement across schools.
- For schools struggling with their attendance instruct that they develop a comprehensive attendance action plan to improve attendance and to appoint a School Improvement Lead to offer support and challenge

Local Governing Committees will:

- Monitor the implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Promote the importance of good attendance through the school's ethos and policies.
- Arrange attendance training for all relevant staff that is appropriate to their role.
- Working with the SLT to set goals for attendance and providing support and challenge around delivery against those goals.
- Attend Attendance Case Conferences and other attendance meetings when required
- Agree attendance targets
- regularly review attendance data, discuss and challenge trends and help school leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most. These may include pupils with a social worker, are form a background or ethnicity where attendance has been historically low, have a long-term medical condition, special educational needs or a disability, or are eligible for free school meals.
- Governors will set areas for improvement to establish and maintain the best levels of attendance for all students. To assist with this, the Headteacher will report to Governors termly on attendance related issues.
- Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory responsibilities
- Identify a designated Governor for Attendance.

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Appointing a member of the SLT to the Attendance Officer role.
- Ensuring all parents are aware of the school's attendance expectations and procedures.
- Ensuring that every pupil has access to full-time education and will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence.
- Make the necessary statutory data returns and such other requests to their respective local authority
- Allow their respective local authority access to the register and to support joint working with other schools, trusts and their local authority.

The Attendance Officer is responsible for:

- The overall strategic approach to attendance in school.
- Developing a clear vision for improving attendance.
- Monitoring attendance and the impact of interventions.
- Analysing attendance data and identifying areas of intervention and improvement.
- Communicating with pupils and parents with regard to attendance.
- Following up on incidents of persistent poor attendance.
- Informing the LA of any pupil's name being deleted from the admission register unless exceptions apply.

Staff are responsible for:

- Following this policy and ensuring pupils do so too.
- Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.
- Where designated, taking the attendance register at the relevant times during the school day.

We expect that all students will:

- Attend school regularly
- Arrive on time, appropriately dressed in school uniform and prepared for the school day
- Through our effective guidance system, report any problems which could impact on their attendance or punctuality
- Follow school rules

We expect all parents to:

- Ensure their child attends every day.
- Ensure that their child arrives to school wearing school uniform with the correct equipment fully prepared for the school day
- Provide the school with up to date homework and at least 2 emergency contact numbers and inform the school if their details change
- Inform school in confidence of any problem which might impact on their child's attendance or punctuality
- Be aware that it is their responsibility to inform school of the reason for their child's absence. They should contact school on the first day of absence before 9.30 am when their child is unable to attend
- Provide medical evidence if requested by school
- Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance.
- arrange all holidays during the thirteen weeks of school holidays and not during term time
- Book any medical appointments around the school day where possible.
- Support our school's procedures in promoting outstanding attendance for all and attend appropriate meetings in school to discuss their child's attendance
- Work in partnership with the school, emphasising to their children the importance of respecting policies and procedures

Parents/carers can expect that school will:

- Provide the highest quality of education
- Promote and encourage excellent attendance and punctuality
- Raise awareness of the importance of excellent attendance with parents, around school and within the local community
- maintain an effective electronic registration system
- Regularly monitor attendance and use data to identify emerging patterns of absence
- Closely monitor the attendance of identified vulnerable groups of students
- Address the causes of non-attendance
- Work with parents, the Local Authority, schools across the Trust and external agencies to improve attendance
- Make every reasonable effort to contact the parent/carer when a child fails to attend school and the school has not been notified of the reason for the absence

- provide work during a period of authorised absence, or on a student's return
- Support students upon return to school after a period of absence
- Include attendance data in appropriate school reports
- Act promptly and confidentially when notified of a problem which could impact on attendance or punctuality
- Comply with safeguarding regulations

A summary table of responsibilities for attendance has been produced by the Department for Education: Summary Table of Responsibilities for Attendance. The document summarises the different responsibilities of parents, schools, Directors & Governors and local authorities when supporting different cohorts of pupils including those who are persistently and severely absent.

## 5.	Attendance expectations

The school has high expectations for pupils' attendance and punctuality, and ensures that these expectations are communicated regularly to parents and pupils.

