



*Aim high, be courageous, show love and kindness.*

**St Nicholas C of E Primary School**

## Attendance Policy

*“The St Nic’s Family working together to improve attendance”*

<b>Approved by:</b>	Governing Body	<b>Date:</b> March 2024
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<b>Last reviewed on:</b>	As above
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<b>Next review due by:</b>	March 2025
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## The importance of school attendance

At St Nicholas C of E Primary School, we strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment, whereby each member of the school community feels wanted, valued and secure and excited to be part of the St Nic's family. We encourage our pupils to "aim high, be courageous & show love and kindness" and aim for them to be happy to come to school and learn. With happiness and love of learning, attending school every day has a positive impact on their educational journey and into their future workplace. Attending school means that children can make friends, develop their social skills and be able to work with others. We expect our school community to support and promote excellent school attendance by acting as role models.

We believe that children cannot learn academically, socially and have support for their wellbeing, if they are absent from school. Therefore, we aim to ensure that all our children take full advantage of the educational and pastoral opportunities available to them and to raise standards by promoting regular attendance and punctuality of our children. We believe high attainment depends on good attendance. Improving attendance and reducing absence, especially persistent absence is a priority for our school, Warwickshire County Council and at government level.

It is recognised that attending school regularly can be a protective factor for children, young people and their families. For the most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided. A child who is not in school is not achieving: development, social and emotional wellbeing and safety may all be compromised. If we don't know where children are, this questions – how do we know they are safe? Our Attendance Policy therefore reflects the need to ensure all of our children and their families are safe by putting in the processes and systems stated in this policy to enable us to do this.

We recognise that attendance is a matter for our whole school community. Our Attendance Policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is a strand that runs through all aspects of school improvement, supported by our policies on Safeguarding & Child Protection, Behaviour and Relationships and SEND.

## Our aims to work together to improve attendance

It is our aim to have an attendance policy by which we can demonstrate our vision of –

*"The St Nic's Family working together to improve attendance"*

As a school, we aim to support pupils and their families who need to improve their attendance by fostering positive relationships and working together in partnership. It is our aim is to be proactive, supportive, understanding, to listen and to work with parents and children to understand the barriers to attendance and work collaboratively to resolve those barriers.

Our attendance policy aims to give clear guidance to staff, parents, pupils, and governors to:

- Support pupil's achievement by establishing the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Ensure every pupil is safeguarded and their right to education is protected.
- Recognise the key role of our school community in promoting good attendance.
- Provide a clear framework for monitoring and responding to pupil absences.
- Inform parents/carers aware of the processes for reporting absences and for supporting attendance that is a concern or serious concern.
- Inform parents/carers of their legal responsibilities and ensure their children have access to the education to which they are entitled.
- To realise our expectation of our annual whole school target of 96% attendance.

## Roles and Responsibilities

At St Nicholas, we believe that school attendance matters to everyone and that it is a shared responsibility by governors, all school staff, parents & children. In the DFE Statutory Guidance '*Working together to improve attendance*,' it states "Improving attendance is everyone's business. The barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates, and are often specific to individual pupils and families." In our policy, we aim to share the roles and responsibilities of our school community.

Specific roles and responsibilities at our school are shown below –

<b>Name</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Contact</b>
Mrs Sarah Rayson	Headteacher & Designated Safeguarding Lead	head3146@welearn365.com
Mrs Emma Slack	Assistant Head & Attendance Lead	slack.e@welearn365.com or attendance3146@welearn365.com
Mrs Amy Beard	Admin Attendance contact	attendance3146@welearn365.com
??????	Named governor for attendance	?????

**The Governing Body** of St Nicholas School recognises the importance of school attendance and promotes it across the school's ethos and policies. They take an active role in attendance improvement by:

- Supporting the school to prioritise attendance, and work together with leaders to set whole school cultures.
- Ensuring school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- Ensure compliance with legislation and statutory guidance.
- Ensuring themselves and school staff receive training on school attendance and are aware of current research & information etc relating to improving attendance.
- Play an active role in developing policies and procedures which support high levels of attendance.
- Regularly reviewing attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the children who need it.
- Appointing a governor responsible for monitoring and reviewing whole-school attendance data, offering support to the Attendance Lead.

**As a school** we are responsible for:

- Developing and maintaining a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance for all of our pupils, including SEND and children with medical issues.
- Creating an ethos of "The St Nic's family working together to improve attendance."
- Having a clear school attendance policy that is accessible and shared, and which all staff, pupils, parents & governors understand.
- Accurately completing admission and attendance registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence.
- Regularly monitoring and analysing attendance and absence data and proactively use it to identify pupils at risk of poor attendance and put effective support in place.
- Building strong relationships with families, listen to and understand barriers to attendance and work with families to remove them.
- Having a dedicated senior leader with overall responsibility for driving the improvement of attendance.
- Sharing information and work collaboratively with Warwickshire County Council, multi-agency efforts and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.
- Signposting and supporting access to any required services, where out of school barriers are identified.
- Holding more formal conversations with parents and be clear about the potential need for legal intervention in future where there is a lack of engagement.
- Working with the local authority on legal intervention where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate.
- Escalating support through Social Care where there are safeguarding concerns.
- Playing a role in school for monitoring attendance, promoting good attendance and working together to improve attendance.
- Ensuring that all staff are trained and are aware of up to date research and information around attendance.

