



Attendance Policy



St. Peter's
Catholic Primary School

Approved by: SPL Local Governing Board

Date: September 2026

Next review due by: September 2027

Our Mission

We put Jesus at the heart of everything that we do.

special kind unique inventive
generous awesome gentleness
purity helpful good positive
expressive enjoyable caring
adventurous bouncy zingy
fun truth colourful superb
confident polite compassion
friendly enthusiastic marvellous
comforting nice remarkable
happy magnificent great
meaningful forgiveness
exceptional joy wonderful
interesting creative hopeful
incredible spectacular
original brilliant peace
lovely service outstanding
dynamic amazing
dignity fabulous impressive
beautiful sacrifice
glorious fantastic tolerance
exciting terrific delicious
integrity cool considerate
phenomenal laughing funny
sharing humility loving
energetic smiling captivating
justice encouraging mercy
gracious faithful important
supporting delightful thankful
hard-working tremendous



St. Peter's
Catholic Primary School



St Raphael
the Archangel
Catholic Multi-Academy Trust

*Forming Christ-centred pilgrims of hope with kind hearts, questioning minds,
a thirst for knowledge, and a hunger for justice.*

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For the purposes of this policy, references to “parents/carers” shall be taken to include the definition of ‘parent’, as used in this policy, in section 3.7 below.

References to the Headteacher within this policy shall be read as references to the Principal, where this is the title used within the School.

1. Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the statutory guidance on [Working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE). We aim to achieve this through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, which includes:

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

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the DfE’s statutory guidance on [Working together to improve school attendance](#) 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 7 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- The [Equality Act 2010](#)

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)
- [Ofsted's 2025 framework toolkit](#)

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents/carers
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations, statutory duties and comply with the law on school attendance, 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 pupils' 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
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

3.2 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
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising the assistant headteacher to be able to do so
- Working with the parents/carers of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) 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
- Communicating 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/carers through all available channels
- Sharing information from the school register with the local authority, including:
 - Notifying the local authority when a pupil's name is added to or deleted from the school admission register outside of standard transition times
 - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who fail to attend school regularly, or who have been marked with an unauthorised absence for a continuous period of 10 school days
 - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who the school believes will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader (also known as the 'senior attendance champion') is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- 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
- Building close and productive relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is the headteacher (Genevieve Jordan) and can be contacted via the school office.

Tel: 01926 427497

Email: admin@stpeters-learn.straphaelcmat.co.uk

3.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 9)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance, and the headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher/assistant headteacher (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is Sandra Giacalone and can be contacted via the school office.

Tel: 01926 427497

Email: admin@stpeters-learn.straphaelcmat.co.uk

3.5 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1) if advised to do so by the attendance officer, and submitting this information to the school office within 10 minutes of the start of each session.

3.6 School office staff

School office staff will:

- Take calls and respond to voicemails (or emails if appropriate) from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the class teacher, Early Support Lead, headteacher or assistant headteacher, where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance
- Contact parents/carers to request further information where the reason provided for a pupil's absence is unclear, insufficient to determine the appropriate attendance code, or gives rise to concerns about the pupil's welfare or attendance.
- Where no notification or explanation for a pupil's absence has been received, contact parents/carers by 9.45am, or as soon as practically possible, to establish the reason for the absence and, where appropriate, the expected date of return

3.7 Parents

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 before 9.30am on the day of the absence (and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child and, if the child is in the Early Years Foundation Stage, provide more than 2 emergency contact numbers, where possible
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

- Keep to any attendance support plans and/or contracts that they make with the school and/or local authority
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting the headteacher (as designated senior lead responsible for attendance), office manager/attendance officer, their child's class teacher or the Early Support Lead. They can all be contacted via the school office.
Tel: 01926 427497
Email: admin@stpeters-learn.straphaelcmat.co.uk

**Under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, parents have a legal duty to secure full-time education through regular attendance at school or otherwise. Failure to secure regular attendance at a registered school may constitute an offence under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. 'Regular' attendance is attending school every day that the school is open in line with the school rules (Warwickshire Attendance Service; UK Supreme Court (Isle of Wight Council v Platt [2017])).*

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day, on time

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

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

We will take our attendance register at the start of each morning session of each school day and once during each afternoon 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 a place other than school
- Absent
- Absent – unable to attend due to unavoidable causes

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
- 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
- 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 8.55am and ends at 3.30pm.