Lessons starts at **9.00 am**, and pupils will be in their classroom, ready to begin lessons at this time; therefore, pupils will be expected to be on the school site by **8:45am**. Pupils will have a 15 minute morning break at **10:15am for Years 1-3 and 10.45 for years 4-6**, and a lunch break at 11.45 -12.30 pm for years 1 & 2, 12.20 -1.20 pm for Year 3 and **12:30 to 1.20 pm for years 4-6** – pupils will be expected to have returned from each break and be ready to recommence learning at the stated times.

Registers will be taken as follows throughout the school day:

- The morning register is opened at **9:00am**. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time. Pupils attending after this time will receive a mark to show that they were on site, but this will count as a late mark.
- The morning register will close at **9:30am**. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they do not attend school before this time. **NOTE this should be the same for every session, and depending on the structure of the school day, not longer than either 30 minutes after the sessions begins, or the length of the form time or the first lesson in which registration takes place**
- The afternoon register will be marked by **12:30pm for children in years 1 & 2 and 1.20 pm for children in year 3-6**. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time
- The afternoon register will close after 10 minutes. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they are not present

Pupils will be encouraged to communicate any concerns related to attendance and absence as soon as possible to the relevant member of staff.

## 6.	Recognition of Good and Improved Attendance

The School recognises the importance of praise and reward for both good and improved attendance. All students are encouraged to realise the importance of good attendance and punctuality to enable them to achieve their full potential at school and their life goals. There is a monitoring system which incorporates rewards and consequences for students and they must have excellent attendance and punctuality to be considered to take part in school trips etc.

7.   Absence procedures

When a student has had a lengthy absence from their education, whether authorised or unauthorised appropriate support will be given to help him/her catch up on any work that they have missed.

Secondary students will attend a meeting with a member of staff to discuss the absence and work that they have missed.

The School recognises that occasionally a student may be absent due to a medical condition, illness and/or ongoing additional needs. The School has an excellent pastoral and SEN support system and regular meetings ensure that these students are provided with the appropriate targeted support to minimise the disruption to their education.

Authorised

Authorised absence means that the School has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification.

Only the Headteacher can approve absence - not parents/carers. The school is not obliged to accept a parental note or other form of notification as a valid reason for absence and further evidence may be requested. If, after investigation doubt remains about the explanation offered, or where no explanation is given, the absence will be treated as unauthorised.

Should a student feel unwell in school, the student must follow the School's procedure and inform the relevant member of staff if they feel too poorly to remain in school. If appropriate, school will call home to notify parents/carers and to inform them if the child needs to be collected.

Unauthorised

Unauthorised absence is when the School is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence.

Where parents condone unjustified absence the School will commence attendance procedures at an early stage and this may lead to a referral to the Local Authority for a Penalty Notice Fine or Statutory Procedures for non-school attendance.

To avoid unauthorised absence it is the responsibility of parents/carers to inform school of the reason for their child's absence. Contact should be made with the school on the first day of absence before 9.30 am when a child is unable to attend. They will be expected to provide an explanation for the absence and an estimation of how long the absence will last, e.g. one school day.

If the school does not receive notification of an absence by the close of the morning register a text message or phone call will be made to parent/carers as soon as practicable on the first day to inform them of the absence. If no response is received a phone call will be made to the other named contacts held by the school. If no response is received following this then a home visit may be made at the discretion of the school to ascertain the whereabouts of a student who has failed to attend. If no reason is provided for a student's absence the absence will be marked as unauthorised.

The school will always follow up any absences in order to:

- Ascertain the reason for the absence.
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is being taken.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
- Identify the correct code to use to enter the data onto the school census system.

Where a pupil is absent for more than **three** school days in a row, or more than **10** school days in **one term**, the pupil's parent will be expected to provide a signed letter with an explanation for the absence(s).

The school will not request medical evidence in most circumstances where a pupil is absent due to illness; however, the school reserves the right to request supporting evidence where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness.

Where attendance drops below 95% the intervention pathway at **Appendix 1** will be followed to support pupils and their families to improve attendance including referral to local authority School Attendance Support Team.

A consistent approach to correspondence, supporting documentation and resources to help track and review improvement in attendance is utilised by the Trust. These are included at **Appendix 2 & 3** (held as separate documents in the Trust Policy area of Microsoft Teams) contains supporting documentation, resources and template letters.