We need the help of **our parents** to:

- Ensure their child attends school regularly and on time.
- Inform us about absences & on the first day of non-attendance, inform us before 9:30am, by contacting the school via email, telephone or through Study Bugs and on each subsequent day(s) of absence, providing us with reasons for absences.
- Advise us when their child is expected to return.
- Ensure that where possible, appointments are made outside the school day
- Speak to any member of the leadership team, Mrs Slack (Attendance Lead) or class teacher to seek support and advice for any issues that may be preventing their child from wanting to attend school.
- Work alongside the school to address and improve any patterns of poor attendance.
- Provide us with more than 1 emergency contact detail for your child.

We ask **our children** to:

- Attend school every day unless they are ill.
- Arrive on time between 08:40am and 08:50am.
- Tell a member of staff about any difficulties or reasons that may be affecting their attendance.
- Follow our school values and expectations for behaviour in full, so they are ready to learn and fully engage in positive learning attitudes.
- Understand the importance of attendance and the impact non-attendance can have on learning, development, social and emotional wellbeing and safety.

### The Legal Framework

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at school or by education otherwise than at school. A child is of compulsory school age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday. A child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they reach the age of 16. The government expects all schools and local authorities to:

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence.
- Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled.
- and act early to address patterns of absence.

Parents are expected to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly. In accordance with the Education Act 1996, we will work with parents and carers and the Local Authority to ensure that parents are supported to secure education for children of compulsory school age. Where required, we will formalise support and where necessary, work with the LA to use legal measures. A "Parent" is defined as:

- Any natural parent, whether married or not
- Any parent who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility as defined in the Children Act (1989) for a child or young person
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person

## Attendance register

As a school, we use an electronic management information system to keep our attendance and admission registers. Registers are legal records and all schools must preserve every entry in the attendance or admission register for 3 years from the date of entry.

We take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day (am) and at the start of the second session (pm). We mark whether every pupil is:

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

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes used by us.

## Understanding Types of Absence

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school, as either authorised or unauthorised. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

**Authorised absences** are morning or afternoon sessions away from school for a genuine reason such as illness, religious observance, medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause. As far as possible, medical and dental appointments should be made outside of the school day. Where this is not possible, school should be informed prior to the appointment. Children must attend before and after the appointment wherever possible. If the appointment requires the child to leave during the day, they must be signed out by a member of the office staff. Should a child arrive late following an appointment, they should report to main entrance and will be signed in.

**Unauthorised absences** are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been granted. Unauthorised absence includes the following examples; however, this list is not exhaustive:

- 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, their own or family birthdays or day trips
- accompanying siblings or parents to medical appointments
- leave of absence or holidays taken during term time without leave, not deemed 'for exceptional purposes' by the headteacher

**Unexplained absences** are those where we as a school have not been provided with a reason for absence. At this point we will endeavour to obtain a reason in order to ensure the child is safe and well, which as a school, is our responsibility. The NSPCC, in their briefing '**Neglect: learning from serious case reviews (2022)**' comments that – "*A child's absence from school can often be an early indicator of an increased need within a family. Procedures for non-attendance at school need to highlight potential safeguarding concerns.*" Whilst this may not be the case for all children where non-attendance is not explained, it is our duty as a school to ensure we have procedures in place to safeguard all of our children and their families.

**Persistent Absenteeism (PA)** - A child is defined by the Government as a 'persistent absentee' when their attendance is 90% or below across the school year for any reason. So, this means they are missing 10% or more of school which equates to 1 day or more every 2 weeks. PA includes both authorised and unauthorised absences.

**Severe Absenteeism (SA)** – A child is defined as a severe absentee if they miss more than 50% of school. SA includes both authorised and unauthorised absences.

Absence at both of these levels will cause considerable damage to any child's education, emotional and mental wellbeing and their social experiences.

### Procedure for reporting absence

It is our aim to improve attendance and to offer support to our families that need it. Therefore, we closely monitor all absence and the reasons that are given, thoroughly. It is therefore important that all absences are reported and reasons are provided using the following ways:

**Email** – attendance3146@welearn365.com

**Study Bugs** – sending a message via the Study Bugs app

**Phone** – telephoning the school office on 01926 853257

If a child is absent from school, parents must follow these procedures:

- Contact the school on the first day of absence by 9.30am.
- Contact the school on every further day of absence, again before 9.30am and inform us when they are expected to return.
- Ensure that your child returns to school as soon as possible and you provide any medical evidence, if requested, to support the absence.

The Study bugs app is free to download from the link on our school website, or from the App Store or Google Play. You can also access Study Bugs directly from our website on the homepage.

### **Timings –**

Gates open and children start to come in – 8:40am to 8:50am (registers are open for the morning session)

Gate closes – 8:50am and children should be in class no later than 8:55am

Morning Register taken by staff up to – 9:00am

Register closed – 9:00am

Afternoon register closed by staff – 1:10pm

### Punctuality

We expect our children to arrive on time, unless lateness is unavoidable. Late arrival after registration without good reason is counted as unauthorised absence for that session. Children arriving after the gate has closed will need to come to the main school entrance. Parents will be asked for the reason for lateness and this will be entered into the Late Book. Punctuality is monitored alongside attendance by the Attendance Lead & Senior Leadership Team. It is important that children arrive on time so that they start their learning at the same point as their peers, do not miss any vital teaching opportunities and experiences and are able to complete subsequent learning tasks to demonstrate their progress and next steps. Any children identified as being a concern for persistent lateness will be monitored and support will be offered to the family, once the barriers to punctuality are explored.