Pupils can arrive in school from 8.45am and must arrive in school by 8.55am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.55am and will be kept open until 9.25am.

The register for the second session will be taken at 1.30pm and will be kept open until 2pm.

4.2 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 9.30am, or as soon as practically possible, by contacting the school office staff via telephone: 01926 427497.

Where the explanation is unclear; insufficient to determine the appropriate attendance code; or gives rise to concerns about the pupil's welfare or attendance, the school may contact parents/carers to establish the reason for the absence and determine the appropriate attendance code.

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 or has been advised to mark the absence as unauthorised by the Local Authority Attendance Service.

Where 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.

4.3 Planned absence

Parents/carers should, wherever reasonably possible, arrange medical and dental appointments outside school hours. Where this is not possible, 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 evidence of the appointment.

The school may request additional appropriate information about the appointment where necessary to ensure that the absence is recorded accurately and to support the pupil's safety, wellbeing and educational needs. This may include seeking information that enables the school to understand whether any reasonable adjustments, pastoral support, SEND provision or other appropriate support may be required before, during or following the appointment.

Parents/carers will not normally be expected to provide detailed medical information where this is not necessary.

Where possible, the pupil should:

- Be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary, and attend school before/after their appointment
- Wear school uniform to their appointment, to make it easier to return to school afterwards

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

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

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

The school monitors punctuality regularly and uses attendance data to identify pupils who are persistently or increasingly late. Where a pattern of lateness is identified, the school will contact parents/carers at an early stage to share the relevant information, understand the reasons for the lateness and identify any barriers that may be affecting the pupil's ability to arrive on time.

The school will work in partnership with the pupil and their family to agree practical strategies and, where appropriate, provide or signpost additional support. This may include adjustments or targeted support where SEND, health, wellbeing, family circumstances or other barriers are contributing to difficulties with punctuality. Progress will be monitored and positive improvements recognised.

Where punctuality does not improve despite appropriate support, the school will escalate its response in line with its attendance procedures, Warwickshire Attendance Service guidance and the DfE statutory guidance, including consideration of further attendance support or appropriate legal intervention where necessary.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

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

- Call the pupil's parent on the morning of the day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason by 9.45am, or as soon as practically possible. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, or where the absence is out of character, or there are concerns about a pupil's welfare or whereabouts, the school may undertake an Attendance and Welfare Home Visit* where it is safe and appropriate to do so.
- Follow its safeguarding procedures where the school is unable to establish a pupil's whereabouts, is unable to make contact with the family, or has concerns about a pupil's immediate safety or welfare, the school may contact the police or other appropriate safeguarding services where necessary. The school will share relevant information with external agencies where there is a safeguarding or welfare concern and will continue to follow the appropriate attendance procedures alongside any safeguarding response.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not.
- 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 and follow the above steps 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 to the pupil's social worker and/or youth offending team officer
- 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, the school may issue: a notice to improve; a penalty notice; or seek other legal intervention (see section 7 below) as appropriate

** The purpose of Attendance and Welfare Home Visits is to establish contact, ensure the pupil is safe and well where appropriate, understand any barriers to attendance, hear the views of the pupil and family, and identify any support that may be required. Visits will be undertaken in a **respectful, non-judgemental and supportive manner** and will not be used as a punitive measure. Where a visit raises safeguarding or welfare concerns, the school will follow its safeguarding procedures and liaise with relevant services where appropriate.*

4.6 Unexplained absence, welfare checks and Children Missing Education

The school has clear procedures for responding to unexplained absence and ensuring that the whereabouts and welfare of pupils are established. Where no reason for absence has been provided, the school will make appropriate first-day contact with parents/carers and seek to establish the reason for absence. Where necessary, further contact will be made using the contact information held by the school.