8.   The Admission Register

The school admission register, sometimes known as the 'the school roll', must be
kept in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations
2024.

Regulation 8 sets out the contents of the admission register.

The names of all pupils (both compulsory and non-compulsory school age) must be
entered on the admission register.

The admission register must be kept electronically. Schools must record personal details of every pupil at the school in the admission register. The register must include the following information for every pupil:

> • full name;
>
> • name the pupil uses at school;
>
> • sex;
>
> • address;
>
> • the full name and address of each of the pupil's parents;
>
> • which of the pupil's parents, if any, the pupil normally lives with and at least one telephone number by which each such parent can be contacted in an emergency. Where reasonably practicable, schools should hold an emergency contact number for more than one person for each pupil;
>
> • day, month and year of birth;
>
> • day, month and year of the pupil's starting day at the school;
>
> • name and address of the last school the pupil attended, if any.

Full details on the keeping of the Admission Register (including the deletion of names) can be found in Chapter 7 of Working Together to Improve School Attendance.

9. **Children at Risk of Missing Education / Deletions of Names from the Admission Register**

DfE's guidance on Children Missing Education sets out the expectations for schools and local authorities in respect of making reasonable efforts to find out a pupil's location and circumstances.

All schools must agree with the relevant local authority, the regular interval that the school will inform the local authority 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.

All staff should be aware that children going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. Staff should make reasonable efforts to identify the whereabouts of children missing education in advance of the 10-day requirement.

Where a pupil has not returned to school for ten days after an authorised absence or is absent from school without authorisation for twenty consecutive school days16, the pupil can be removed from the admission register when the school and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to establish the whereabouts of the child. This only applies if the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or unavoidable cause.

The school will ensure that it only deletes names from the admission register for a reason set out in regulation 9 of the School Attendance Regulations. A pupil's name will never be removed for any other reason and the school is aware that doing so could constitute off-rolling.

The school will make returns to the LA when pupils' names are deleted from the admission register. This will be with the exception of pupils whose name has been deleted from the register at or after the end of the last term of the school year when they are in the most senior year group, unless the LA has requested this information.

When the school is notifying the LA that a pupil's name is being deleted from the admission register, the following information about the pupil will be provided:

- Full name
- Address
- The full name and address of any parent the pupil normally lives with
- At least one telephone number by which any parent the pupil normally lives with can be contacted in an emergency
- If applicable, the pupil's future address, the full name and address of the parent who the pupil is going to live with and the date the pupil will start living there
- If applicable, the name of the pupil's other school and when the pupil began or will begin to attend the school
- The reason under which the pupil's name has been deleted from the admission register

Names will never be retrospectively deleted from the admission or attendance register – these registers will remain an accurate record of who is a registered pupil and their attendance at any given time. Pupils' attendance will be recorded up until the date that their name is deleted from the admission register.

10.   Marking of Registers

Schools must follow Department for Education guidance when marking the Register:

[Working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) (publishing.service.gov.uk)](publishing.service.gov.uk)

There is a legal requirement upon schools to keep an accurate attendance register at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session to mark students present or absent. This is also part of the safeguarding procedures.

There is also a requirement that attendance records must show whether an absence of a student of compulsory school age is authorised or unauthorised.

The School has a computerised registration system in place which incorporates a lesson monitor. Taking of registers is an integral part of the school day. Particular attention is paid to accurate use of codes. The falsification of attendance registers by any member of staff may result in disciplinary action.

Periodic checks of registers in schools will be undertaken by the Trust where deemed necessary. The local authority may also request access to the Register.