## St Nic's procedures for unexplained absences

Where any child does not attend or stops attending without reason, as a school we are responsible for ensuring that child is safe and well. Therefore, if your child is absent from school, has been marked absent and we have not been made aware as to why they are not in school, at 10:00am an automated notification will be sent automatically via Study Bugs. This message will ask parents to get in touch urgently. If the child is vulnerable, our Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL/DDSLs) will be notified and further action will be taken by them to ensure they are safe and well, for example, informing their Social Worker if they have one. If we have not received a message either via Study Bugs, email or telephone by 1:05pm, after the afternoon register closes, Mrs Beard, our Admin for Attendance, will attempt to call the numbers we have on our records. It is of high importance that we are provided with up to date information such as phone numbers, address, email & emergency contact details. Mrs Slack (Attendance Lead) will be notified of the unexplained absence through notification on CPOMS. This is called a Day 1 absence.

For subsequent days (Days 2-10), where a child is still not attending and their absence is still unexplained, we will continue to attempt to make contact through - messages on Study Bugs, phone calls, letters home and home visits. We may also attempt to contact emergency contacts, places of work and if applicable the school of a sibling. We may also seek advice from Warwickshire Attendance Service (WAS) or Front Door. Safeguarding is paramount and it is our responsibility as a school that we seek to ensure our children are safe & well. You can see the full process for dealing with unexplained absences in Appendix 2.

If we have reached Day 10 of an unexplained absence with no contact, the child will be classed as a "Child Missing in Education" (CME) and a referral will be made by us to the Children Missing in Education Team. See the flowchart for Warwickshire CME protocol, Appendix 3, for further information. This is a safeguarding procedure that we are duty bound to follow as a school.

## How do we remove barriers to attendance?

As a school, we aim to support our children and their families, who need to improve their attendance by fostering positive relationships and working together in partnership. It is our aim to be proactive, supportive, understanding, to listen and to work with parents and children to understand the barriers to attendance and work collaboratively to resolve those barriers. Barriers to attending may include some of the following: long-term medical conditions, special educational needs and disabilities, attachment issues, bereavement, trauma, safeguarding concerns or Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA). (EBSA is commonly associated with emotional and physical distress and a reluctance to attend school, often leading to reduced attendance and further anxiety regarding school.) The ethos of whole-school monitoring and championing of attendance is vital to ensure the prevention of non-attendance and to fully understand the barriers affecting attendance. "Attendance is everyone's business" (DFE – *Working together to improve attendance.*)

Please see the diagram below for whole-school monitoring responsibilities.



Monitoring and communication is key and we aim to regularly communicate with staff, children, parents so they are fully aware of attendance levels.

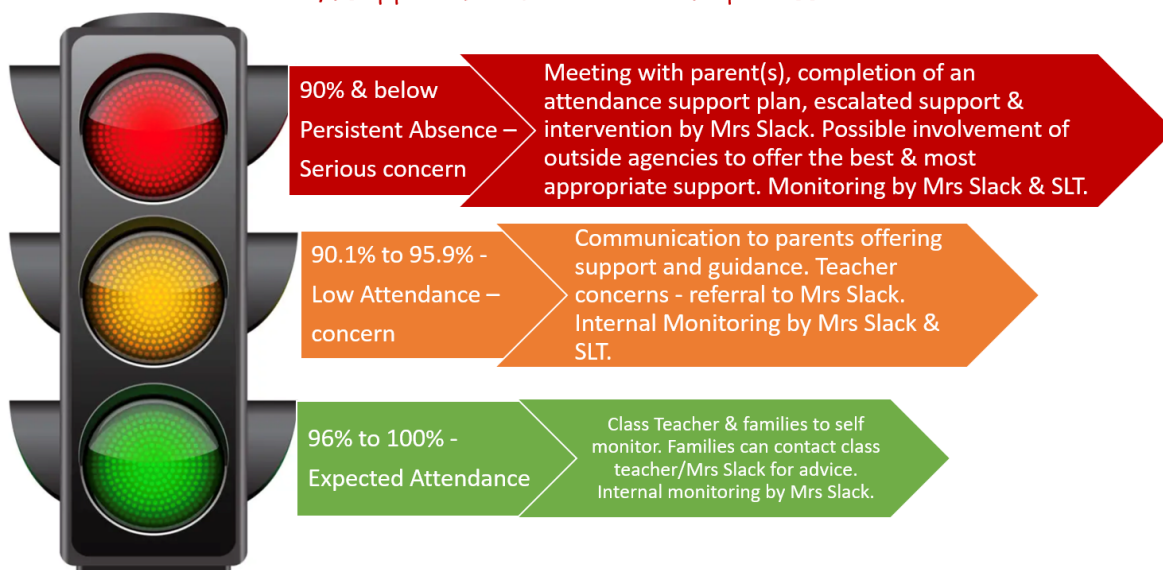
**Class Teachers** receive weekly updates sharing the attendance percentages for each child in the class. This helps the teacher to monitor and identify early attendance concerns. They are able to seek advice from Mrs Slack or a member of the Senior Leadership Team. If necessary they may communicate their concerns with parents.