Where absence remains unexplained, is out of character, or there are concerns about a pupil's welfare or whereabouts, the school may undertake an Attendance and Welfare Home Visit where it is safe and appropriate to do so. The purpose of such a visit is to establish contact, check on the pupil's welfare, understand the circumstances of the absence and identify whether any support is required. Staff will follow the school's lone-working and safeguarding procedures when undertaking any home visit.

Where there are safeguarding concerns, these will be referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and managed in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures. Where appropriate, the

school will make a referral to Warwickshire Children's Social Care, the Police or other relevant agencies. Where there is an immediate concern about a child's safety or wellbeing, the school will act without delay.

The school will also follow Warwickshire County Council's Children Missing Education (CME) procedures. Where a pupil's whereabouts cannot be established following appropriate reasonable enquiries, the school will make a referral to the CME Team in accordance with WCC requirements. This includes situations where a pupil has been absent without authorisation for 20 school days and their whereabouts are unknown, or where a pupil has not returned following 10 consecutive school days of authorised leave of absence, subject to the circumstances and WCC guidance.

Reasonable enquiries may include contacting parents/carers and other known contacts, communicating by telephone, email or letter, checking information held by the school, making appropriate enquiries with other agencies or schools where relevant, and undertaking a home visit where it is safe to do so. The school will maintain appropriate records of enquiries and actions taken.

The school will also have systems to identify pupils who do not transition to their expected next school or educational setting, and pupils whose names are removed from the admission register where their future educational arrangements have not been confirmed. The school will make the appropriate notifications and returns to the local authority and follow CME procedures where required. Schools are required to notify the local authority when pupils are added to or removed from the admission register outside standard transition points, and this information supports effective CME processes.

The school will not wait for a particular absence threshold where there are safeguarding or welfare concerns. The response will be proportionate to the circumstances, taking account of the pupil's individual needs, vulnerabilities, previous attendance and safeguarding history.

4.7 Reporting to parents

The school will regularly communicate with parents/carers about their child's attendance and absence record, following Department for Education (DfE) guidance.

School will communicate with parents regularly and in a way that is clear, supportive, personalised and proportionate, **recognising that schools and families share the same goal of ensuring that children attend regularly, feel that they belong and are able to benefit fully from their education.**

Where possible and appropriate, communication will be tailored to the individual circumstances of the pupil and family. Communication will seek to identify and address barriers to attendance at an early stage. In line with DfE guidance, communication will frame discussions about absence in terms of the days, lessons and learning or wider school experiences missed, rather than relying solely on attendance percentages.

Parents/carers can view their child's attendance information, including daily attendance marks, through the My Child at School (MCAS) app, enabling them to monitor attendance throughout the school year.

Where attendance is good, the school will recognise and celebrate positive attendance and improvements. Where attendance begins to decline, or where a pattern of absence or lateness is identified, the school will communicate with parents/carers at an early stage. Communication will be proportionate to the circumstances and may include:

- informal conversations or check-ins with the pupil and/or parent/carer;
- communication from the class teacher, where appropriate;
- telephone calls from the class teacher, school office, pastoral staff or headteacher/assistant headteacher;
- emails to parents/carers;
- written letters or attendance notifications;
- meetings with parents/carers to discuss attendance, understand any barriers and agree appropriate support plans;
- regular check-ins or follow-up communication to review progress; and
- where appropriate, further attendance support or referral to relevant external services in line with the school's attendance procedures and statutory guidance.

The member of staff communicating with the family will be appropriate to the circumstances and may change as attendance concerns develop. For example, initial concerns may be addressed by the class teacher or office/pastoral team, while more persistent or complex concerns may involve the headteacher or other appropriate staff.

All communication will aim to be **warm, respectful, non-judgemental and solution-focused**, while remaining clear about the importance of regular attendance and the expectations placed on parents/carers.

The school will seek to understand the individual circumstances of each pupil and family, identify barriers to attendance and work collaboratively with parents/carers and pupils to agree appropriate support to ensure that every pupil can attend school regularly and benefit fully from their education.

