



Attendance Policy

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Version History Log

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<u>05/09/2024</u>	<u>2</u>	Changes made in line with new guidance August 2024 Added in attendance contract information to page 9 and appendix

Our Vision Statement 'Learning for Life'

Learning for life' with Jesus' promise of 'life in all its fullness' is at the heart of St Mary's.

At our school, children are seen as unique and will feel loved, safe and empowered to flourish so they reach their full potential both academically and personally.

Commitment to Attendance

The staff of St Mary's C of E School are committed, in partnership with the parents / carers, pupils, governors and the Local Authority, to building a school which serves the community and of which the community are proud.

Regular attendance is key to staying healthy, enjoying and achieving, keeping safe, contributing to the community, and social and economic well-being. Research clearly demonstrates the link between regular attendance and educational progress and attainment. As a school, we will encourage parents to ensure that their children achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent this are identified and acted on promptly.

Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#), through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence



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- Building strong relationships with families to make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school

Legislation and guidance

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

- Part 6 of the [Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of the [Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment](#)

It also refers to:

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

Expectations

All pupils must:

- Attend school 100% of the time, unless the absence is authorised by the Headteacher.
- Attend school punctually at 8.40am.
- Attend appropriately prepared for the day.

All parents will:

- Encourage 100% school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities.
- Ensure that their child arrives at school punctually and prepared for the school day.
- Ensure that they contact the school on the first day of absence by **9.20am** or sooner if known in advance, whenever their child is unable to attend school.
- Contact school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from school.
- Notify the school immediately of any changes to contact details and ensure school has at least 2 emergency contacts details for each child.
- Notify the school of any home circumstances that might affect the behaviour and learning of their child.

The school will:

- Provide a welcoming atmosphere.
- Provide a safe learning environment.
- Provide a sympathetic response to any pupil's or parent's concerns.
- Keep regular and accurate records of AM and PM attendance and punctuality.
- Monitor individual pupil's attendance and punctuality.
- If the school has not heard by 9.20am from a parent, someone in the office will attempt to contact parents/ carers listed as contacts to establish a reason for the absence.
- If this contact is unsuccessful and we have not been able to contact a parent or carer about an absence of 4 sessions then an unannounced home visit will take place as a welfare check.
- Follow up all unexplained absences to obtain explanations from parents. Although parents may offer a reason, only the school can authorise the absence. In the case of long term or frequent absence due to medical conditions, verifications from a GP or other relevant body may be requested.
- Encourage good attendance and punctuality.
- Regularly inform parents of the % attendance of all pupils. Each half term an attendance report will be sent home.
- Make initial enquiries regarding pupils who are not attending regularly and put in place support and interventions when deemed appropriate.
- Meet regularly with the Inclusion Officer to monitor and support school attendance and punctuality.



Roles and responsibilities

The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

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

The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data and reporting this to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising attendance officer to be able to do so



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- Working with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) alongside the SENCO to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- Supporting the SENCO communicate with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents
- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Supporting the HSLW, SENCO and DSL's in their role to tackle attendance issues. Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers

The attendance officer will:

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Maintaining attendance records and ensuring attendance information is kept up to date on CPOMS
- Providing the headteacher with half termly attendance data for whole school, classes and specific groups of children.
- Meeting with the headteacher and HSLW half termly to review attendance of PA group and carryout any follow up actions.
- Working with Inclusion officers and wider staff to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- Ensuring the appropriate paperwork is received from parents with regards to absence requests and medical information

Class teachers will:

- Teachers/ cover teachers are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office
- Teachers are to take an active interest in the attendance of the children in their class, ensuring they are aware of the reasons for absence and actively encourage good attendance.
- Where appropriate teachers will contact parents to maintain positive relationships with families during long periods of absence.
- If a child is unable to attend a school and the absence is authorised, the class teacher will organise a weekly face to face online call with the child each week and provide weekly learning for the child to complete at home while they are unable to attend school.

School admin/office staff

School admin/office staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system.
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to SLT/ HSLW where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance.
- Update CPOMS with absence information: 1) For identified vulnerable children 2) Children under Inclusion team 3) Where reason given for absence is a 'cause for concern'.
- If a child is absent from school and the reason is unknown the contacts for they child will be sent an absence text.



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- If the text is not responded to by lunchtime on day 1 then the contacts for the child will be called. This process will be repeated on day 2 of the absence if no contact with school has been made on day 1.
- After 4 sessions of unexplained absence a cold call will be made to the family home by SLT/HSLW as a welfare check.