**At Senior Leadership level**, attendance data is monitored regularly by Mrs Slack (Attendance Lead), looking for patterns and trends in non-attendance or punctuality. Through the monitoring process, we are then able to identify potential barriers to attendance and identify families that may need support and intervention. Attendance is discussed with all Senior Leaders on a regular basis.

**Parents** are key when it comes to monitoring their child's attendance as they see day to day experiences and issues which can cause non-attendance. We urge our parents to come and talk to their child's class teacher or contact Mrs Slack (Attendance Lead) should they wish to discuss any attendance concerns. Early identification is key to help prevent deeper and entrenched attendance concerns. When attendance drops between 95.9-94% we will send out a message via Study Bugs to parents to inform them of the decrease in attendance. Just 4 days off school can mean that a child's attendance percentage for the year drops to around 95.8%, so we are mindful that children will over the course of the year experience illness and need to be off school. Parents will receive an annual report of their child's attendance for the year in the end of school report.

We endeavour to provide a supportive and collaborative process to improve attendance and punctuality. Please see the diagram below which shows the levels of intervention needed to support the improvement of attendance and punctuality.

*The St Nic's Family – working together to improve attendance:  
A supportive and collaborative process*



Mrs Slack is the designated senior lead responsible for attendance and alongside monitoring attendance, she will also support families in improving attendance and punctuality as follows:

- Identify that there is an attendance or punctuality concerns
- Make contact with parents
- Meet with families as often as is needed, depending on the circumstances and barriers to attendance
- Act as conduit for communication between school and the family
- Build relationships with the child and family and become that trusted staff member for them
- Record any information on the child's barriers to attendance, targets, concerns etc on CPOMS and the child's Attendance Improvement Plan as appropriate
- Offer patience, support and guidance

*The St Nic's Family working together to improve attendance*

- Work collaboratively with the family to create a bespoke Attendance Improvement Plan to tackle the individual barriers
- Signpost or make referrals to outside agencies
- Celebrate with families the improvements to attendance and punctuality

### How do we promote attendance and punctuality?

Recognising improving attendance and punctuality is a whole school community responsibility and supports our attendance vision of *“The St Nic’s Family working together to improve attendance.”* As a school we are working to raise the profile of attendance and punctuality and building a culture of positive behaviour. We currently have the following strategies to promote the need for consistent attendance at the expected school percentage of above 96%, but to also let children, parents and staff know that improving attendance is a key priority in our school and at a National level.

#### *Giving children a reason to attend –*

At the forefront of improving attendance, is the need to develop a range of strategies which strengthen a child’s connection and relationship with their place of learning. In other words, we need to ask - How do we get our children to want to come to school? The answers to that are, firstly ensuring we have a welcoming school culture and secondly, to give our children a purpose to be in school each day. Our aim is to provide this ethos through:

**Our staff** – We aim that all staff are trained in attendance so that our approach to improving attendance is consistent throughout our school. We encourage all of our staff through our Behaviour and Relationships Policy, to promote positive relationships with the children that is built upon trust, respect and care. This starts with those first positive social interactions children and parents have as they are greeted on the playground by Senior Leaders or Teaching Assistants or at the main entrance by any member of staff. Also, the first 10 minutes or so of their time as the children enter the classroom each morning and settle into the school day, has the potential to be extremely valuable. Whether on the playground, in the corridor or in the classroom, children need to experience a warm welcome each morning. That first interaction of the day each child has, must be a positive one. We therefore ask all of our staff to complete an “Active Meet and Greet” when our children enter the classroom by using any of the following St Nics Meet & Greet strategies. (These strategies can also be used around the school i.e. outside, in the corridor, at the school entrance):

<i>St Nics Meet &amp; Greet</i>
<b>Using positive welcome messages</b> – Good morning/good afternoon, Hello it’s lovely to see you today, Welcome back, I hope you are feeling better, It’s great to see you in school, I am looking forward to seeing your amazing writing/work today (especially if linking it back to a previous piece of work).
<b>Using children’s names accurately</b> - No pet names or terms of endearment.
<b>Using non-verbal communication</b> – Thumbs up, handshake, wave or high-5 (where appropriate)
<b>Being deliberately upbeat</b> – Use positive words – super, great, wonderful to see you, it’s a great day today etc
<b>Giving positive praise</b> – Well done you’ve started your morning task, Super you’ve put your book bag away etc
<b>Reminding children of rules and routines</b> – Put your book bag in the draw, Have a go at our morning task, After the register it will be assembly, I can see some super sitting etc
<b>Having a calm environment</b> - Play calm music (where appropriate) to welcome children and having a message on the Interactive Whiteboard welcoming the children (alongside showing their morning task.)
<b>Sharing what we are doing today</b> – “I am excited about today because...”, “Today we are going to be...”
<b>Positioning</b> - Stand at the door as children are coming in, moving around the classroom or standing at the front of the classroom. Staff will not doing jobs i.e. hearing readers etc as they are expected to be proactively welcoming the children and supporting the transition into school so they are ready to learn.
<b>Noticing</b> – Acknowledging each child in their class by saying hello, using their name, thumbs up or by using the above strategies, by the time the register is taken.
<b>Using positive attendance language</b> – It’s great to see you in school, I hope you are feeling better, I’m glad to see you today, as opposed to negative language - you are late, why were you off yesterday, you missed all your work, you won’t know what your doing, you’ll have to work harder to catch up now etc.
<b>Senior Leadership Presence</b> – Having Senior Leaders to meet and greet on the playground or at the front of school giving a positive and warm welcome to parents and children.