Where attendance does not improve despite appropriate support, the school will follow its attendance escalation procedures and the DfE statutory guidance.

5. Authorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

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 for employment or for admission to another educational institution
- 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.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as:

Rare and unexpected circumstances which are unlikely to reoccur and which, in the circumstances, cannot reasonably be managed outside the school term. Examples may include:

- Medical emergencies
- Bereavement or serious family emergencies (e.g. death of a close family member)
- Significant traumatic or distressing events affecting a pupil

Leave of absence will not be granted for a pupil to take part in 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. The school may request further information or supporting documentation where appropriate.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 2 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school office.

5.2 Other reasons for authorised absence

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

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- 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 for religious observance. Pupils should attend school on the days surrounding those set apart for religious observance

- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – a pupil is a mobile child if their parent is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with them. In these circumstances a pupil will be considered as a mobile child, provided they are of compulsory school age and have no fixed abode and whose parent is in a trade or business that requires them to travel from place to place
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

5.3 Absences from the school site (which are not classified as absences)

The headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings. These are not classified as absences. Reasons 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

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

We want our pupils to succeed and develop their skills. To do this, pupils need to avoid missing lessons and days of school as much as possible. As a school, we want to reward high attendance and not just penalise pupils for poor attendance.

At St Peter's, we promote a positive culture of attendance and recognise that pupils need to attend regularly to benefit fully from their learning, friendships and wider school experiences. In line with DfE guidance, we aim to celebrate good attendance, recognise improvement and encourage positive attendance habits, rather than focusing solely on sanctions for poor attendance.

Our approach may include:

- praise and recognition for good attendance, punctuality and improvement;
- celebrating individual and whole-school attendance achievements;
- recognising small steps and sustained improvements;
- age-appropriate rewards or incentives where appropriate;
- positive communication with pupils and parents/carers;
- early identification of barriers to attendance and appropriate support; and
- regular monitoring and review of attendance strategies.

The specific approaches used by the school may vary according to the needs of pupils and the circumstances of the school. Rewards and recognition will be used sensitively and fairly and will not disadvantage pupils whose attendance is affected by circumstances beyond their control, including SEND, health or other significant barriers. The school will recognise progress and improvement, rather than solely rewarding pupils who already have high attendance.

Where attendance remains a concern, the school will work collaboratively with pupils and families to understand barriers, provide appropriate support and follow its attendance procedures and the statutory framework where improvement is not secured.

7. Supporting pupils with poor attendance

Our school, in conjunction with Warwickshire Attendance Service and DfE guidance, will make use of the full range of support and potential sanctions – including, but not limited to, those listed below – to tackle poor attendance. Please also see details on Warwickshire Attendance Service and DfE returns as detailed below in section 8.6

Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

7.1 Attendance contract

Warwickshire Attendance Service use attendance contracts as a form of attendance support.

An attendance contract is a formal written agreement between a parent, the child (if they are old enough to understand and it is appropriate), the school and the local council to address irregular attendance at school. An attendance contract is not legally binding, but it provides a more formal route where previous support has not worked or would not have been appropriate.

Parents cannot be compelled to enter an attendance contract, and the school cannot agree an attendance contract in a parent's absence.

Where an attendance contract would be an appropriate form of support, the school will arrange a meeting with the parent and Warwickshire Attendance Service (and pupil if they are old enough to understand/it is deemed appropriate) to discuss how we can work in partnership to improve the pupil's attendance.

Where parents fail to comply with an agreed attendance contract, the school and Warwickshire Attendance Service may seek an alternative course of action. In the first instance, this will include discussions with the parents to seek explanations and determine whether the attendance contract remains useful. Where there is further non-compliance following these discussions, the school and Warwickshire Attendance Service may take further action.

7.2 Education supervision order

In cases where voluntary early help plans and attendance contracts have been unsuccessful, we may work with the local authority to issue an education supervision order. If an education supervision order is considered, the local authority will inform the parent(s) in writing and will set up a meeting.