Parents will:

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

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

Parents are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time.
- Call the school to report their child's absence by 9.20am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Keep to the home school agreement signed when joining the school.
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance.
- Refer to the school website for information and support materials with regards to attendance.

Pupils Leaving During the School Day

- Pupils are not allowed to leave the premises without prior permission from the school.
- Parents are requested to confirm in writing, using the absence request form, the reason for any planned absence, the time of leaving, the expected return time and whether the pupil is being collected.
- Parents must provide evidence of appointments that need to take place during school hours.
- Pupils must be signed out on leaving the school and signed back in on their return (This must be completed using the Inventory Sign In / Out process).
- Where a pupil is being collected from the school, parents are requested to report to the school office before the pupil is allowed to leave the site and complete the Inventory Sign In / Out process.

Attendance register

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

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, whether every pupil is:

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

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made



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- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not for children of statutory school age.
- The nature of the activity, where a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances, where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

- The school day starts at 8.40am and ends at 3.10pm.
- Pupils must arrive in school by 8.40am on each school day.
- The register for the first session will be taken at 8.50am and will be kept open until 9.05. The register for the second session will be taken at 12.45 and will be kept open until 1.00pm.

Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9.20am or as soon as practically possible, by calling the school to speak to the office team or leaving a message if it is before the school office opens.

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised, unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where the absence is longer than 5 days, or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence.

We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment and provides the relevant paperwork and evidence.

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible.

Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

Approval for term-time absence

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

The headteacher will only grant a **leave of absence** to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the [2024 school attendance regulations](#). These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances

A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

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

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.



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Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least two weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school website. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Other valid reasons for **authorised absence** include (but are not limited to):

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments.
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

Other reasons the school may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
- Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority
- Attending work experience
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed.

Sanctions

Our school will make use of the full range of potential sanctions – including, but not limited to, those listed below – to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

Penalty notices

The headteacher (or someone authorised by them), local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

If the school issues a penalty notice, it will check with the local authority before doing so, and send it a copy of any penalty notice issued.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks)
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

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

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

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

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

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

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day). These penalty notices are not included in the



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National Framework, not subject to the same considerations about support being provided, and do not count towards the limit as part of the escalation process.

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

Notices to improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

They will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under [section 7 of the Education Act 1996](#)
- Details of the support provided so far
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

Lateness and punctuality

Punctuality to school is crucial and registration at the beginning of the day with a pupil's teacher is important. Lateness into school causes disruption to that individual's learning and to that of the other pupils in the class. It is paramount therefore that all pupils arrive at school on time ready to learn **by 8.40am**.

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the 'L' code.
- After the register has closed will be marked as late, using the 'U' code as unauthorised late.
- If there is persistent lateness parents will be invited to attend a meeting with the headteacher to discuss the context and put in place any support or intervention if applicable

Following up unexplained absence

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

- If a child is absent from school and the reason is unknown the emergency contacts for they child will be sent an absence text. Identify whether the absence is approved or not. If the text is not responded to by lunchtime on day 1 we will call the pupil's parent to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts after 4 sessions then a cold call will be made to the family home and if deemed necessary the school may contact police or social services to raise the concern.
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session(s) for which the pupil was absent
- Call the parent on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary
- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence external agencies involved with the family
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with: [issue a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention, as appropriate]



Reporting to parents

- Parents will receive an attendance report each half term so that they are aware of how many sessions their child has missed.
- If a child is persistently late, a meeting will be held between the headteacher and the parents to address the lateness. Initially, the class teacher will address lateness this with the parents and if there is no improvement a meeting will be held with the headteacher.
- When a child's attendance starts to be a concern but has not dropped to 90%, an initial attendance letter will be sent to parents.
- If a child's attendance drops to 90%, the parents will be invited to attend a meeting with the headteacher and HSLW to discuss the context and potential barriers to identify any support and interventions that may help to improve the attendance. At this meeting, the parents will be issued with a Stage 1 attendance letter and an attendance contract agreed. The attendance is reviewed each half term.
- Depending on the attendance figures and the individual circumstances, if the attendance does not improve or is an ongoing concern, then further action may be taken: external agencies may become involved; the parents may be issued with a penalty notice, notice to improve or receive a stage 2 attendance letter at a consequent meeting with the headteacher and HSLW.

Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's strategy for improving attendance.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
 - Discuss attendance and engagement at school
 - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
 - Explain the help that is available
 - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
 - Review any existing actions or interventions
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant.
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
- Implement sanctions, where necessary
- Initial attendance letter will be issued when attendance falls to 92%.
- A stage 1 letter will be issued at a parent meeting, when attendance falls to 90% and an attendance contract will be agreed.
- A stage 2 letter will be issued at a parent meeting, if there is no improvement in attendance over the next half term.
- See further details on 'Reporting to parents' section in this policy.



Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance
- Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
- Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severed absence, and their families.
- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinators, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads)
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

Changing Schools

It is important that if families decide to send their child to a different school that they inform us as soon as possible. A pupil will not be removed from the school roll until the following information has been received and investigated:

- The date the pupil will be leaving the school and starting the next.
- The address of the new school.
- A new home address if appropriate.

The pupil's school records will then be sent to the new school. In the event that the school has not been informed of the above information, the family will be referred to the local authority Tracking Officer and Education Inclusion Team.

A

Attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's [guidance on school attendance](#).

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination

X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a ‘mobile child’ who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are:

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

Appendix 1: Application for leave form

Application for leave of absence for exceptional circumstances

Please read the following guidance carefully.

As parents, you have a legal responsibility to ensure your child's attendance at school. During the academic year, pupils are at school for 190 days and at home for 175 days.

Please be aware that The Education (Pupil Registration)(England)(Amendment) Regulations 2013, state that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Headteacher is also required to determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted.

Please complete and submit this form if you want the Headteacher to consider your request for your child's leave of absence for exceptional circumstances. We may ask for proof to validate your request.

Unauthorised absence of 5 days or more will result in the following action being taken:

1. If you have not incurred a penalty notice relating to this child/children since 19 August 2024, then the penalty notice will be charged at the rate of £160.00, **per parent/carer per child**, if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80.00 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice will result in Surrey County Council considering legal proceedings against you in the Magistrates Court.
2. If you have incurred a penalty notice relating to this child/children since 19 August 2024, the rolling 3 year period will be activated from the date of the first penalty notice and the second penalty notice will be charged at the flat rate of £160.00, **per parent/carer per child**, if paid within 28 days. There will be no reduction for payment within 21 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice will result in Surrey County Council considering legal proceedings against you in the Magistrates Court.
3. If you have incurred 2 penalty notices relating to this child/children in the rolling 3 year period since the first penalty notice was issued, then you will NOT receive a third penalty notice – Surrey County Council will have no option but to consider a prosecution, **per parent/carer per child**, in the Magistrates Court under s 444 Education Act 1996.

The Headteacher will consider the reasons for the request carefully and will notify you of the decision. In the absence of a decision, parents/carers cannot assume that permission for the absence has been given. For further information, please refer to our School Attendance Policy.

Name of child:	Class:
I am applying for leave of absence for my child for	
from:	to:
Number of school days:	
The exceptional circumstances for which leave is requested:	
Has your child/children already had any leave of absence since 01 September 2024 resulting in a penalty notice being issued to you (applicant) or any other parent/carer? YES / NO	

If YES, please give dates and details:	
I also have children at...	
Signed: (Parent/Carer)	Date:
Address :	

To the Parent/Guardian of :

To be completed by the Headteacher		
Having considered your request carefully, my decision is that leave of absence is:		
Approved		The absence will be recorded as authorised.
Not approved		The absence will be recorded as unauthorised and we will be requesting the Surrey County Council to issue a penalty notice per parent/carer per child.
Explanatory notes:		
Signed: (Headteacher)		Date:

Appendix 2: Initial attendance letter

Dear Parent/Carer of XXX

We need your help, please.

XXX has been absent for {#} days of school, which is equal to {#} lessons missed so far this school year

We know that sometimes our pupils cannot come to school because they are really unwell - and that's the right thing to do for them and other students. Medical advice is clear however that children with mild illness will often be well enough to attend - for example if they have a cough, or cold, without a temperature. The NHS guidance [Is my child too ill for school? - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk) is designed to support parents in their decision making about mild illness.

We also know that pupils fall behind their friends and classmates when they miss school. At school we want the amount of missed education to be reduced as much as possible. We believe that our community is stronger together, with all of our pupils in school, on time, every day. We are building life skills, life-long friendships and preparing your child for future success.