**Curriculum** – We aim to use a well thought out and meaningful curriculum to encourage our pupils to feel that their learning is worthwhile. We aim for our curriculum subjects to stand out, be interesting and engaging. We ask teachers to highlight what’s coming up so the children don’t want to miss out on any learning. In lessons, we ask our teachers to:

- Use pre-learning and anticipation of the next lesson’s content to interest children – for example, “tomorrow we are ...”
- Link learning to past and future lessons, split content, and use pole-bridging to link lessons, such as “you will remember in our last lesson we ...”

**Beyond the Curriculum** – Events in school that are beyond the curriculum can create a sense of belonging and identity. We offer extra-curricular activities in the form of after-school clubs run by school staff and external clubs. We also hold key events across the school year such as The St Nic’s Great Egg Race (KS2), Easter Bonnet Parade (KS1/EYFS), Christmas Disco, sporting competitions, author visits, year group performances, year group trips and residential and author visits. We also encourage parent attendance to events such as our weekly Time to Shine assemblies, year group performances, coffee mornings etc. Activities such as performing arts (i.e. Young Voices, year group performances) often result in a production that requires regular rehearsal time, ultimately meaning that pupils need to attend school. We hope these memorable experiences in school will encourage children to attend so they have shared experiences with their friends.

### *Putting attendance out there! –*

- Newsletter - attendance figures for each class and whole school are publicised in the school newsletter every two weeks. We share on the newsletter whether attendance has increased or decreased for each class. We will also include on the newsletter, up and coming events in school, information on how to improve attendance, legal updates and information etc.
- Website – It is our aim to share twice weekly attendance news on our school website under the section Latest News. We also aim to update our Attendance page so that it is current, informative and promotes attendance and punctuality.
- Coffee Mornings - Our Attendance Lead runs open coffee mornings every half term alongside the SENDCO to provide an opportunity for parents to drop in and discuss any concerns around Attendance and SEND. Outside agencies such as WAS are also invited to give talks to parents and discuss any concerns.
- Class Teachers - are provided with weekly attendance figures for the class every Friday. They can use this information to monitor attendance.
- Assemblies – Raising the profile of attendance in assemblies is good practise. Therefore, during our Time to Shine assembly each week, attendance figures for the previous week will be acknowledged. Improvements in whole-class attendance will be celebrated. Children will also be reminded of the whole-class end of year incentive to motivate the children. In our wellbeing assembly, time will be given throughout the year to address and talk about attendance. Staff will be able to highlight the importance of attending regularly and punctually. It will be also be a time to share how as a school we promote attendance and punctuality.

### *Communicating recognition -*

As a school we are mindful that attendance is not always the fault of the child or family, for example, children can be off school due to ongoing illness, SEND or exceptional circumstances and we do not want to penalise children as this can promote a negative attitude towards attendance. Therefore, we aim to promote attendance through recognising improvements in attendance/punctuality or attendance that is consistently at the expected level. We will do this by communicating recognition as follows:

- At any point in the year and regularly via StudyBugs, letters or postcards home, when a child’s attendance or punctuality trend has shown improvement.
- At the end of each term, when expected attendance of 96-100% is achieved for that term, messages will be sent home via StudyBugs.

## How to request a leave of absence

Only exceptional circumstances warrant a leave of absence and headteachers should not authorise absence for holidays taken during term time. All leaves of absence will be granted by the headteacher, Mrs Rayson. We will consider each application individually, taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted at our headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness (including mental illness) and medical/dental appointments
- Family Bereavement
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the child's parents/carers belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents'/carers' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 3 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the Leave of Absence Request Form on our school website or you can obtain a paper copy from our school office. The form is also shown in appendix 4. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence. Please see the letters issues to parents once a decision has been made by the headteacher – Appendices 5 & 6.

## Legal Sanctions

The School may refer parents to the Warwickshire County Council Local Authority for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age. The LA can then decide whether to issue a fixed penalty notice in which case each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the LA. The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may consider:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

## Legislation and Guidance

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

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

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)

- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools

### Appendix 1 – DfE Register codes

<b>Codes</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Education off site (no Dual reg)	Approval Education Activity
C	Other authorised circumstances	Authorised Absence
D	Dual registration	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded	Authorised Absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised Absence
G	Family holiday (not agreed)	Unauthorised Absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised Absence
I	Illness	Authorised Absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised Absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised Absence
O	Unauthorised Abs	Unauthorised Absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised Absence
S	Study leave	Authorised Absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised Absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised Absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
#	School closed to pupils & staff	Attendance not required
Y	Enforced closure	Attendance not required
X	Non-compulsory school age absence	Attendance not required
Z	Pupil not on roll	Attendance not required