An education supervision order is a formal intervention but **not** criminal prosecution.

An education supervision order initially lasts for 1 year, but it can be extended within the last 3 months for a period of up to 3 years at a time.

In cases where parents persistently fail to meet the directions given under the education supervision order, they may be liable to a fine of up to £1,000 upon conviction.

7.3 Notice to improve

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

A notice 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.

It 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, or prosecution considered, 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

7.4 Penalty notices

The headteacher (or a deputy or assistant headteacher, authorised by the headteacher), 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, we will check with the local authority before doing so, and send the local authority 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 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.

8. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

8.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

If the school becomes aware of barriers that relate to the pupil's needs, we will inform the local authority in line with their current guidelines.

The school recognises that some pupils may experience complex or individual barriers to regular attendance. In line with DfE guidance, we will seek to understand the individual circumstances of the pupil and family, work collaboratively with parents/carers and the pupil, and identify practical ways to remove or reduce barriers to attendance. This may include appropriate adjustments to the school day or provision, pastoral or wellbeing support, SEND support, support with routines and transitions, and working with relevant external services where appropriate.

Where barriers cannot be effectively addressed through school-based support, or where additional specialist support is required, the school will work with the local authority and other relevant agencies to identify

appropriate support. Attendance will be monitored and support reviewed regularly to ensure that interventions are appropriate and effective.

8.2 Pupils absent due to mental or physical ill health

The school recognises that physical or mental health difficulties can affect attendance. We will work collaboratively with pupils and their families to understand the reasons for absence, identify barriers to attendance and agree appropriate support.

Where appropriate, the school may consider adjustments to the school day or provision, pastoral or wellbeing support, SEND support, phased or supported reintegration, and liaison with relevant health or other professionals.

Attendance will be monitored and support reviewed regularly, with the aim of helping pupils return to and maintain regular attendance wherever possible. The school will take account of individual circumstances and will not treat health-related absence solely as a matter of compliance or sanction.

Parents/carers should consult the school office and the NHS guidance, [*Is my child too ill for school?*](#), when deciding whether to keep their child at home due to illness. The school will share this guidance with parents/carers and support them in understanding it, with the aim of promoting attendance wherever appropriate.

Parents/carers are welcome to contact the school office for advice if they are unsure whether their child is well enough to attend. The school office may also contact parents/carers to discuss reported symptoms and, where appropriate, advise whether the pupil should remain at home or attend school. This advice will take account of the pupil's symptoms, wellbeing and relevant public-health guidance.

Please note, the NHS guidance on vomiting/diarrhoea is not a hard-and-fast rule for every individual circumstance. The school will consider the circumstances of the illness, the pupil's presentation and any relevant public-health advice when advising parents/carers about when their child should return to school. For example, an isolated episode of vomiting where there is a clear non-infectious explanation may be considered differently from repeated vomiting and/or diarrhoea consistent with an infectious illness. Where there is any doubt, the school may advise parents/carers to follow the full 48-hour exclusion period or seek appropriate medical advice.

8.3 Pupils absent due to other barriers to attendance

The school recognises that some pupils may experience additional barriers to regular attendance, including pupils:

- With SEND
- Who are disadvantaged
- Who are known or previously known to children's social care
- Who face other barriers to attendance (e.g., young carers)

The school will analyse attendance information for these pupils, seek to understand individual barriers and work in partnership with pupils and their families to identify appropriate support.

Where necessary, timely and appropriate adjustments or adaptations and targeted interventions will be put in place to remove or reduce barriers to attendance. Support may include pastoral or wellbeing support, SEND provision, adjustments to routines or the school day, support with transitions, regular check-ins and liaison with relevant professionals or agencies.

The impact of targeted support will be monitored and reviewed regularly, with approaches adapted where necessary to ensure that they remain appropriate and effective. The school's aim is to ensure that all pupils are supported to attend regularly and benefit fully from school, while recognising and responding appropriately to their individual needs and circumstances.

Where a pupil has an education health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, the school will inform the local authority.