Designated staff members will take the attendance register at the start of each school day and at the start of the afternoon session. This register will record whether pupils are:

- Present.
- Absent.
- Attending an approved educational activity.
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

The school will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:

The school will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:

- \# = Planned whole school closure
- / = Present in the morning
- \ = Present in the afternoon
- L = Late arrival before the register has closed
- C = Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance
- C1 = Leave of absence granted by the school for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad
- C2 = Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
- E = Suspended or permanently excluded but no alternative provision made
- I = Illness (not medical or dental appointment)
- M = Medical or dental appointments
- R = Religious observance
- S = Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination
- T = Parent travelling for occupational purposes
- G = Unauthorised holiday
- N = Reason not yet provided
- O = Unauthorised absence
- U = Arrived after registration closed

- D = Dual registered at another school
- B = Attending any other approved educational activity
- J1 = Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
- K = Attending education provision arranged by the LA
- P = Participating in a supervised sporting activity
- Q = Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements
- V = Educational visit or trip
- W = Work experience
- X = Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
- 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
- Z = Prospective pupil not on admission register

When the school has planned in advance to be fully or partially closed, the code '#' will be used for the relevant pupils who are absent. This code will also be used to record year groups who are not due to attend because the school has set different term dates for different years, e.g. induction days.

Pupils who are absent from school but are receiving remote education for any reason will still be marked as absent in the register using the most appropriate absence code.

All amendments made to the attendance register will include the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date of amendment and the name and role of the person who made the amendment.

Every entry received into the attendance register will be preserved for six years.

11. Medical or Dental Appointments

Parents will be expected to make medical or dental appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. The School recognises that occasionally medical or dental appointments during the school day are unavoidable. However, students are expected to return to school immediately following an appointment and medical evidence may be requested. The vast majority of medical / dental appointments do not require a full day, or even a full session of absence. In line with safeguarding regulations, students are required to sign in and out of school when they arrive or leave during the school day.

12. Requests for Leave of Absence in Term-time

Permission from the Head Teacher must be sought for all absences that occur during term-time. A 'request for leave of absence form' **(Template 8)** must be completed in advance of the absence (available from the school office). Only the Head Teacher can decide if the absence is to be authorised or unauthorised. **(Template 9 or Template 10).** The headteacher's decision is not subject to appeal.

Under current regulations, schools cannot authorise any holidays taken in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Exceptional circumstances will include when a pupil is unable to attend because:

- There is a lack of access arrangements.
- Transport normally provided is not available and the school is not within walking distance.
- There is widespread disruption to travel.
- Part of the school premises is closed, and the pupil cannot be practicably accommodated.
- The whole school site has been closed unexpectedly.
- The pupil is in criminal justice detention.
- Public health guidance or law legislates that attendance is respectively not advised or prohibited.
- Any other avoidable cause makes attendance impossible.

The use of the seven 'Y' codes for exceptional circumstances will be collected in the school census for statistical purposes. Code Q will be used in circumstances where there are a lack of access arrangements.

School will require evidence of exceptional circumstances, which should be attached to the 'request for leave of absence form' and the judgement about what is exceptional will be made by the Headteacher.

If term-time leave is not granted, taking a pupil out of school will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and may result in sanctions, such as a penalty notice. The school cannot grant leaves of absence retrospectively; therefore, any absences that were not approved by the school in advance will be marked as unauthorised.

Holidays taken in term time can have a very negative impact on a child's education, as well as school's attendance statistics and examination results. Research has shown that a 10% drop in attendance (equivalent to 19 ½ days in a school year) can mean a one grade drop at GCSE.

For absences that are due to sporting or other educational activities which have not been organised by school, evidence of the event must accompany the 'request for leave of absence' form.

13. Punctuality

Punctuality is extremely important. All students are required to arrive punctually for registration at 9.00am in the morning and 12.30pm for Year 1 & 2, or 1.20pm for Year 3-6 in the afternoon.

If a student arrives for school after the close of registration at 9.30 am, 12.40 or 1.30pm the session can be recorded as 'U' mark on the registration certificate which is an unauthorised absence and will impact on their overall attendance.

We also expect students to arrive punctually to lessons. Students who arrive late to lessons not only affect their own learning but also seriously disrupt the learning of others in the class.

The school has strict disciplinary procedures for dealing with persistent lateness and rewards for excellent punctuality.

14.   Truancy

Truancy will be considered as any absence of part, or all, of one or more days from school, during which the school has not been notified of the cause behind such absence.

All staff will be actively engaged in supporting the regular attendance of pupils, and understand the importance of continuity in each pupil's learning.

Any pupil with permission to leave the school during the day must sign out and sign back in again on their return.

Immediate action will be taken when there are any concerns that a pupil might be truanting. If truancy is suspected, the Headteacher is notified, and they (or nominated member of staff) will contact the parent in order to assess the reasons behind the pupil not attending school.