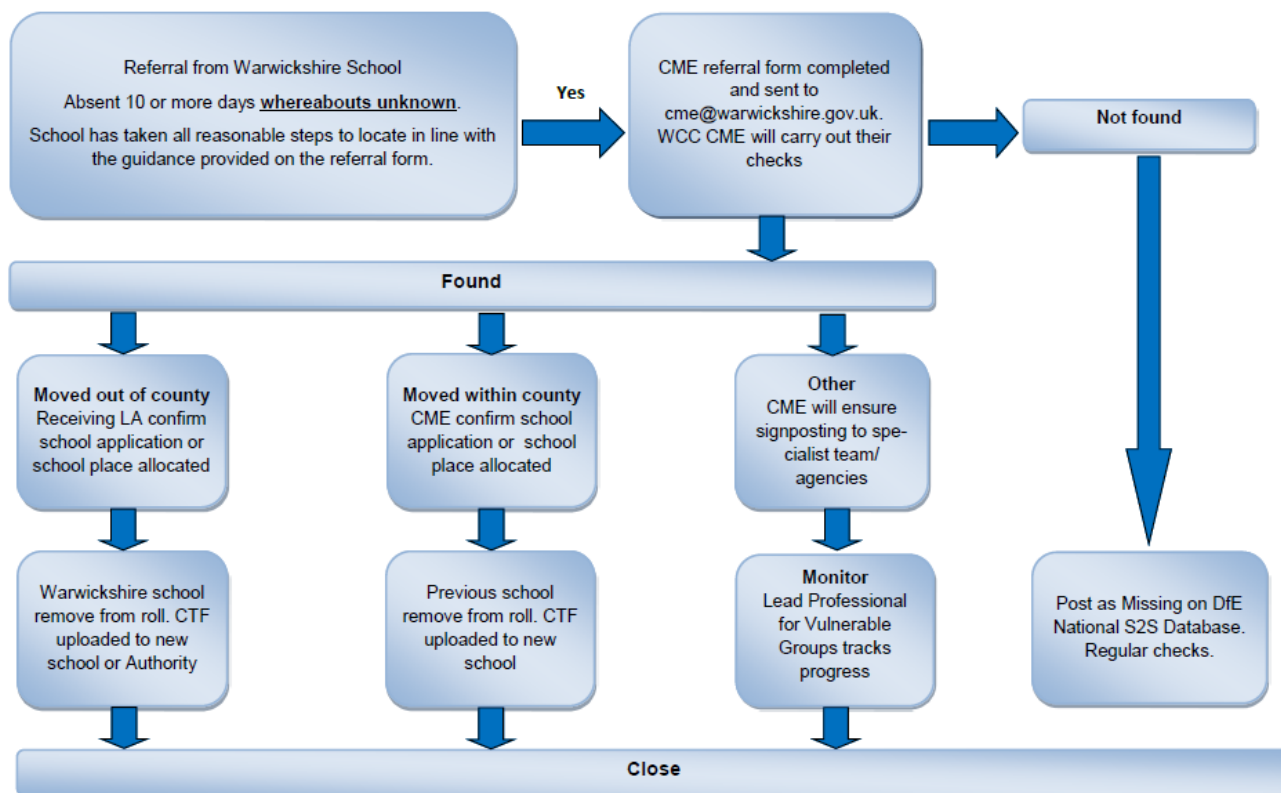
## Appendix 2 - St Nicholas C of E Primary School - Procedure for Unexplained absences