8.4 Pupils returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence

The school will work with pupils and their families to support a positive and successful return to school following a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence. The approach will be personalised to the pupil's circumstances and may include a return-to-school meeting, a named member of staff to support the pupil, appropriate adjustments to routines or provision, pastoral or wellbeing support, catch-up arrangements and, where appropriate, a time-limited phased return. The school will liaise with relevant professionals or services where additional support is required. Progress will be monitored and the support reviewed and adapted as necessary, with the aim of restoring regular attendance as soon as reasonably possible.

8.5 Prolonged or unexplained absence for children in the EYFS below compulsory school age

For a child in the EYFS who is below compulsory school age, the school will follow up unexplained or prolonged absence promptly. Where there is prolonged absence, or absence without notification, or absence becomes a concern, the school will attempt to contact the child's parents and alternative emergency contacts.

When deciding whether a child's absence should be considered prolonged, the school will use professional judgement and consider the:

- Patterns and trends in the child's absences and their personal circumstances
- Vulnerability of the child and their parents, as well as the circumstances of their home life

We will also implement our safeguarding procedures (see our child protection & safeguarding policy on the school website or available in hard copy from the school office) and refer any concerns to local children's social care and/or request a police welfare check. The school will also follow Warwickshire County Council's procedures for children who are absent or missing from early education where appropriate.

For EYFS pupils who are already of compulsory school age, normal school attendance procedures apply (as outlined throughout this policy).

8.6 Warwickshire Attendance Service returns for prolonged or irregular absence

The school will make the statutory and local attendance returns required by the Department for Education (DfE) and Warwickshire County Council (WCC). These returns support the identification of pupils who are experiencing prolonged or irregular absence, enable appropriate support to be considered and contribute to safeguarding and the local authority's statutory attendance responsibilities.

This includes, where applicable:

- **Sickness return:** if a pupil is absent due to illness (recorded in the attendance register as absent using code I) and the school has reasonable grounds to believe they will miss 15 school days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness, the school will make the required notification to the local authority. Only one return is needed per continuous period of absence.
- **Attendance/ irregular attendance return** – the school will provide information to WCC regarding pupils who are not attending regularly and pupils who meet the local authority's criteria for prolonged unauthorised absence. This will be completed in accordance with current WCC procedures and timescales.

The school will continue to monitor attendance proactively and will not wait for a statutory return threshold to be reached before taking action. Where concerns about attendance, welfare or safeguarding arise, the school will follow its attendance and safeguarding procedures and will work with WCC and other appropriate agencies where necessary.

9. Attendance monitoring

9.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) daily, weekly, monthly, half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level.

Specific pupil information will be shared with the DfE on request. The school has granted the DfE access to its management information system so the data can be accessed regularly and securely. Data is shared automatically with the DfE and WCC daily.

Data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics.

The school will benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement, and share this with the governing board.

9.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and
- 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

9.3 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 we have identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence, and their families (see section 9.4 below)
- 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-ordinator, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium lead)
- 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

9.4 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 work proactively and collaboratively with parents and pupils. 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 informal conversations or check-ins with the pupil and/or parent/carer in-person or via phone – communication may be from the class teacher, school office, pastoral staff or headteacher/assistant headteacher;
- Email parents/carers regarding pupil absence attendance concerns and attendance improvements, ensuring they are kept informed of the amount of time their child has missed from school and the impact this may have on their education

- Write letters, emails or attendance notifications to update parents/carers on attendance levels, remind them of the support available through the school and external agencies where appropriate, and encourage open, positive and productive communication to help remove barriers to regular attendance.
- 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
 - Agree appropriate support plans with parents and, where appropriate, the attendance service
- Regularly check-in and follow up communication to review progress
- 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
- Where appropriate, offer further attendance support or referral to relevant external services in line with the school's attendance procedures and statutory guidance
- Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 7, above)

10. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the headteacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

11. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Relationships (Behaviour & Self-regulation) Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions
- EYFS Policy
- Self-Harm Policy

Appendix 1: 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: • 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