The following procedures will be taken in the event of a truancy:

- In the first instance, a letter of warning will be sent to the parents of the pupil, informing them of the truancy and stating that any future occurrences could result in further action being taken.
- If any further truancy occurs, then the school will consider issuing a penalty notice.
- A penalty notice will be issued where there is overt truancy, inappropriate parentally-condoned absence, excessive holidays in term-time and persistent late arrival at school.

15.   Missing Children

Pupils will not be permitted to leave the school premises during the school day unless they have permission from the school. The following procedures will be taken in the event of a pupil going missing whilst at school:

- The member of staff who has noticed the missing pupil will inform the headteacher immediately.
- The office staff will also be informed as they will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search.
- A member of staff will stay with the rest of the class, and all other available members of staff will conduct a thorough search of the school premises as directed by the headteacher.
- The following areas will be systematically searched:

    - All classrooms
    - All toilets
    - Changing rooms
    - The library
    - Any outbuildings
    - The school grounds

- Available staff will begin a search of the area immediately outside of the school premises, and will take a mobile phone with them so they can be contacted.
- If the pupil has not been found then the parents of the pupil will be notified.
- The school will attempt to contact parents using the emergency contact numbers provided.
- If the parents have had no contact from the pupil, and the emergency contacts list has been exhausted, the police will be contacted.

- The missing pupil's form tutor will fill in an incident form, describing all circumstances leading up to the pupil going missing.
- If the missing pupil has an allocated social worker, is a looked-after child, or has any SEND, then the appropriate personnel will be informed.
- When the pupil has been located, members of staff will care for and talk to the pupil to ensure they are safe and well.
- Parents and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the pupil has been located.

The headteacher will take the appropriate action to ensure that pupils understand they must not leave the premises, and sanctions will be issued if deemed necessary. Appropriate disciplinary procedures will be followed in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

The Headteacher will carry out a full investigation, and will draw a conclusion as to how the incident occurred. A written report will be produced, and policies and procedures will be reviewed in accordance with the outcome where necessary.

16. **Performances and activities, including paid work**

The school will ensure that all pupils engaging in performances or activities, whether they receive payment or not, which require them to be absent from school, understand that they will be required to obtain a licence from the local authority which authorises the school's absence(s).

Additional arrangements will be made by the school for pupils engaging in performances or activities that require them to be absent from school to ensure they do not fall behind in their education – this may involve private teaching. These arrangements will be approved by the local authority who will ensure that the arrangements are suitable for the pupil.

The pupil will receive education that, when taken together over the term of the licence, amounts to a minimum of three hours per day that the pupil would be required to attend a school maintained by the local authority issuing the licence. This requirement will be met by ensuring a pupil receives an education:

- For not less than six hours a week; and
- During each complete period of four weeks (or if there is a period of less than four weeks, then during that period), for periods of time not less than three hours a day; and
- On days where the pupil would be required to attend school if they were attending a school maintained by the local authority; and
- For not more than five hours on any such day.

Where a licence has been granted by the local authority and it specifies dates of absence, no further authorisation will be needed from the school. Where an application does not specify dates, and it has been approved by the local authority, it is at the discretion of the Headteacher to authorise the leave of absence for each day. The Headteacher will not authorise any absences which would mean that a pupil's attendance would fall below 95 percent. Where a licence has not been obtained, the Headteacher will not authorise any absence for a performance or activity.

Attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution

The school will usually grant leave of absence where an application has been made in advance by the parent who the pupil normally lives with and the leave is to enable the pupil to

attend an interview for employment or admission to another educational institution, e.g. university or college.

Study leave for a public examination

The school may grant leave of absence for a pupil to study for a public examination and the leave has been agreed in advance with a parent who the pupil normally lives with.

Study leave will not be granted by default once tuition for the examination syllabus is complete and will be used sparingly. Provision will still be made available for pupils who want to continue to come into school to revise.

Pupils subject to a part-time timetable

In very exceptional circumstances and where it is in a pupil's best interests, the school will grant leave of absence to accommodate for a pupil on a part-time timetable. In such circumstances, the days on which the pupil is expected to attend school will be agreed in advance.