Day	Action
Day 1	<p><b>AM</b> - Not informed of absence by 10:00am – Day 1 am Study Bugs Alert sent automatically, asking to make contact asap. Vulnerable Child/Family alerted verbally to DSL/DDSLS &amp; on CPOMS. AB to start unexplained absence contact sheet to be added to for each day.</p> <p><b>PM</b> – Not informed of absence then AB will follow up with a phone call &amp; Day 1 pm Study Bugs message saying we have called, please call asap. Alert ES (Attendance Lead) and add to CPOMS (attendance.)</p>
Day 2	<p><b>AM</b> – Not informed of absence by 10:00am – AB to phone. Vulnerable Child/Family alerted verbally to DSL/DDSLS &amp; on CPOMS.) Alert ES (Attendance Lead) and on CPOMS (attendance.)</p> <p><b>PM</b> – If still no response by 1pm, AB to call, then send Day 2 home visit letter via email if not heard anything by 1:30pm for a safe &amp; well check. Give until 3pm for parents to reply to email then make arrangements for home visit to take place the next day. Alert ES (Attendance Lead) and add to CPOMS (attendance) together with copy of letter sent.</p>
Day 3	<p><b>AM</b> - Not informed of absence by 9:30am or no contact made from the previous day – home visit by SLT/AB (2 people). Vulnerable Child/Family alerted verbally to DSL/DDSLS &amp; on CPOMS.) If no answer at residence, Day 3 postcard posted through door together with paper copy of Day 2 letter that was emailed. Add action onto CPOMS with update.</p>
Day 4	<p><b>AM</b> – Not informed of absence by 10:00 am – AB to phone and send a Day 4 Study Bugs message. Vulnerable Child/Family alerted verbally to DSL/DDSLS &amp; on CPOMS.) Alert ES (Attendance Lead) and add to CPOMS (attendance.)</p> <p><b>PM</b> – Not informed of absence – AB to phone again and then if still no response AB/ES to phone sibling’s school if applicable. If no reply 1:30pm issue Day 4 home visit letter via email. Add action onto CPOMS with update.</p>
Day 5	<p><b>AM</b> - Not informed of absence by 9:30am or no contact made from the previous day – home visit by SLT/AB (2 people). Vulnerable Child/Family alerted verbally to DSL/DDSLS &amp; on CPOMS.) If no answer at residence, Day 5 postcard posted through door, together with paper copy of Day 4 letter that was emailed. Add action onto CPOMS with update. ES to speak with DSL/DDSLS, Warwickshire Attendance Service &amp; Front Door for advice where needed.</p>
Day 6	<p><b>AM</b> – Not informed of absence by 10:00am – AB to phone again &amp; send Day 6 Study Bugs message. Vulnerable Child/Family alerted verbally to DSL/DDSLS &amp; on CPOMS. Alert ES (Attendance Lead) and add to CPOMS (attendance.)</p> <p><b>PM</b> – Not informed of absence by 1pm – Day 6 home visit letter issued via email saying home visit will be conducted. Also send letter via email and via post (if possible recorded delivery.) ES/AB to attempt to contact emergency contact on school records. ES to speak with DSL/DDSLS, WAS &amp; Front Door for advice where needed. Add action onto CPOMS with update.</p>
Day 7	<p><b>AM</b> – Not informed of absence by 9:30am or no contact made from the previous day – home visit by SLT/AB (2 people). Vulnerable Child/Family alerted verbally to DSL/DDSLS &amp; on CPOMS. If no answer at residence, Day 7 postcard posted through door, together with paper copy of Day 6 letter that was emailed. Speak to neighbours if appropriate. Also send copy of Day 7 letter via email. Phone sibling school again if applicable. Speak to DSL/DDSLS. Speak to Front Door/WAS again for advice. Add action onto CPOMS.</p>
Day 8	<p><b>AM</b> - Not informed of absence by 9:30am or no contact made from the previous day – home visit by SLT/AB (2 people.) Vulnerable Child/Family alerted verbally to DSL/DDSLS &amp; on CPOMS. If no answer at residence, Day 8 letter posted through door explaining we need to establish if the child is safe &amp; well and will have to contact WAS and potentially make a referral to Warwickshire Safeguarding if we are unable to establish child this. Include paper copy of Day 7 letter. Also send copy of Day 8 letter via email and via recorded delivery post. If on our records, phone parent’s work place. Speak to DSL/DDSLS. ES speak to Child Missing in Education for advice for potential referral. Add action onto CPOMS.</p>
Day 9	<p><b>AM</b> – Not informed of absence by 9:30am or no contact made from the previous day – home visit by SLT/AB (2 people.) Vulnerable Child/Family alerted verbally to DSL/DDSLS &amp; on CPOMS. If no answer at residence, Day 9 letter posted through door explaining we will home visit again tomorrow and to contact us urgently. If we are unable to establish if the child is safe and well a CME referral will be complete tomorrow. Contact emergency contact, sibling school &amp; work place where applicable. Speak to DSL/DDSLS. Speak to Front Door/CME/WAS again for advice. Add action onto CPOMS.</p>
Day 10	<p><b>AM</b> - Not informed of absence and child is not in school. Final Home visit to take place and DSL/DDSLS phone CME team to alert them to the referral. DSL/DDSLS - Complete the online CME Referral. Vulnerable Child/Family alerted verbally to DSL/DDSLS &amp; on CPOMS. Add action onto CPOMS. <a href="https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/childrenmissingeducation">https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/childrenmissingeducation</a></p>

## Appendix 3 – Flowchart for Children Missing in Education Protocol – Warwickshire County Council

[www.warwickshire.gov.uk/childrenmissingeducation](http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/childrenmissingeducation) T. 01926 736323

### Children Missing Education Protocol for Warwickshire Pupils



Please Note: Where it is identified that a child may have been off rolled, the previous school will be required to place this child back onto their roll immediately.

To read further information about Children Missing in Education, follow this link - <https://api.warwickshire.gov.uk/documents/WCCC-1010-97>

For urgent concerns about a child's safety or well-being which requires immediate action, call the Front Door (and police if appropriate) without delay on 01926 414144.

Appendix 4 –Leave of absence form



APPLICATION FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE FOR A SCHOOL PUPIL IN TERMTIME IN EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES ONLY

Important Information for Parents/Carers

- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013 only allow Head Teacher to authorise leave of absence (for any purpose) in exceptional circumstances
If the exceptional circumstances are agreed, the Head Teacher will determine the length of the absence authorised
Requests for Leave of Absence should made in advance and before any arrangements confirmed or money committed
If Leave of Absence is granted please contact school to discuss measures to minimise the impact of the absence on your child's academic progress
This form MUST be completed by the resident parent(s)/carer(s) before requests will be considered
Please complete a Leave of Absence form for each child
Failure to make a request for a Leave of absence in advance will result in the absence being recorded as unauthorised

Please note: Parents do not have any legal entitlement to take their childon holiday during term time.

I wish to apply for Leave of Absence from school to be granted to:

Name of Child: \_\_\_\_\_ Form Group: \_\_\_\_\_

First Date of Proposed Absence: \_\_\_\_\_

Last date of Proposed Absence: \_\_\_\_\_

Expected date of return to school: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for Proposed Absence – please provide reasons to support the application including evidence (they can only be exceptional circumstances) (see overleaf before completing)

.....
.....
.....

Total days requested on this occasion [ ]

(For siblings) I have also applied to \_\_\_\_\_ School/Academy for leave of absence for \_\_\_\_\_ (Insert child/children's name)

Signature of resident Parent/Carer: \_\_\_\_\_ Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

For school use only: NAME OF CHILD: \_\_\_\_\_ Date received by school: \_\_\_\_\_

Absence Authorised: Yes/No

The reasons for this decision are:.....

- LOA record sheet to be completed by school and submitted where verbal requests made/ for other relevant information

1st date of absence: ..... Last date of absence:.....

Expected date of return to school: .....