We also know that you can have a significant effect on XXX absences this academic year and we would really appreciate your help and support ensuring that XXX comes to school every day so that they can get the best possible outcomes. We want to work with you to achieve this – please call or come in and meet XXX class teacher if there is anything we can do to support you or your child. We appreciate that every family's situation is unique.

We will be in touch again to request a meeting with you if we have ongoing concerns about your child's attendance.

Kind regards

Mrs J Chambers
Head Teacher

Appendix 3: Stage 1 Attendance Letter

Dear

Having reviewed our attendance figures since the return of school in XXXX, it has been noted that XXXX attendance level is below 90% and is therefore a cause for concern.

Whilst most of the absences have been explained as being due to illness, the Department of Education have declared that any child whose attendance at school is 90% or less is to be classified as a pupil with Persistent Absence.

If there are any health conditions that we are not aware of, or any other problems you are experiencing in getting your child into school, then please contact the office if you would like to make an appointment to see me or Laura Merrick (Home School Link Worker) to discuss this matter; we may have ways that we can help.

Regular attendance is very important to your child's education and your child's education is important to us, as I am sure it is to you. Please note that your child's attendance will be closely monitored by the school and also the Local Education Welfare Officer.

Yours sincerely,

Appendix 4: Stage 2 Attendance Letter

Dear.....

Please find enclosed a copy of XXX attendance registration certificate. You will see from this that XXX has only achieved XXX % attendance this year. This level of attendance could have a serious impact on XXX progress at school.

Whilst I am aware that most of the absences have been explained as being due to illness, I am concerned that this level of illness could indicate an underlying medical condition. In view of this level of absence, the school will no longer authorise any further absences unless medical evidence is provided. This could be in the form of an appointment card for the GP, dentist or the hospital or a copy of a prescription or a letter from the GP, consultant or dentist.

If you would like to discuss this, or any other circumstances which are causing XXX to be absent from school, please do not hesitate to contact me to arrange a meeting.

If there is no improvement in XXX attendance, we may be required to apply further sanctions inline with the Attendance Policy that is enclosed for your reference.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs J Chambers
Head Teacher

Appendix 5: Attendance Contract (Agreement for NMI)

<p>Legislation Section 19 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 Section 7 & 444 Education Act 1996</p>
<p>Working together to improve school attendance DFE guidance August 2024</p>

This is a voluntary agreement entered into by
 and School Name.

The purpose of this contract is to support to improve their attendance at school.

Background/context to Attendance Contract:
 (Brief account of barriers to regular attendance)

.....

Current attendance%:

Date of meeting and chair
Child name and DOB:
Parent(s) name and DOB:
School representative name and role:
Others present:

Parents: will:

- 1) Ensure that attends school / alternative provision regularly and on time for registration at.....am.
- 2) Contact school every dayis absent by telephone/email.
- 3) Attend all meetings with the school.
- 4) Access or partake in the support offered by the school and/or other professionals.
- 5)
- 6)
- 7)
- 8)

Child: will:

School:will:

- 1) Be available for support and advice as required and respond in a timely manner to any barriers to regular attendance.
- 1) attend school every day and on time.
- 2) Ensure that the registers are accurately completed.
- 2) raise any concerns that may be barriers to regular attendance with school.
- 3) Monitor attendance.
- 3) identify a named person in school to go to if any issues arise.
- 4)
- 4)
- 5)
- 5)

Other professionals will:

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

Agreement

We will do what we have agreed in this parenting contract and will work together to help (insert pupil's name) attend school regularly/behave well in class.

Signed Parent(s):

Date:

Signed child/young Person:

Date:

Signed school representative:

Date:

Signed other professional:

Date:

Signed other professional:

Date:

Signed other professional:

Date:

Identified lead professional:

Review date:

Parents' Consent to Information Sharing: –

We also understand and agree that information about me/us has been and will continue to be collected so that the parent and child, the school and the LA can assess and provide appropriate assistance and services. The school and LA may also use this information for service planning, monitoring and research purposes and may share the information with external agencies and providers of relevant services that they need to work with to ensure that we are provided with the most appropriate services. We understand that this information will be stored either electronically or in the manual records by the school/LA for case management purposes. The school/LA will keep the information updated and notify anyone who is given the information of any changes to ensure corrections are made.

The above statements must be explained in full to the parents so that they understand them & the implications clearly.

Signed Parent(s):

Date:

It is a requirement for the council to provide the Department for Education with annual data on all education parenting contacts issued