17. Religious Observance

Parents are required to submit a written request in advance of an absence for religious observance.

The school will only accept requests from parents for absence on grounds of religious observance for days that are exclusively set apart for religious observance by the relevant religious body. The school will define this as a day where the pupil's parents would be expected by an established religious body to stay away from their employment to mark the occasion.

The school may seek advice from the religious body in question where there is doubt over the request.

18. Parent Travelling or Occupational Purposes

If a pupil is travelling with their parent as a result of the parent's trade or business and is therefore unable to attend, the school will assure itself that this is a genuine reason. Proof will not be sought without genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the reason for absence given. The parent will be encouraged to ensure that the pupil can attend a school where they are travelling to, and be dual registered at that school.

19. SEND and Health-related Absences

The school recognises that pupils with SEND and/or health conditions, including mental health issues, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers, and will incorporate robust procedures to support pupils who find attending school difficult.

In line with the SEND Policy and Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy, the school will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for disabled pupils to reduce barriers to attendance, in line with any EHC plans or IHPs that have been implemented. The school will secure additional support from external partners to help bolster attendance where appropriate.

Where the school has concerns that a pupil's non-attendance may be related to mental health issues, parents will be contacted to discuss the issue and whether there are any contributory factors to their child's lack of attendance. Where staff have a mental health concern about a pupil that is also a safeguarding concern, they will inform the DSL and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will be followed.

If a pupil is unable to attend school for long periods of time due to their health, the school will:

- Inform the local authority if a pupil is likely to be away from the school for more than 15 school days.
- Provide the local authority with information about the pupil's needs, capabilities and programme of work.
- Help the pupil reintegrate at school when they return.
- Make sure the pupil is kept informed about school events and clubs.
- Encourage the pupil to stay in contact with other pupils during their absence.

The school will incorporate an action plan to help any pupils with SEND and/or health issues cope with the stress and anxiety that attending school may cause them. Such plans will be regularly monitored and reviewed until the pupil is attending school as normal and there has been signs of significant improvement.

To support the attendance of pupils with SEND and/or health issues, the school will consider:

- Holding termly meetings to evaluate any implemented reasonable adjustments.
- Incorporating a pastoral support plan.
- Carrying out strengths and difficulties questionnaire.
- Identifying pupils' unmet needs through the Common Assessment Framework.
- Using an internal or external specialist.
- Enabling a pupil to have a reduced timetable.
- Ensuring a pupil can have somewhere quiet to spend lunch and breaktimes.
- Implementing a system whereby pupils can request to leave a classroom if they feel they need time out.
- Temporary late starts or early finishes.
- Phased returns to school where there has been a long absence.
- Small group work or on-to-one lessons.
- Tailored support to meet their individual needs.

20. **Working with Parents to Improve Attendance**

The school will work to cultivate strong, respectful relationships with parents and families and work to build trust and engagement. Open and honest communication will be maintained with pupils and their families about the expectations of school life, attendance and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them. The school will liaise with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, e.g. Children's Services.

The school will ensure that there are at least two sets of emergency contact details for each pupil wherever possible to ensure the school has additional options for getting in touch with adults responsible for a pupil where the pupil is absent without notification or authorisation.

The school will ensure that parents are aware of their legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and to facilitate their child's legal right to a full-time education – parents will be made aware that this means their child must attend school every day that it is open, save for in certain circumstances, e.g. sickness or absences that have been authorised by the Headteacher in advance. The school will regularly inform parents about their child's levels of attendance, absence and punctuality, and will ensure that parents are aware of the benefits that regular attendance at school can have for their child educationally, socially and developmentally.

If a pattern of absence becomes problematic, the Attendance Officer will work collaboratively with the pupil and their parents to improve attendance by addressing the specific barriers that prevent the pupil from being able to attend school regularly. The school will always take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for pupil absence and will approach families to offer support rather than immediately reach for punitive approaches.

Where these barriers are related to the pupil's experience in school, e.g. bullying, the Attendance Officer will work with the Headteacher and any relevant school staff, e.g. the DSL, SENCO, pastoral lead to address this. Where the barriers are outside of the school's control, e.g. they are related to issues within the pupil's family, the Attendance Officer will liaise with any relevant external agencies or authorities, e.g. Children's Service's or the local authority School Attendance Support Team, and will encourage parents to access support that they may need.