Head Teacher/Attendance Lead: ..... Date: .....

- Copy of this completed section must be sent back to parent with letter

The St Nic's Family working together to improve attendance

#### Appendix 4 continued...

#### **The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013 state:**

Head Teachers **shall not grant any** leave of absence during term time **unless:**

A) An application has been made in advance, by the parent with whom the child normally resides

#### **AND**

B) They consider there to be exceptional circumstances relating to the application.

The Head Teacher must be satisfied that exceptional circumstances warrant the granting of a leave of absence.

The Head Teacher can determine how long an absence should be and any additional absence will not be authorised.

- 
- Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full-time education through regular attendance at a school or otherwise (i.e. home education) (Section 7 Education Act 1996).
  - If a child who is of compulsory school age, who is registered at school and fails to attend regularly, it is the parent that will be guilty of an offence (Section 444 (1) Education Act 1996).
  - Parents whose children have unauthorised absence may be subject to a Fixed Penalty Notice and/or prosecution.
  - Any Fixed Penalty Notices issued and/or prosecution will apply to each parent for each child who fails to attend school.
- 

#### **Parents:**

- a. The application must be made in advance by the parent(s) that the child normally resides with.
- b. Any leave of absences taken which have not been requested in advance will be recorded as unauthorised.
- c. Parents can be issued with a Fixed [Penalty Notice or prosecuted](#) for unauthorised absence including holidays.

***We have a shared responsibility to ensure that the law is upheld and that your child achieves to their full potential. We look forward to your co-operation.***

## Appendix 5 –Leave of absence authorised letter



**Mrs S Rayson**  
Head Teacher

### St. Nicholas C of E Primary School

Priory Road

Kenilworth

CV8 2PE

(01926) 853257

[admin3146@welearn365.com](mailto:admin3146@welearn365.com)

[www.st-nicholas-primary.org.uk](http://www.st-nicholas-primary.org.uk)

@StNicsCofE

Add Date

Application for Leave of Absence during Term Time in Exceptional Circumstances for (insert child's name and class)

Dear

I have received your completed application/verbal request for Leave of Absence outlining the exceptional circumstances to support your application. I have carefully considered your request and reviewed the exceptional circumstances you have given.

As you are aware Government regulations prohibit Head Teachers from authorising absence in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. In this instance only the school is prepared to accept the reasons put forward and authorise the Leave of Absence request (please see the attached Leave of Absence form for details). Any extension to this request without authorisation or further absence will be unauthorised and as parent(s) you may be liable to further action including the issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice or prosecution through the court.

You should be aware that failure to secure «Forename»'s attendance at school is a criminal offence under Section 444(1) and 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996. In the event that «Forename»'s attendance at school fails to improve or improve sufficiently then this could result in a Fixed Penalty Notice (£60 fine if paid within 21 days of receipt of notice increasing to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days) being issued to you or criminal prosecution proceedings being issued against you. If criminal proceedings are issued and you are found guilty, the court could sentence you to a fine of up to £1,000 or £2,500 and or sentence you to serve a community sentence period or sentence you to serve a custodial period of up to 3 months.

This decision is not made lightly. Our school is dedicated to the education of all our pupils and believes regular attendance through the year is essential to every child's success and fulfilment.

Please contact the school to discuss measures to minimise the impact of the leave on your child's academic progress.

If you have any concerns about the content of this reply please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely  
Mrs Sarah Rayson  
Head Teacher



*"The St Nic's Family Working together to improve attendance"*



## Appendix 6 – Leave of absence rejected letter



**Mrs S Rayson**  
Head Teacher

### St. Nicholas C of E Primary School

Priory Road

Kenilworth

CV8 2PE

(01926) 853257

[admin3146@welearn365.com](mailto:admin3146@welearn365.com)

[www.st-nicholas-primary.org.uk](http://www.st-nicholas-primary.org.uk)

@StNicsCofE

**Add Date**

Application for Leave of Absence during Term Time in Exceptional Circumstances for (insert child's name and class)

Dear

I have received your completed application/verbal request for Leave of Absence outlining the exceptional circumstances to support your application. I have carefully considered your request and reviewed the exceptional circumstances you have given.

As you are aware Government regulations prohibit Head Teachers from authorising absence in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. In this instance the school will not authorise this Leave of Absence request and any absence taken during this period will be unauthorised (please see the attached Leave of Absence form for details). As parent(s) you have a legal duty to ensure that your child receives a full-time education (section 7 Education Act 1996). You may be liable to further action including the issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice or prosecution through the court if your child is absent during the period requested in your application.

Evidence shows that pupil absence has a negative impact on pupil performance and social development. We urge you to consider this matter very carefully before making a decision to go ahead.

You should be aware that failure to secure «Forename»'s attendance at school is a criminal offence under Section 444(1) and 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996. In the event that «Forename»'s attendance at school fails to improve or improve sufficiently then this could result in a Fixed Penalty Notice (£60 fine if paid within 21 days of receipt of notice increasing to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days) being issued to you or criminal prosecution proceedings being issued against you. If criminal proceedings are issued and you are found guilty, the court could sentence you to a fine of up to £1,000 or £2,500 and or sentence you to serve a community sentence period or sentence you to serve a custodial period of up to 3 months.

If you have any concerns about the content of this reply please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Sarah Rayson  
Head Teacher



*"The St Nic's Family Working together to improve attendance"*