21.   Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

The Department for Education deems that if a student's attendance drops below 90% they become known as a Persistent Absentee, regardless of the reason for the absence and irrespective of whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any student's educational prospects and parent/carer's full support and co-operation is required to avoid this.

All absences are monitored thoroughly and any case seen to have reached the Persistent Absence level or becoming at risk of reaching it is given priority. Continued persistent absence may lead to a referral to the Local Authority for statutory procedures.

There are various groups of pupils who may be vulnerable to high absence and PA, such as:

- Children in need
- LAC
- Young carers
- Pupils who are eligible for FSM
- Pupils with EAL
- Pupils with SEND
- Pupils who have faced bullying and/or discrimination

The school will ensure it provides support to pupils at risk of PA, in conjunction with all relevant external authorities where necessary.

The school will use a number of methods to help support pupils at risk of PA to attend school. These include:

- Offering catch-up support to build confidence and bridge gaps in learning.
- Meeting with the pupil and their parent to discuss patterns of absence, barriers to attendance, and any other problems they may be having.
- Establishing plans to remove barriers and provide additional support.
- Leading weekly check-ins to review progress and assess the impact of support.
- Making regular contact with the pupil's parent to discuss progress.
- Assessing whether an EHC plan or IHP may be appropriate.
- Considering what support for re-engagement might be needed, including with regard to additional vulnerability.
- 1:1 discussion with pupil
- Internal Centre Support within school
- Language barrier support

- Early Help Assessment
- Referral to targeted support agencies
- Attendance Focus Group/Attendance Panel
- Part-time timetable provision – short measured timescale
- Referral for local authority intervention

The school will focus particularly on pupils who have rates of absence over 50 percent, and will work with the LA and other partners to engage all relevant services needed to identify and address the wider barriers to attendance these pupils are facing.

Where a pupil at risk of PA is also at increased risk of harm, the school will work in conjunction with all relevant authorities, e.g. social services, to support the pupil in line with the school's duty of care. The school will also bear in mind that the continuation of severe PA following intervention may, in itself, constitute neglect, and will escalate any concerns in this regard in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

22.   Legal Intervention

The school will allow sufficient time for attendance interventions and engagement strategies to improve pupils' attendance; however, where engagement strategies to improve attendance have not had the desired effect the Attendance Officer will consider:

- Holding a formal meeting with parents and the school's point of contact in the School Attendance Support Team.
- Working with the local authority to put a Parenting Contract or an Education Supervision Order in place.
- Engaging children's social care where there are safeguarding concerns.

- Where the above measures are not effective, the headteacher will issue a notice to improve as a final opportunity for parents to engage in support and improve attendance before a penalty notice is considered.
- Where a pupil reaches the national threshold of 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks, the school will consider whether a penalty notice is appropriate. A school week means any week in which there is at least one school session. This can be met with any combination of unauthorised absence (e.g. 4 sessions of holiday taken in term time plus 6 sessions of arriving late after the register closes all within 10 school weeks). These sessions can be consecutive (e.g. 10 sessions of holiday in one week) or not (e.g. 6 sessions of unauthorised absence taken in 1 week and 1 per week for the next 4 weeks). The period of 10 school weeks can also span different terms or school years (e.g. 2 sessions of unauthorised absence in the Summer Term and a further 8 within the Autumn Term).
- When a school becomes aware that the threshold has been met, they are expected to make the following considerations to decide whether to issue a penalty notice in each individual case:
o Is support appropriate in this case?
  - If yes, they are expected to continue with the existing support without a penalty notice or issue a Notice to Improve if that support is not working or is not being engaged with. A penalty notice can be issued if either has not worked.
o If no, for example a holiday in term time, a penalty notice should be issued subject to the other conditions below.
  - Is a penalty notice the best available tool to improve attendance and change parental behaviour for this particular family or would further support or one of the other legal interventions be more appropriate?
o Is issuing a penalty notice in this case appropriate after considering any

obligations under the Equality Act 2010 such as where a pupil has a disability?
- ○ (For local authorities only) Is it in the public interest to issue a penalty notice in this case given the local authority would be responsible for any resulting prosecution for the original offence in cases of non-payment?

If the answer to those questions is yes, then a penalty notice should be issued. If not, another tool or legal intervention should be used to improve attendance.

- Each case will be considered individually to determine whether a penalty notice or another tool or legal intervention should be used to improve attendance.
- A fixed penalty notice may be issued in line with the LA's code of conduct and the DfE's 'Working together to improve school attendance' guidance.

23. Monitoring and Analysing Absence

The Attendance Officer will monitor and analyse attendance data regularly to ensure that intervention and support is delivered quickly to address habitual absence at the first signs.

The Trust's Data Manager will provide data to schools covering punctuality, truancy, and authorised and unauthorised absence, for:

- The school cohort as a whole.
- Individual year groups.
- Individual pupils.
- Demographic groups, e.g. pupils from different ethnic groups or economic backgrounds.
- Other groups of pupils, e.g. pupils with SEND, LAC and pupils eligible for FSM.
- Pupils at risk of PA and pupils who are PA

The Trust Data Manager will supply this information to secondary schools on a weekly basis and primary schools on a monthly basis.

The Attendance Officer will conduct thorough analysis of the above data on a half-termly, termly and full-year basis to identify patterns and trends. This will include identifying, for each group:

- Patterns in uses of certain codes.
- Particular days of poor attendance.
- Subjects which have low lesson attendance.
- Historic trends of attendance and absence.
- Barriers to attendance.

The Attendance Officer will provide regular reports to staff across the school to enable them to track the attendance of pupils and to implement attendance procedures. The Attendance Officer will also be responsible for monitoring how attendance data changes in response to any interventions implemented to increase attendance in future.

The Local Governing Committee will regularly review attendance data, including examinations of recent and historic trends, and will support the SLT in setting goals and prioritising areas of focus for attendance support based on this data.

The school will also benchmark its attendance data against local, regional and national level data to identify areas of success and areas for improvement, and will share practice which has been shown to be effective with other schools.

The Board of Directors will ensure staff from different schools within the Trust regularly share

expertise and collaborate on interventions.

24.   Training of staff

The school will recognise that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, staff will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk pupils as part of their induction and refresher training.

The governing board will ensure that teachers and support staff receive training in line with this policy as part of their induction. Following this initial training, staff will be offered regular and ongoing training as part of their CPD opportunities.

Training will cover at least the following:

- The importance of good attendance
- That absence is almost invariably a result of wider circumstances
- The legal requirements on schools, e.g. the keeping of registers
- The school's strategies and procedures for monitoring and improving attendance
- The school's procedures for multi-agency working to provide intensive support for pupils who need it

The Attendance Officer and other staff with specific attendance functions in their role will complete enhanced attendance training – this will include training regarding interpreting and analysing attendance data and supporting pupils to overcome commonly seen barriers to attendance.

Staff will receive training to ensure they understand that increased absence from school could indicate a safeguarding concern, and know how such concerns should be managed.

25.   Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years by the headteacher. Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

ATTENDANCE INTERVENTION   Appendix 1

Throughout Process Consider & Engage Support Required by Student/Family

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95% and Below

Student at risk of Persistent Absentee Classification (Below 90%)

Initial Letter - At Risk of Persistent Absentee Classification

(Template 1)

Absence Continuing and no valid reason provided

Formal 3 week Review Date Letter & Medical Evidence Request

(Template 2)

At 3 week Review Date

No Improvement and continuing unauthorised absence

At 3 week Review Date

No further Unauthorised Absences

Letter to parent/carer to arrange meeting

(Template 4)

Improvement Recognition Letter

(Template 3)

Meeting with Parent

Individual Attendance Improvement Plan - (Template 5)

Minutes of Meeting - (Template 6)

If parent does not attend the meeting and to ensure continued intervention

Letter and Plan to be sent in post - (Template 7) and (Template 5)

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4 week Review of Attendance Plan

If unauthorised absence has continued and attendance meets threshold a referral to be raised to the Local Authority Engagement & Learning Team for Legal Procedures

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4 week Review of Attendance Plan

If absence has continued but absence is authorised plan to be extended.

If during 4-week Attendance Plan period multiple unauthorised absences are continuing then consideration should be given to referring to the LA earlier